

# **Ontario Young Liberals Northern Region Policy Parliament**

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**Welcome to the 2008 Ontario Young Liberals Northern Region Policy Parliament!**

Thank you for your participation in the Northern 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 Northern 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.

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: Joey M, Jacob M, and Justin T.

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 – [chris@oyl.org](mailto:chris@oyl.org)

Table of Contents				
Policy Title	Club	Author	Page	Result
A) <a href="#">Tax Shifting for Ontario: Providing Bold Leadership for Addressing Climate Change</a>	Nickel Belt Young Liberals		3	
B) <a href="#">La chasse d'ours du printemps</a>	Nippising Young Liberals	Holly Garnett	4	
B) <a href="#">Spring Bear Hunt</a>	Nippising Young Liberals	Holly Garnett	5	
C) <a href="#">A Policy to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers</a>	Laurentian University Young Liberals	Jordan Glass	6	
D) <a href="#">Northern Youth Strategy</a>		Joey Montpellier	8	
E) <a href="#">Responsibility to Protect</a>		Justin Tetreault	9	
F) <a href="#">Policy ensuring fair and equal representation in Northern Ontario</a>	Laurentian University Young Liberals	Jordan Glass	10	

## **A) Tax Shifting for Ontario: Providing Bold Leadership for Addressing Climate Change**

**Submitted By: the Nickel Belt Young Liberals**

**WHEREAS** numerous scientific experts and reports have documented that man-made climate change is occurring due to large increases in greenhouse gas emissions over the past several decades;

**WHEREAS** these same experts have warned that if worldwide greenhouse gas emissions are not very soon stabilized and reduced by at least 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 then there is a greatly increased risk of more severe natural disasters, species extinction, food crop devastation, rising sea levels that would force island and Arctic indigenous communities to migrate and a host of other factors contributing to human suffering;

**WHEREAS** with each passing year the cost of acting on climate change becomes much more expensive as the “Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change” noted that failure of countries to invest at least 1% of their GDP into environmental initiatives risks global GDP being approximately 20% lower than it might have otherwise been;

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Liberal Party committed in the 2007 Ontario Election to reduce emissions that cause climate change by 6% below 1990 levels by 2014, 15% below by 2020 and 80% by 2050;

**WHEREAS** many environmentalists and economists agree that, while the planned closing of coal power plants will reduce emissions, it will also be required to put a real price on carbon in order to achieve the emissions reductions Premier McGuinty has committed to; and,

**WHEREAS** British Columbia and Quebec have put in place carbon taxes that have been widely praised and well received; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Young Liberals lobby the Ontario Government to adopt a revenue neutral tax shifting plan that would place new taxes on energy use (but not gasoline at the pumps), while giving all the resulting revenue back in income and corporate tax cuts, additional financial support for the manufacturing sector, and enhanced income supports for those with lower incomes, fixed incomes and those living in rural and northern regions of Ontario; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** in the event that the Liberal Party of Canada forms the next government of Canada and implements a tax shifting plan at the federal level, that the OYL lobby the Ontario Liberal Government to embrace this plan and work to harmonize its environmental policies with those of the Liberal Party of Canada.

## B) La chasse d'ours du printemps

ATTENDU QUE le Gouvernement de l'Ontario estime que la population des ours noirs en Ontario est la plus grande de l'Amérique du Nord. Avant que la chasse d'ours du printemps était annulée en 1999, ils nombraient 75,000 à 100,000.<sup>1</sup>

ATTENDU QUE la chasse d'ours aide à contrôler ce grand nombre d'ours.

ATTENDU QUE, selon *la Fédération des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs de l'Ontario*, la diminution de la population d'ours par les chasseurs au printemps aide tout l'écosystème de l'Ontario. Quand le nombre d'ours est plus petit, il diminue la compétition entre les ours pour la nourriture. Ceci aide d'autres faunes comme les élans et les cerfs qui ne peuvent pas survivre quand les ours les chassent sans arrêt.<sup>2</sup>

ATTENDU QUE c'est déjà illégal de chasser un ours avec ses enfants.<sup>3</sup>

ATTENDU QU'à cause de la surpopulation des ours, la plupart des communautés du nord trouve qu'il y a plus d'ours qui entrent dans leurs communautés en cherchant de la nourriture. Ces ours endommagent les maisons et les cabanes, créent le désordre avec les déchets, et même blessent et tuent des humains et des animaux domestiques.

ATTENDU QUE la police et le Ministère des richesses naturelles sont préoccupés avec les appels pour piéger et tuer les ours qui sont trop proches des humains, au lieu de leurs propres emplois.

