

Ontario Young Liberals Southwest Region Policy Parliament

Guelph, Ontario

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**Host: University of Guelph
Young Liberals**



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President, University of Guelph Young Liberals and Host**

Welcome to the 2008 Ontario Young Liberals Southwest Region Policy Parliament!

Thank you for your participation in the Southwest Region Policy Parliament. The OYL is a member-driven organization and these events can only be successful if you get involved! We appreciate all the hard work and energy you have shown in crafting policies and coming to this policy parliament to advocate for your ideas.

The goal of the Policy Parliament is for young Liberals from Southwest region to come together to discuss, debate and prioritize policies you wish to move forward to the province-wide OYL Policy Parliament (also know as "OYL SummerFling"). Please note that we were not able to translate the policies into French due to timing, however, all policies discussed at SummerFling will be bilingual.

Policies ratified at SummerFling will become the OYL policy priorities for 2008-2009. We will focus our efforts on lobbying for these policies and encourage our colleagues in the Liberal party that they seriously consider adopting them. The OYL has an impressive track record over the years of successfully implementing policies, such as our support for the Kyoto Accord, high funding for post-secondary education, or the adoption of same-sex marriage.

Due to the timing of the OYL AGM and the by-election, the OYL Southwest Policy Parliament is starting a little later than in previous years. Nevertheless, the OYL has a strong history of active policy parliaments and I have no doubt that this year will be no different. Also, the OYL looks forward to having another round of policy discussions in the fall of 2008.

In 2008-2009, OYL Policy Parliaments will be one component of policy action and development. We look forward to holding regional policy discussions, lobby days at Queen's Park and Ottawa, and actively participate in the Ontario Liberal Party and Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario)'s policy sessions. If you would like to get involved or become a member of the Policy Committee, please let me know!

I want to acknowledge all of the help and support by my wonderful colleagues who have provided a great deal of help organizing this event: Meghan, Magda, Mandy, and Jacob.

Thank you again for your hard work and brining forward ideas and policies you think will make a difference in the lives of Canadians and the citizens of Ontario.

Please do not hesitate to contact me (647.284.1282) if you have any questions.

Sincerely, Chris Drew, OYL Policy Director - chrisdrew.oylpolicy@gmail.com

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Funding for Research and Innovation

Submitted By: University of Waterloo Young Liberals

WHEREAS Canada has been awarded only 6 Nobel prizes in the last Century, less than other countries such as Norway (9), Austria (12), Sweden (29), France (45), and the UK (91);

WHEREAS among 17 select OECD countries, Canada ranks 14th in innovation, 12th in research intensity, and 14th in triadic patents (big ideas patented in multiple jurisdictions);

WHEREAS Ontario's investment in R+D as a proportion of GDP is 14% below the G7 average;

WHEREAS Canada's business spending on R+D was 37% below the G7 average, and Ontario's business R+D was 16% below the G7 average;

WHEREAS universities are being forced to direct funding towards “commercially viable” research instead of towards basic research projects; and,

WHEREAS there has been a steadily decreasing emphasis on science and technology funding for many years now; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the Ontario and Canadian government to increase their funding in research and innovation in order to bring Canadian research and innovation to at least G7 and OECD average;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Ontario and Canadian government encourage businesses to invest more in research and development; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT universities not be required to fund “commercially viable” research and focus on basic research.

Amendments to the 1985 Indian Act

Submitted By: Chad Cowie

WHEREAS Canada and its legislation continues to refer to those under the Indian Act as “Indians within the meaning of the Indian Act (Chapter 27, Statutes of Canada – 1985);

WHEREAS a majority of the Indigenous populations take offence to being referred to as Indians as the term is generally in meaning to those who are culturally/ethnically linked to the nation of India;

WHEREAS it is the 21st century and Canada continues to use a colonial and archaic term when referring to the first peoples of North America;

WHEREAS currently those elected to Chief and Council are not held accountable to the people who elect them into office;

WHEREAS the only people Chief and Council must report to/listen to are the Federal Government of Canada, specifically the Minister of Indian Affairs and those within the Ministry of Indian Affairs;

WHEREAS this clause has allowed many Chief and Councils to take advantage of those who elect them all in order to benefit themselves or those who they deem fit to;

WHEREAS the lack of accountability/recall to those who elect them has led to undemocratic methods and the current system allows them to continually do this with no negative consequences on themselves until their mandate is up;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Federal Government of Canada meet with various First Nations groups, leaders, and communities to discuss a possible changing of name for the Ministry of Indian Affairs and all legislation related;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Federal Government of Canada take no longer than one year to work on a name change for Indian Affairs in order to allow a proper amount of time to discuss what is best suited in the eyes of those who are within the Indian Act (Chapter 27. Statutes of Canada - 1985);

BE IT RESOLVED THAT once a new name is changed, the Federal Government of Canada has up to five (5) years to amend/change any items that must be updated to reflect the name change;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Federal Government of Canada amend the Indian act to enforce accountability of Chief and Council to the people who elect them into their offices;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Federal Government of Canada only amend these two items with the consensus of the First Nations population who are recognized under the Indian Act (Chapter 27, Statutes of Canada – 1985).

