

July 20, 2010

Minister of Finance

OASIS – Oasis Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs – has over 150 Agencies, representing over 25,000 employees and providing supports and services for approximately 35,000 people with developmental disabilities and their families.

We wish to advise that there is much confusion as to the details and the implications of both Bill 16 and the Provincial Budget of March 25, 2010. Some questions are only now being answered but others still require clarification, including but not limited to:

What are the expectations on organizations and unions at the bargaining table?

While it is good to put out a policy statement, is this a legislated direction?

If agencies have the opportunity to provide increases within the resources they have available – is that allowed?

Will Conciliators and Arbitrators be bound by such policy statements?

What is the penalty for failure to comply?

It may be that some volunteer Boards are ready to hand the keys back to the government – especially given the additional compliance demands and the inability of an organization to compensate its management staff for those demands.

It is unfortunate that the Ministry of Community and Social Services has chosen to renege on its commitment by cancelling the 4th year base increase that was promised. This is in a sector that has been historically underfunded. So much for the reliance on more than one year at a time planning!

It is unfortunate that the government has chosen not to fund its own Pay Equity legislated liability – which will presumably lead to a reduction in supports and services available and an increase in waiting lists.

It is unfortunate that the government has again (2<sup>nd</sup> time) chosen not to recognize the work of non bargaining unit staff and the support they provide to people with special needs and their families.

It is unfortunate that the government has chosen to pay down the debt – which it chose to create – on the backs of some of the most vulnerable in our society.

Where do we go from here . . .

We need further clarification on Bill 16 and the Budget, so that we can figure out its implications and ramifications both in the short and long term. What are the rules?

We need some words and some actions that will show this government is prepared to invest in all of its citizens in the Province of Ontario – including its most vulnerable – and especially during a time of Transformation of the Developmental Service System!