
RECESSION RELIEF FUND COALITION

January 21, 2009

Right Honourable Stephen Harper, PC, MP
Prime Minister;
The Honourable James M. Flaherty, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Finance;
House of Commons, Ottawa
Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Harper and Minister Flaherty,

We are writing on behalf of the Recession Relief Fund Coalition, which represents 199 organizations across the country that are concerned about the recession's impact on the social services sector.

The social services sector, which provides a diverse array of services, is seeing a significant increase in demand as more and more Canadians come to depend on it in their struggle to survive the many effects of the recession. The ability, however, for the social services sector to provide these services, is in jeopardy. The funds this sector relies upon are dwindling, as foundations, corporations and individuals cut back on charitable giving and philanthropic sponsorships.

We appeal to you to respond to this critical issue in your budget next week by creating a Recession Relief Fund to:

- Prevent spending cuts to public and private not-for-profit agencies serving vulnerable people, including children, youth, families, immigrants, those who are homeless, un/under-employed, senior citizens, people who are disabled and those suffering from mental illness.
- Increase funding for all HRSDC and settlement programs, including a doubling of the existing levels of funding being provided through the HPI (Homeless Partnerships Initiatives) program, and extend programs currently set to expire in March, 2009.

Given that pressure on the social services sector is exacerbated by the continuing lack of affordable housing, we also appeal to you to invest a portion of proposed infrastructure spending in the implementation of a fully funded National Housing Programme.

Sincerely,

John Andras
Senior Vice President/Portfolio Manager, Research Capital, 45th floor, 199 Bay St, Toronto, ON M5L 1G2
Chair, SKETCH

Cathy Crowe, Street Nurse
Atkinson Economic Justice Fellow, 333 Sherbourne Street, Toronto, ON M5A 2S5

cc
Michael Ignatieff, MP, Leader Liberal Party
Jack Layton, MP, Leader New Democratic Party
Gilles Duceppe, MP, Leader Bloc Québécois

Recession Relief Fund Declaration

With a recession under way, there will be an increased need for the essential services provided by the many front-line agencies serving Canada's most vulnerable. The recession, however, has put the funding that allows these agencies to operate in jeopardy. Foundations and individuals, facing 30% plus hits to their equity portfolios, are cutting back on charitable giving. Similarly, corporations facing layoffs, decreasing profitability, and in many cases, fighting for survival, are cutting back on charitable giving and philanthropic sponsorships.

At the same time, it is anticipated that all levels of government, faced with deficits and declining tax bases, will cut spending. Government grants to social service agencies are not seen as core spending and are often the first things to be cut.

At a time of increased demand and decreased revenues, many agencies will be very hard pressed to maintain current service levels. Some agencies may be forced to lay off staff, cut programs, and even close their doors, creating greater crowding, demand and pressure on those agencies remaining. At the same time, more and more people will require help.

The result will be an increase in the number of homeless men, women, children and families. There will be overcrowding in shelters, deteriorating health conditions and increased mortality. Increasing levels of extreme poverty will lead to higher costs to the healthcare system, criminal justice system and remedial social services.

We call on the Federal Government to immediately create a Recession Relief Fund to finance:

- **The prevention of spending cuts to public and private not for profit agencies serving vulnerable people including children, youth, families, immigrants, those who are homeless, un/under-employed, senior citizens, people who are disabled and those suffering from mental illness. (Some funding programs are set to expire March 31, 2009).**
- **An increase in funding for all HRSDC (Human Resources and Social Development Canada) and settlement programs, including a doubling of the existing level of funding being provided through the HPI (Homeless Partnerships Initiatives) program, to supplement funding that is projected to be lost from private sector sources, and increase funding levels as required.**

In addition, we call upon the Federal Government to invest a portion of proposed infrastructure spending on social infrastructure by implementing a fully funded National Housing Program.

ENDORSEMENTS: ORGANIZATIONS

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| 1. 6 St. Joseph House | 7. AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador |
| 2. AAWEAR | 8. AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador/Tommy Sexton Centre |
| 3. Aboriginal Health Initiative - UBC Medical Students | 9. AIDS Moncton |
| 4. Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario | 10. AIDS New Brunswick |
| 5. Agincourt Community Services Association | 11. Aids Vancouver Island |
| 6. AID Committee of Guelph & Wellington County | |

