March 29, 2006

Attention: Mayor Larry Di Ianni, Councillor Brian McHattie, Councillor Bob Bratina, Councillor Bernie Morelli, Councillor Sam Merulla, Councillor Chad Collins, Councillor Tom Jackson, Councillor Bill Kelly, Councillor Terry Whitehead, Councillor Phil Bruckler, Councillor Maria Pearson, Councillor David L. Mitchell, Councillor Murray Ferguson, Councillor Art Samson, Councillor Dave Braden, Councillor Margaret McCarthy

I salute you for your recent funding grant to establish the Centre for Civic Inclusion. This is great news, a testament to all the hard work carried out by many dedicated organizations and volunteers in our community.

Increasingly Hamilton is the destination of choice for newcomers. Our community is becoming ever more diverse with numerous languages spoken. We must ensure that inclusive spaces, based on principles of anti-racism and substantive equality, are supported and accessible.

As I say in the attached statement in the Legislature, I am pleased that Hamilton groups committed to fighting discrimination and promoting inclusion are getting much-needed resources for their indispensable work in the community.

As a former city councillor, I am proud that you have affirmed your commitment to ensuring the Centre for Civic Inclusion becomes a mainstay in our community.

Sincerely,

Andrea Horwath
MPP Hamilton East

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Excerpt From Hansard
Remarks of M.P.P. Andrea Horwath
Official Record of the Ontario Legislature

March 28, 2006

Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): Fostering a positive and inclusive community requires dedicated space to fight discrimination and reduce barriers. I rise this afternoon to celebrate an important step in meeting that goal: the creation of the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion.

Last week, the city of Hamilton provided $125,000 for the establishment and operation of this new resource centre to encourage the participation and integration of members of immigrant, refugee and visible minority groups in the Hamilton community. In fact, more than 5,000 newcomers choose Hamilton as their home each year, 24% of Hamilton's population are immigrants and over 100 languages are spoken in our city.

Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative, established by former Mayor Robert Wade and comprised of over 70 organizations and 100 dedicated volunteers, spearheaded the creation of the centre for civic inclusion in partnership with the Settlement and Integration Services Organization, with the help of the United Way and the Hamilton Community Foundation. These numerous organizations and individuals worked extremely hard to establish the centre, which will combat racism at all levels of the community and create space for greater involvement by our diverse ethnoracial communities.

I want to congratulate my former colleagues on city council for taking this move. I urge the provincial government to follow the example of the city of Hamilton and provide needed tangible supports for the centre at the same time. I am proud to welcome the addition of the centre for civic inclusion to the city of Hamilton.