

Ontario Young Liberals Southcentral Region Policy Parliament

Brantford, Ontario

May 24, 2008

Host: Brant Young Liberals



**Chris Drew, OYL Policy Director – chris@oyl.org
Deep C, OYL Southcentral Region Coordinator – jonathan.tsao@oyl.org
Jacob Mksyartinian, OYL President – Jacob@oyl.org**

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

Thank you for your participation in the Toronto 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 Toronto 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 2007, Toronto Region in particular was successful as two of the five policies passed at SummerFling were from the Toronto Region.

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: Jacob, Terry, Ryan, and Jonathan. I would also like to thank our special guest, the Michael Ignatieff for joining us.

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

Table of Contents				
Policy Title	Club	Author	Page	Result
A) <u>Establishment of a National Organization to Coordinate Research and Innovation at the National Level Policy</u>	Trinity-Spadina Young Liberals	Daniel Gatto	7	
B) <u>Establishment of a Federal Ministry of Sustainable Development in Canada Directly Funded by a Tax for Investment in Sustainable Energy Technologies Policy</u>	Trinity-Spadina Young Liberals	Daniel Gatto	8	
C) <u>Renewed Pan-Canadian Funding Model for Aboriginal Peoples</u>	Glendon Young Liberals and St. Paul's Young Liberals	Ryan Singh and Ryan Dunn	9	
<u>Background Research</u>			10	
D) <u>Increase Early Outreach and Information about Post-Secondary Education</u>	St. Paul's Young Liberals	Ryan Dunn	13	
<u>Background Research</u>			14	
E) <u>A Policy to Make Genocide History</u>	Etobicoke Centre Young Liberals	Terry Chemij	16	
F) <u>A Policy to Improve Public Housing</u>	Etobicoke Centre Young Liberals	Terry Chemij	18	
G) <u>A Policy to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers</u>	Etobicoke Centre Young Liberals	Terry Chemij	19	
H) <u>Review and Reform of the Ontario Municipal Board</u>	York University Young Liberals	Ben Keen	21	

Table of Contents				
Policy Title	Club	Author	Page	Result
I) <u>Harmonized Interest on Student Loans</u>	York University Young Liberals	Ben Keen	22	
J) <u>Reversing the Ban on MSM Organ Donation</u>	Toronto Centre Young Liberals	Aaron GlynWilliams in collaboration with Michael Pelz	23	
K) <u>Addressing Canada's Demographic Changes By Improving the Permanent Residents Process</u>	Toronto Centre Young Liberals	Denise Lam	24	
L) <u>Increasing Access to Gainful Employment for Internationally Trained Professionals</u>	Toronto Centre Young Liberals	Yuri Navarro	25	
M) <u>Improving Contracts with Telecommunication Companies</u>	University of Toronto Young Liberals	Adlan Taramov	26	
N) <u>Ban Asbestos Exports to Developing Countries</u>	Toronto Centre Young Liberals	Angela De Campo and Chris Drew	27	
O) <u>Creation of a VIA Rail Act</u>	Toronto Centre Young Liberals	Mark Drew	28	
P) <u>Using Low-Speed Vehicles to Fight Climate Change</u>	Ryerson Young Liberals	Chris Drew	29	

Defending Northern Canada

Submitted by: the Burlington Young Liberals

WHEREAS Canada's northern environments increasingly face ecological degradation;

WHEREAS icebreakers and nuclear submarines from nations such as the United States and Russia have repeatedly disregarded Canada's national borders, trespassing through our Arctic waters;

WHEREAS it must be recognized that Canada's Arctic is home to a vast base of rich natural resources; and,

WHEREAS it is necessary for a sovereign nation to assert its independence and support its territories, to preserve said sovereignty; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Burlington Young Liberals Club *urges* the Government of Canada to:

- Increase government presence in Canada's Arctic through more frequent military and scientific expeditions, to reaffirm to the international community our commitment to our northernmost jurisdiction;
- Fulfill its stated commitment of constructing and maintaining an Arctic deepwater port;
- Increase military funding to purchase heavy polar ice breakers, and not simply seasonal patrol vessels, thus providing improved search and rescue capabilities, eased access for scientific research, improved patrol capabilities, and improved accessibility to northern communities;
- Fulfill its stated commitment of establishing Canada's Arctic waters as Canadian internal waters and not international straits, noting that the waters separating Canadian islands are frozen over for the majority of the year thus acting as an extension of the land for our Inuit peoples; and,
- Increase funding to climate change research in Canada's Arctic.

