July 31, 2006

His Worship Larry Di Ianni
Mayor
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Di Ianni:

Thank you for your letter regarding council's request that the Province of Ontario amend the Ontario Works Act, 1997, to permit increased per diem funding for emergency shelters. I appreciate your taking the time to keep me informed of council's activities.

We are on the side of the most vulnerable in our province. That is why we have provided communities across the province with additional funding to supply essential services to people who are homeless, and at risk of becoming homeless, including an additional three per cent increase to homelessness programs and emergency shelters in 2005-06.

These initiatives help move people off the street and into shelters, and from emergency hostels to permanent housing. The programs also connect people who are at risk of losing permanent housing to community services, such as employment counseling, life-skills training and money management. In addition to the three per cent increase, we have provided another $2 million to enhance homelessness prevention programs.

We are giving our communities more tools to help our most vulnerable residents. This is just one of the many ways that we are working with our partners to build stronger, more sustainable communities.

I note that you have sent a copy of your letter to my colleague the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services. I trust the minister will also take council's views into consideration.
Mayor Di Ianni, thank you again for writing. My colleagues and I are enthusiastic about continuing to work with you and our other municipal partners in the best interests of Ontarians in communities provincewide. Please accept my personal best wishes.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Baldwin McQuinty
Premier

C: The Honourable Madeleine Meilleur