ATTENDU QU'avant l'annulation de la chasse d'ours en 1999, plusieurs touristes venaient au nord chaque printemps pour chasser les ours noirs. En voyageant au nord, les chasseurs payent pour leur logement, leur guide et la nourriture.

ATTENDU QUE la chasse d'ours est aussi un avantage pour l'économie du nord de l'Ontario, une région qui souffre déjà d'un manque d'emploi et d'activité économique. Sans la chasse du printemps, *La Fédération des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs de l'Ontario* estime que l'économie du nord de l'Ontario a perdu 350 à 500 millions de dollars.<sup>4</sup>

ATTENDU QUE les gouvernements municipaux, provincial et fédéral profitent d'environ quatre millions de dollars chaque année en taxes pour la chasse d'ours.<sup>5</sup>

IL EST RÉSOLU QUE, le gouvernement d'Ontario doit réintégrer la chasse d'ours du printemps.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministère des Richesses naturelles, <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/csb/news/jan15nr99.html>.

<sup>2</sup> La Fédération des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs de l'Ontario, <http://www.ofah.org/Bear/Reinstate.cfm>.

<sup>3</sup> La Fédération des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs de l'Ontario, <http://www.ofah.org/Bear/Reinstate.cfm>.

<sup>4</sup> La Fédération des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs de l'Ontario, <http://www.ofah.org/Bear/Reinstate.cfm>.

<sup>5</sup> La Fédération des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs de l'Ontario, <http://www.ofah.org/Bear/Reinstate.cfm>.

## B) Spring Bear Hunt

**Submitted By: Holly Garnett, Nippising Young Liberals**

**WHEREAS** the Government of Ontario estimates that the population of black bears in Ontario is the largest in North America. Before the Spring Bear Hunt was cancelled in 1999 the bear population numbered between 75 000 and 100 000;

**WHEREAS** the Spring Bear Hunt helps to control and regulate the bear population;

**WHEREAS** according to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, controlling the bear population through the Spring Bear Hunt helps entire ecosystems. When the population is less sizable, it limits competition between bears for food. This also helps other wildlife like moose and deer, that are unable to survive when the growing bear population hunts them for food;

**WHEREAS** it is already illegal to hunt a female bear with her cubs;

**WHEREAS** due to the overpopulation of bears, most Northern communities find that nuisance bears enter their communities in search for food. These bears damage houses and cottages, make messes with garbage and garbage dumps, and even wound and kill humans and domestic animals;

**WHEREAS** the police and the Ministry of Natural Resource must preoccupy themselves with calls to trap and kill bear too close to human populations. Without the Spring Bear Hunt, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters estimates that the Northern Ontario economic has lost between 350 and 500 million dollars;

**WHEREAS** the Spring Bear Hunt helps the economy of Northern Ontario, a region that is already suffering for a lack of jobs and economic activity;

**WHEREAS** before the Spring Bear Hunt was cancelled in 1999, bear hunters stimulated the Northern economy through paying for their lodging, guides and food while visiting the North for spring hunting trips; and,

**WHEREAS** municipal, provincial and federal government profit from about 4 million dollars each year in taxes from the Spring Bear Hunt; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the provincial Liberal government reinstate the Ontario Spring Bear Hunt.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

## C) A Policy to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers

**Submitted By: Jordan Glass**

**WHEREAS** approximately 250,000 to 300,000 child soldiers are currently exploited in situations of armed conflict in 20-30 countries around the world (DFAIT);

**WHEREAS** the widespread availability of inexpensive, lightweight automatic weapons allows for children as young as seven to participate in combat related roles;

**WHEREAS** children can be easily intimidated and manipulated to carry out orders to kill and to commit other various atrocities;

**WHEREAS** young girls are often victims of maiming, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, and are at a higher risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS;

**WHEREAS** poverty and a lack of education offer few options for a child, so many “volunteer” to become soldiers;

**WHEREAS** preventing the recruitment and assisting with the reintegration of former child soldiers is not stated as the DFAIT “key” priorities or as ongoing priorities; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the OYL urges the Government of Canada to make the prevention, use of, and reintegration of former child soldiers a “key” priority for DFAIT and CIDA;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the OYL urges the Government of Canada to assist, where possible, the establishment of accurate birth registration systems to help prevent the recruitment of children under 18 (this provides a source of evidence to assist with prosecution of violators of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child);

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the OYL urges the Government of Canada to include the law against recruitment of child soldiers into the Criminal Code of Canada (to allow for the prosecution of Canadian citizens abroad [extraterritorial jurisdiction] and the protection of Canadian victims abroad);

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the OYL urges the Government of Canada to partner with NGO’s and aid organizations to create viable alternatives to recruitment, such as education, employment, and skills training;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the OYL urges the Government of Canada to increase global awareness via NGO’s about children’s rights against forced recruitment into military groups (therefore empowering youth to resist pressure and coercive means of recruitment); and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the OYL urges the Government of Canada to withhold any military assistance for governments that fail to take steps to demobilize and stop recruiting children into their forces or governments which support groups that actively engage in recruiting child soldiers.