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

Establishment of a Federal Ministry of Sustainable Development in Canada Directly Funded by a Tax for Investment in Sustainable Energy Technologies Policy

Submitted by: Daniel Gatto, Trinity-Spadina Young Liberals

WHEREAS there is increasing need to replace our carbon-based energy technologies in light of scarcity of these resources and notably the environmental and health repercussions of their exploitation;

WHEREAS reliance upon nuclear energy and its popularity is growing provided increasing energy demands, the zero-carbon footprint left by producing it, the low financial cost of its production and the possibility of the reprocessing of certain nuclear waste through newer nuclear technologies;

WHEREAS nuclear energy should be seen only a short-term solution to our energy needs because it is not sustainable; and,

WHEREAS energy is a provincial matter and sustainable energy production merits strong federal leadership; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Liberal Party of Canada make party policy of a federal Ministry of Sustainable Development to be directly funded by a 2% federal tax on all goods and services to establish a fund to procure finances for investing in renewable energy technology capital to be managed by the newly established ministry;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL recommend that half of this 2% go towards the direct purchase of sustainable energy producing capital and the other half to further the research and development of this capital; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL suggest for the Ministry to have an initial goal of supplying at least 10% of provincial energy demand to each of the provinces by 2020 and 20% by 2030.

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

Renewed Pan-Canadian Funding Model for Aboriginal Peoples

Submitted by: Ryan Singh, Glendon Young Liberals and Ryan Dunn,
St. Paul's Young Liberals

WHEREAS currently, a significant gap exists between the standard of living for Aboriginal Canadians and the standard of living for the rest of Canada

WHEREAS considerable investments in education, housing and infrastructure, health services, and human resources for aboriginal Canadians are needed to close the living standards gap and stimulate economic development

WHEREAS the Liberal Party of Ontario is committed to the fair and equitable standard of living for all people in Canada

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Liberal Party advocate for a renewed pan-Canadian funding model for aboriginal peoples in order to rectify the existing living standards gap

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the new funding model address key areas such as education, health care, housing and infrastructure, and human resources.

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

Background Research: Renewed Pan-Canadian Funding Model for Aboriginal Peoples

About the Kelowna Accord

On November 25, 2005, a national process of Aboriginal policy negotiation was concluded in Kelowna, British Columbia. At this First Ministers Conference on Aboriginal Affairs, the Prime Minister and the premiers agreed on a five-year, \$5 billion plan to improve the lives of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples. Originally entitled: *First Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders: Strengthening Relationships and Closing the Gap*, the plan would be more commonly known as the Kelowna Accord. The successful implementation of the Kelowna Accord would have seen the standard of living gap catch up to the rest of Canada by 2016. The Accord was hailed as a breakthrough for all aboriginal people. However, seventy-two hours later, Prime Minister Martin's budget was defeated, and the Kelowna Accord never came to fruition.

Investments in the Accord

The Kelowna Accord addressed some of the more pertinent issues with living standards for aboriginal people in Canada. The following is a brief summary of the investments and initiatives:

Relationships and Accountability

In the area of relationships and accountability the primary aspects of the plan were as follows:

- Implement all commitments at the First Ministers Meeting provincially in close conjunction with regional First Nations, Metis, and Inuit groups.
- Establish regional key performance indicators and monitor progress.
- An annual two-day meeting between Aboriginal Affairs ministers and national Aboriginal leaders, including a First Nations forum, a Metis forum, and an Inuit forum.

Education

According to a 2007 report from the Centre for the Study of Living Standards, in 2001, 52.2% of Aboriginal Canadians 15 and over were high school graduates, compared to nearly 70% of non-Aboriginal Canadians. Moreover, only 23% of Aboriginal people aged 18 to 29 reported having completed their post-secondary education, compared to 43% in the rest of Canada.

This divide has a direct impact on labour force participation and standard of living. This gap also represents a void of cultural capital within the aboriginal community.

The protection of the aboriginal identity in the educational process is paramount to maintaining a cultural identity in Canada, however without significant capital investments these objectives will not be achieved.

The Kelowna Accord called for a \$1.8 billion investment in education in order to:

- increase the high school graduation rate of aboriginal people to equal the rest of Canada (22,000 more high school graduate over the next 5 years)
- increase the post-secondary completion rate by 50% (14,800 graduates in the next 5 years and 37,000 graduates over the next 10 years)

Health Care

Health issues facing aboriginals have a significant impact on the standard of living gap. According to a Prime Minister's Office report in 2005, the infant mortality rate among aboriginal people was 20% higher than the rest of Canada; aboriginal people were three times more likely to have type 2 diabetes; and the suicide rates of aboriginal people was anywhere from 3 to 10 times more common than the rest of Canada.

Each of these health issues represents a significant problem given the advancements in healthcare and health education.

The Kelowna Accord called for a \$1.3 billion investment in health care for aboriginal people in order to:

- reduce child mortality, child obesity, diabetes and youth suicide by 20% over a five year period
- double the number of health care workers by 2016; specifically 150 doctors and 1,200 nurses)

Housing and Infrastructure

Estimates calculated by the PMO project that the on-reserve housing shortage is 20,000 to 35,000 units and increasing. Off the reserve, aboriginal people have a 76% higher housing need than the rest of Canada. Moreover, on-reserve, one of the greatest threats to the well being of aboriginal people is the purity of the drinking water for people.

To alleviate the housing and infrastructure concerns, the Kelowna Accord called for \$1.6 billion to:

- reduce the on-reserve housing deficiency by 40% over the next 5 years.
- reduce the off-reserve housing access gap by 50% over the next 5 years.
- earmark \$400 million to address the need for clean water.