Reversing the Ban on MSM Organ Donation

Submitted By: Michael Pelz, University of Western Ontario Young Liberals

WHEREAS Canada suffers from severe organ shortages and maintains one of the lowest organ donation rates in the world;

WHEREAS thousands of Canadians wait in hope for organs;

WHEREAS all donated organs undergo extensive tests to guard against transmission of HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis-C, and other debilitating diseases;

WHEREAS there have been no reported cases of organ recipients receiving HIV/AIDS and/or Hepatitis-C from organs donated by gay men;

WHEREAS as per the recommendations of Canada's medical community, screening efforts should focus on dangerous sexual activity independent of sexual orientation;

WHEREAS Health Canada's stipulation that gay men who have engaged in sexual activity since 1977 are ineligible to donate organs is counterproductive and void of credible scientific information, moreover, such policies avoid addressing unsafe sexual practices in the heterosexual community;

WHEREAS the Federal ban on organ donations from gay men promotes regrettable stereotypes which denigrate the gay community; and,

WHEREAS the ban on gay male organ donations reduces the already small amount of organs available for donation; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the recent ban on MSM organ donations be overturned;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Health Canada refocus its efforts on enhanced screening and education programs about potentially risky sexual activities for all groups, independent of their sexuality; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Health Canada strive to promote equality and tolerance between all Canadians, and that all significant policy decisions be completed in consultation with the Canadian Medical community.

Childhood and Youth Obesity

Submitted By: University of Guelph Young Liberals

WHEREAS Canada has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in the developed world, ranking fifth out of 34 OECD states; and

WHEREAS in March 2007, the non-partisan Standing Committee on Health produced the report *Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids*, in which the Committee makes twelve recommendations that address the fear that today's children will be the first generation for some time to have poorer health outcomes and a shorter life expectancy than their parents; and

WHEREAS a particularly alarming finding of the Committee is that First Nations and Aboriginal children and youth have a significantly high rate of obesity; and,

WHEREAS as today's overweight and obese children age, they will become tomorrow's overweight and obese adults; and

WHEREAS the epidemic of obesity is expected to increase dramatically, resulting in an amplified burdening on the healthcare and social systems.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Young Liberals support the twelve recommendations put forward by the Standing Committee on Health; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT in addition to supporting the *Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids* report, the Ontario Young Liberals recommend that Ontario high schools include a physical activity requirement for students to graduate from secondary school.

Note: Policy put forward by the University of Guelph Young Liberals in collaboration with Liz Sandals and the Hon. Carolyn Bennett.

Toward Stronger Environmental Awareness

Submitted By: University of Guelph Young Liberals

WHEREAS the public sector has both the opportunity and responsibility to set a positive example by undertaking investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

WHEREAS it is recognized that an individual's value system is especially developed during her youth;

WHEREAS students attending Ontario's educational institutions will soon be making the political and economic decisions that will determine the long term environmental and economic sustainability of our economy; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT all Ontario public education institutions be conceived and constructed to be as energy-efficient as possible,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Ontario's public education institutions are high priority in receiving any upgrades or investments specifically targeted to increase energy efficiency and/or generate on-site zero-emission energy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the sustainable characteristics of such projects are made very visible at the specific institution, using, for example, information displays; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT an education campaign, specifically targeted at youth, occurs to raise awareness about the positive environmental impact of such projects.

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Post-Secondary Students

Submitted By: University of Guelph Young Liberals

WHEREAS autism spectrum disorders (ASD) is a complex neurological disorder that usually appears during the first three years of life;

WHEREAS people with ASD tend to have difficulty relating to others, problems with speech and non-verbal communication, and limited and repetitive interests and behaviour, such as hand flapping and rocking;

WHEREAS ADS affects nearly 1 in 165 children;

WHEREAS the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) provides funding for services to families with children that have ASD. Some of these services include summer and March Break camps;

WHEREAS a partnership between MCYS and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has led to the creation of the Ontario College Graduate Certificate Program in Autism and Behavioural Science at six colleges or college consortia across the province;

WHEREAS more than 100 students graduated in 2006 from the Ontario College Graduate Certificate Program in Autism and Behavioural Science, and by 2008-2009 the target enrolment will be at least 200;

WHEREAS students attending school and working towards their Graduate Certificate Program in Autism and Behavioural Science need summer employment, preferably in their field; and,

WHEREAS Ontario has invested more than \$3.9 million this year in seasonal camps and other services that provide breaks for families of children with ASD; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT another partnership is formed between MCYS and MTCU for summer camps for children with ASD and students studying towards their Graduate Certificate Program in Autism and Behavioural Science;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this joint initiative between MCYS and MTCU provide grants for students working towards their Graduate Certificate Program in Autism and Behavioural Science to work for their summer acting as 'camp councillors' to 'campers' with ASD; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the families of children with ASD receive grants to attend these summer camps.

Eliminating the Penny

Submitted By: University of Guelph Young Liberals

WHEREAS the Royal Canadian Mint estimates it costs three to four cents to produce a penny;

WHEREAS each year the Mint estimates annual delays in transaction times cost Canadian consumers at least \$64.9 million;

WHEREAS New Zealand banned the penny in 1990 with favourable popular support;

WHEREAS the U.S. Coin Coalition, an organization dedicated in part to banning the penny, has widespread business support;

WHEREAS the existence of the penny is only wanted by the copper and zinc lobbies;

WHEREAS average Canadians loathe the penny, needlessly hoarding millions in unspent coins; and,

WHEREAS the Liberal Party of Canada stands for economic efficiency and the public welfare; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Royal Canadian Mint cease its production of pennies and that all legal cash prices be rounded to the nearest \$0.05.