**Background Notes:**

Case studies, reported by the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, indicate that in El Salvador, Ethiopia and Uganda, a third of child soldiers were girls and face a variety of threats. ([http://dev.waraffectedchildren.gc.ca/bg\\_general\\_information-en.asp](http://dev.waraffectedchildren.gc.ca/bg_general_information-en.asp))

CIDA gives financial support to programs of the World Bank, several UN agencies, and other non-governmental organizations, to demobilize and reintegrate child soldiers

If former child soldiers are not re-integrated into their society they are at risk of becoming marginalized, street children, or being re-recruited (<http://www.unidir.ch/pdf/articles/pdf-art1728.pdf>)

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

## D) Northern Youth Strategy

**Submitted By: Joey Montpellier**

**WHEREAS** the 2001 Census Research Series produced by the Northern Boards from 2002 to 2004 showed that Northern Ontario is a region undergoing important transformations;

**WHEREAS** Economic growth in Northern Ontario has been significantly less than the provincial average since the 1970s;

**WHEREAS** workforce development is seen as crucial to economic development by most people in the region;

**WHEREAS** the rate of youth out-migration has increased substantially since 1996;

**WHEREAS** according to available data, current rates of youth out-migration has declined since 2001, however it remains extremely high;

**WHEREAS** Northern Ontario represents more than 88% of Ontario's land mass, however, it only represents 6.5% of the province's total population (2006 Census);

**WHEREAS** this percentage represents a decrease from 6.9% in 2001;

**WHEREAS** study shows that only a small segment of youth out-migrations is not related to economic issues; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the provincial Liberal government aggressively attack this issue on two axes; education subsidies and diversification of the northern economy;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the provincial Liberal government offers significant education subsidies to students who are ready and willing to work in northern Ontario for 5 years after the completion of their post secondary degree; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the provincial Liberal government increases its investments to help diversify the northern economy so that our youth can find employment in other areas than the resource based industries.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

## E) Responsibility to Protect

**Submitted By: Justin Tetreault**

**WHEREAS** in recent years lives have been lost or have been put at risk when governments have failed to take the necessary actions to protect their civilian populations from internal war, ethnic cleansing, genocide or crimes against humanity;

**WHEREAS** Canada has established a strong reputation for being a positive influence internationally, such as in matters of peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, commitment to aid and its role in achieving an international landmines treaty; and,

**WHEREAS** Canada spearheaded, as part of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, the development of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine, adopted by the United Nations in 2005, providing the international community with the authority to intervene for human protection purposes where a civilian population is suffering, or at risk of suffering, serious harm as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure and where the government in question is unwilling or unable to take action; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Liberal Party of Canada call on the Government of Canada to ensure that Canada takes appropriate and timely action, through the United Nations, to help protect civilian populations from harm in the face of internal war, ethnic cleansing, genocide or crimes against humanity when their governments fail to do so;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Liberal Party of Canada call on the Government of Canada to ensure that the principles of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine are enshrined as a central tenet of Canada's foreign policy;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Liberal Party of Canada adopt the principles of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine as a cornerstone of Liberal Party policy.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

## F) Policy ensuring fair and equal representation in Northern Ontario

**Submitted By: Jordan Glass, Laurentian University Young Liberals**

**WHEREAS** in 2006 Northern Ontario was dropped from eleven (11) seats to ten (10) seats federally;

**WHEREAS** in 2004 Northern Ontario was dropped from eleven (11) seats to ten (10) seats provincially;

**WHEREAS** the current federal government has currently endorsed a bill that will reduce Northern Ontario's share of seats from ten (10) to nine (9);

**WHEREAS** Sudbury Liberal Member of Parliament (MP) Diane Marleau has already introduced an unsuccessful private member's bill ensuring that Northern Ontario never has less than ten (10) seats in the federal House of Commons; and,

**WHEREAS** the current Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty has set precedent by making sure that Northern Ontario keep the ten (10) seats it currently has, rather than decrease to nine (9) during the 2007 provincial election despite a decreasing population; therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Young Liberals endorse a policy that makes sure that Northern Ontario never have less than ten (10) Members of Parliament (MPs) and ten (10) Ontario Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) at any given time.