

June 3, 2010

Dear Tim Hudak, Leader of the Official Opposition, Leader of the Conservative Party of Ontario  
Sylvia Jones, Critic for Community and Social Services, Critic for Children and Youth Services  
Christine Elliott, Critic for Health and Long-Term Care, Deputy Leader, Official Opposition

The families we support and serve appreciate the fact that that you brought this matter to the attention of the government, however, the families who came to the Legislature were extremely disappointed and concerned by the lack of time spent to consider the situations being raised and the focus on "group homes" rather than supports for families. As you are aware, many attendees travelled long distances with their children to attend and to be seen at Queen's Park so that their voices would be readily understandable. We do not understand why other members of the Conservative caucus did not keep the discussion going in order to convey the magnitude of the problems faced by families across the province who have a loved one with a disability.

It is shocking to us that many MPPs continue to be ignorant regarding the number of people in this province who are affected by these matters -- this is not a small population. For every person with a disability, there are many family members, neighbours, co-workers, etc., who are directly affected. Unfortunately, no statistics were presented in the Legislature to demonstrate the gravity of the situation involving families. The crisis situation regarding the inadequacy of the SSAH Program, Passport, etc., is not looming -- it is here and has been for some time. The waitlists for Special Services at Home funding are not moving. They are growing daily. In Toronto alone, there are currently over 1200 languishing on the list and the number increases daily. The Toronto Family Network and other regional networks get calls constantly from parents who say that their son or daughter has been wait listed and they have been informed not to expect anything for a long time. They are living in limbo. They are languishing with no hope in sight. What little discussion there was during question period by a few members will not improve their lives and in fact may have set them back even further.

The families we support would like to know what next steps will be taken by the Conservative Party to continue to address this extremely serious matter. Your response in a timely manner is requested.

Sincerely,

Janis Jaffe-White, Coordinator      Reva Schafer, Resource Parent

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