12. Alternatives North
13. American Homeless Society & World Homeless Union
14. Ansaar Foundation
15. Antigonish R. C. Deanery Social Action Committee
16. Antigonish Women's Resource Centre
17. Arts for Children and Youth
18. Bad Date Coalition
19. Banyan Youth
20. Bargains Group/ Project Survival Kit
21. Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Association
22. Bissell Centre
23. Breakaway
24. Broad Street
25. Broadway Youth Resource Centre
26. BUILT Network - St. Catharines
27. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Nova Scotia
28. Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health (CCSMH)
29. Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy
30. Central Alberta AIDS Network Society
31. Central Alberta Safe Harbour Society for Health and Housing
32. Central Neighbourhood House
33. Centre 507
34. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
35. Centretown Community Health Centre
36. Child and Family Centre
37. Children's Aid Society of Toronto
38. Children's Community Network
39. City of Greater Sudbury
40. Community Action Resource Centre
41. Community Addiction and Mental Health Services of Haldimand-Norfolk
42. Community Development Council Durham
43. Community Outreach Drug Education
44. Community Social Planning Council of Toronto
45. Community Solidarity Coalition of Vancouver Island, B.C.
46. Community Support Team
47. Cornerstone Strategies
48. Creative Resistance
49. CUPE 2316
50. Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Centre
51. Direction 180 community based methadone program
52. Dixon Hall
53. Dorothy Tait Augmentative Communication Consultant
54. Dress for Success Central Alberta
55. Eastern Branch of Ontario Association of Social Workers
56. Edmonton Small Press Association (ESPA) / Our Voice Street News
57. Elgin Street Mission
58. Elizabeth Fry Society
59. Emmett a community circle in action
60. Etobicoke-Lakeshore Housing Task Force
61. Evangel Hall Mission
62. Family Service Toronto
63. FASworld Canada
64. Foundation Fighting Blindness
65. Fred Victor Centre
66. Frontiers Foundation
67. Gateway
68. Good Neighbour's Club
69. Good Shepherd Ministries
70. Greenspiration
71. Groves Consultants Limited
72. Hamilton Mountain Legal & Community Services
73. Health Providers Against Poverty
74. Hillhurst-Sunnyside Community Association
75. HIV/IDU Outreach Worker Sudbury Action Centre for Youth
76. Hospital Employees Union
77. Housing Action Now (Toronto)
78. HYPE
79. Intuitech
80. John Howard Society of Waterloo Wellington
81. KAIROS - Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiative
82. KAIROS B.C.
83. Kinch Designs
84. Left Justified Literary Services
85. LOFT C.S. - Street Outreach Services - SOS
86. LOFT Community Services
87. Lola Rasminsky
88. Low Income Families Together
89. Mandu
90. Maple Tree Preschool
91. Medical Reform Group
92. Mid-Toronto Community Services
93. Miscellaneous Productions Society
94. Mi-teama Youth & Family Organization
95. Multi Faith Alliance to End Homelessness
96. Muslim Canadian Federation
97. Myths and Mirrors Community Arts
98. National Anti-Poverty Organization
99. National Network for Mental Health
100. Nishnawbe Homes Inc.
101. North Bay & District Labour Council
102. North Hamilton Community health Centre
103. North Island Alcohol and Drug Information Society
104. North Shore Community Support Services Inc.
105. North York Women's Shelter

106. NUC-TUCT Non-Profit Homes Corporation
107. Official Board Davenport-Perth United Church
108. Older Women's Network
109. Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care
110. Ontario Nonprofit Network
111. Open Policy
112. Opportunity Works
113. Our Homes (Toronto) Association
114. Our Place Peel
115. Our Voice / Notre Voix
116. Out of the Cold Meal & Emergency Shelter Program
117. Out Of The Cold program, Trinity United Church, Kitchener, On.
118. Overbrook-Forbes Community Resource Centre
119. Pacific Community Resources Society - Baristas Program
120. Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre
121. Parksville/Qualicum KAIROS
122. Peel Poverty Action Group
123. Photography & Story
124. Positive Living North
125. Positive Outlook Program
126. Preparedness
127. Public Health
128. Public Health Services
129. Quiggin Management Services
130. Rainbow Community Centre/Spectrum Core Community Services
131. Red Pepper Spectacle Arts
132. Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO)
133. Rockhaven
134. Safe Harbour Society for Health and Housing
135. Salmon Arm Kairos Committee
136. Salvation Army
137. Sanctuary Ministries
138. Sault Ste. Marie Soup Kitchen Community Centre
139. Scarborough Civic Action Network
140. Seaton House Family Health Team
141. SEDI (Social Enterprise Development Initiatives)
142. Seeds of Hope Foundation
143. Sherbourne Health Centre
144. Sistering - A Woman's Place
145. Six Within Productions Inc.
146. SKETCH - Working Arts for Street-Involved and Homeless Youth
147. Smart Move Training and Development Inc.
148. Social Planning Council of Sudbury
149. Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Toronto
150. Sooke Family Resource Society
151. South Riverdale Community Health Centre
152. St. Christopher House
153. St. Stephen's Community House
154. St. Timothy's Anglican Church, Agincourt
155. Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Chapter 12
156. Street Health Community Nursing Foundation
157. Sudbury and District Health Unit
158. Sudbury Community Service Centre
159. Sudbury-East Community Health Centre
160. TAIBU Community Health Centre
161. Taiwanese Human rights Association of Canada
162. Taproot Faith Community
163. The 519 Church Street Community Centre
164. The AIDS Coalition of Cape Breton
165. The Canadian Harm Reduction Network
166. The Cutting Veg
167. The Human League Association
168. The Learning Disabilities Association of Peterborough
169. The Mississauga Food Bank (Foodpath)
170. The Redwood
171. The Rotary Club of Toronto
172. The Salvation Army Sudbury Centre
173. The Stop Community Food Centre
174. The Victoria Interfaith Committee for Global Justice
175. Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care
176. Toronto Disaster Relief Committee
177. Toronto Drop-In Network
178. Toronto Harm Reduction Task Force
179. Toronto Neighbourhood Centres
180. TRAC Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre
181. Tri County Women's Centre
182. Umbrella Society for Addictions and Mental Health
183. UrbanArts Community Arts Council
184. Vera's Burger Shack
185. Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre
186. Volunteer Sudbury / Bénévolat Sudbury
187. Wellesley Institute
188. West Hill Community Services
189. Western Aboriginal Harm Reduction Society
190. Weston King Neighbourhood Centre
191. Women Elders in Action (WE*ACT)
192. Women's Support Network of York Region
193. Wood Buffalo HIV & AIDS Society
194. WoodGreen Community Services
195. Yonge Street Mission
196. Youth Employment Services YES
197. Youth Link
198. YWCA Geneva House Sudbury
199. YWCA Sudbury