Jennefer Laidley Research & Policy Analyst

INCOME SECURITY ADVOCACY CENTRE

1500 – 55 University Avenue Toronto, ON M5J 2H7

Dear Ms. Laidley:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak about the issue of income security in Ontario. I am happy to respond on behalf of the Green Party of Ontario.

# INCOME SECURITY ADVOCACY CENTRE (ISAC) Questionnaire

1. **How much will your party increase basic OW and ODSP rates? Will your party also ensure that everyone on OW and ODSP gets at least the full basic needs and shelter amounts by implementing a standard flat rate in both programs?**

We believe that a Basic Income Guarantee for all Ontarians is the most effective and dignified way to eliminate poverty.

The Green Party supports the immediate increase of ODSP and OW payments to address the inadequacy of current social programs. We will invest an additional $3.4 billion in 2018-2019 to increase OW and ODSP to the level of the BIG pilot as a first step in implementing a Basic Income Guarantee for all Ontarians. We will invest an additional $6.4 billion per year by 2021-2022 to phase in a BIG at the low income cut off measure.

We also support increasing the asset limits for ODSP and OW payment recipients, with the amount to be indexed to inflation. In addition, we would modernize the eligibility requirements for Ontario Works to end the clawback of employment earnings and further empower recipients to find and maintain meaningful work.

# What will your party do to work with people with disabilities to strengthen ODSP and make OW responsive to their unique needs?

The Green Party will make social assistance programs responsive to the needs of people with disabilities by ensuring eligibility criteria recognizes their illness and that payments are not interrupted during times of transition.

# How will your party ensure that all low-income Ontarians have accessible, high-

**quality health benefits for themselves and their families?**

We will extend health benefits (e.g. Assistive Devices Program, Medical Transportation) to cover low-income Ontarians outside of the social assistance system.

We also support the implementation of a universal dental care and pharmacare program for all Ontarians.

# What specific changes will your party make to transform social assistance from the programs we have now into ones that better serve people’s needs?

The most important change that we would make is to implement a Basic Income Guarantee at the low income cut off measure for all Ontarians to ensure that no person falls into poverty or faces red tape in getting the help that they need.

# How will your party reconfigure OW and ODSP to better serve Indigenous peoples and recognize First Nations sovereignty to design and deliver their own income support programs?

The Green Party supports the right of Indigenous peoples to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing, and other economic and social programs, and to administer such programs through their own institutions.

You can read the rest of our Vision for Ontario at [www.gpo.ca/vision](http://www.gpo.ca/vision) and read our platform at [www.gpo.ca/platform.](http://www.gpo.ca/platform) Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Samantha Bird Director of Operations Green Party of Ontario