

## **OCASI Priorities - Ontario Election 2011**

These questions reflect some of the key priorities of immigrants, refugees and racialized individuals in Ontario, including those routinely identified by OCASI member agencies as the concerns of communities they serve.

### **1. Immigrant Settlement and Integration**

1.1 Negotiate with the federal government for adequate funding for immigrant settlement programs and services.

1.2 Increase Ontario investment in immigrant settlement services by increasing funds for the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP); increase the number of organizations funded through NSP.

1.3 Enact legislation that would allow permanent residents to vote in municipal elections.

### **2. Labour market integration**

2.1 At a minimum provide employers with an incentive such as a tax credit to hire immigrants, and invest in other measures such as paid internships that will improve job prospects for immigrants.

2.2 Introduce employment equity legislation that would create equitable labour market opportunities for all equity seeking groups.

2.3 Increase or at a minimum, sustain investment in the Fairness Commissioner's office; and invest in paid internships and training that would help internationally trained immigrants to complete credentialing requirements and become employed in their field.

### **3. Housing**

3.1. Invest in a housing program to create a minimum of 10,000 universally accessible, affordable, regulated, non-profit and co-op developed housing units annually and ensure that at least 50% of these units can provide "rent geared to income" assistance.

3.2 Create an annualized fund to repair and maintain existing and new affordable housing units.

3.3 Ensure that Ontario tenants are better protected from rent gouging and unfair rental practices by landlords.

## **4. Income Security**

4.1 Reduce racial disparities and inequities and promote economic equity and justice through the following specific initiatives: introduce an employment equity program that has the strength of legislation and sufficient resources for effective implementation; strengthen enforcement of employment standards and workplace safety regimes.

4.2 Reduce economic insecurity for all Ontario residents, while introducing proactive measures that would redress the colour-coded poverty gap and increase income security. Some useful measures include job creation strategies that are targeted to benefit those who are economically marginalized; increasing the minimum wage at least to low-income cut-off levels; increasing social assistance rates and asset limits for people on social assistance;

## **5. Health and Dental care**

5.1 Eliminate the three-month wait for OHIP for permanent residents.

5.2 Invest in affordable dental preventative and treatment services targeted to low-income children and adults and ensure that communities that are over-represented among the poor, such as those of racialized background, will have equitable access.

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