

The Honourable John McCallum
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
john.mccallum@parl.gc.ca

November 5, 2015

Dear Mr. McCallum,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

OCASI is the umbrella organization for immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in Ontario. We are a registered charity founded in 1978, and now have 220 member agencies across the province. OCASI member agencies provide settlement and other services for immigrants and refugees.

We enjoyed working with you in your role as the Critic for Citizenship and Immigration, Multiculturalism and Seniors, and look forward to the positive changes we can make together in your role as Minister of this important portfolio.

We offer our assistance as civil society partners in implementing the priorities identified by your government with respect to immigrants and refugees, particularly the urgent need to meet the target of bringing 25,000 Syrian refugees to safe resettlement in Canada. We look forward to timely implementation of other priorities, including:

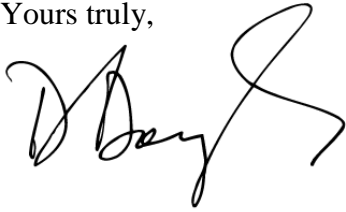
- Fully restoring Interim Federal Health Program for refugees;
- Expanding and expediting government and private sponsorship of refugees from other regions, particularly Africa;
- Granting permanent resident status to sponsored spouses upon arrival;
- Restoring maximum age for sponsorship of immigrant dependents to age 22 from 19;
- Doubling parent and grandparent sponsorship applications to 10,000 a year; and
- Repealing the revocation of citizenship of dual citizens and reducing barriers to citizenship acquisition.

We look forward to engaging with you on redressing the decline in family reunification, refugee protection, and access to citizenship, as well as the deepening vulnerability of migrant workers by providing a pathway to permanent residency to all, including migrant agricultural workers, caregivers, and migrant workers in the low-skilled stream.

We also look forward to engaging with you on long-term priorities for immigrant and refugee settlement and integration, including reversal of several years of deep funding cuts to services in Ontario and building future sector stability through sustained investment. We respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you to offer the Council's expertise and experience in helping to meet your stated commitments, and to share some of the main priorities for Ontario's immigrant and refugee-serving sector.

We welcome your leadership on this portfolio and wish you all success as you embark in your new role.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Douglas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Debbie Douglas
Executive Director