Human Resource Investment

According to Statistics Canada, in November 2005, the unemployment rate for aboriginal people was 19.1% (off-reserve) and 29% (on-reserve) with a median income of \$16,000

/ year. Where as, the rest of Canada, at this time, had an unemployment rate of 7.4% with a median income of \$25,000.

The Kelowna Accord called for a \$200 million investment in human resources in order to:

- increase aboriginal employment levels by 30% over the next 5 years
- increase the median income for aboriginal people by \$4,500 over the next 5 years.
- introduce internet access to 250 aboriginal communities over the next ten years.

The Numbers

Below is a financial breakdown of the \$5 billion investment in the Kelowna Accord

(in \$ Millions)	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total
Education	95	264	408	484	549	1800
Housing and Infrastructure	500	275	275	275	275	1600
Human Resource Investment	40	40	40	40	40	200
Health Care	137	218	309	320	331	1315
Other	39.5	32.5	32	27	39	170
Total	811.5	829.5	1064	1146	1234	5085

Numbers Related to the Policy

Since the Kelowna investment projections were done in 2005, it is naïve to think that an identical investment would yield a similar outcome. Below is a projected investment chart according to the CPI increases from November 2005 to March 2008.

(in \$ Millions)	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total
Education	99	276	427	506	574	1882
Housing and Infrastructure	523	288	288	288	288	1673
Human Resource Investment	42	42	42	42	42	209
Health Care	143	228	323	335	346	1375
Other	41	34	33	28	41	178
Total	848	867	1112	1198	1290	5316

(The CPI index for November 2005 is 107.7 and March 2008 is 112.6. This yielded an inflation index of 1.04549675)

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

Increase Early Outreach and Information about Post-Secondary Education

Submitted by: Ryan Dunn, St. Paul's Young Liberals

WHEREAS low-income students tend to have low participation rates in post-secondary education

WHEREAS recent government initiatives seek to address the financial barriers to post-secondary education for low-income students

WHEREAS low-income students do not have access to the same cultural capital as middle and high income students

WHEREAS early outreach and increased information about post-secondary education for low-income students can reduce the void in cultural capital

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Liberal Party look to increase early outreach and information about post-secondary education to all students in grade 7 and 8

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

Background Research: Increase Early Outreach and Information about Post-Secondary Education

Definitions

Cultural Capital: The concept of cultural capital is simple: children pick up the attitudes, habits and modes of thought and speech from one's parents and other family members. Therefore, parents and family members who are educated tend to have a greater degree of cultural capital. Moreover, parents who are educated tend to have higher income levels. Therefore, income tends to be, but not always, directly correlated to education levels.

Relevance

The concept of cultural capital affects children in two ways: vocabulary and comprehension, and ambition.

Vocabulary and Comprehension

Children from more educated families tend to hear more words than those from poorer families, in that same vein, the level of discussion that occurs and the comprehension of abstract ideas that children pick up is increased. Evidence shows that at age 15 students from more educated families have a higher reading comprehension than those in poorer families. In Canada, this gap is equivalent to one year in schooling. This gap can curtail the participation rates of youth from poorer families because of the classroom divide that occurs.

Ambition

Children who come from educated families are assumed to take the same educational path as their parents. At a very early age it is projected that children will go off and complete at least one post-secondary degree. This is not the same for students who come from families without post-secondary education. The assumption that one will go on to pursue post-secondary studies subconsciously shapes the way they approach their studies, namely, high school is a step before university. In order to take that step certain academic standards must be achieved.

The Power of Information and Early Outreach

Early outreach programs such as Head Start and No Child Left Behind are aimed at closing the cultural capital gaps. These programs aim at giving students the necessary skills, confidence, and environment to examine all possibilities with the utmost potential. More recently, Dr. Phil Oreopoulos from the University of Toronto has been conducting research about financial information and behavioral changes among low income families. He has started to expand his research to measure the impact of information on post-secondary participation. Preliminary results from the financial information study indicates that low-income families tend to have less information about social services and financial assistance than middle and high income families. The preliminary research

about education and information indicates that low-income families do not possess accurate information about the costs and benefits to education.

References

Looker, Dianne, and Graham S. Lowe, 2001 "Post-Secondary Access and Student Financial Aid in Canada: Current Knowledge and Research Gaps," A Background Paper for a Canadian Policy Research Networks Workshop on Post-Secondary Access and Student Financial Aid, 1 February 2001, Ottawa.

Oreopoulos, Phil (2006). "Does Human Capital Transfer from Parent to Child? The Intergenerational Effects of Compulsory Schooling" (with Marianne Page and Ann Stevens) *Journal of Labor Economics*, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 2006, pp. 729-760.

Oreopoulos, Phil. "Helping Complete College Financial Aid Applications: Evidence from a Randomized Trial with H&R Block" (with Eric Bettinger and Bridget Long) (in progress)

Usher, Alex (1998). "Income-Related Barriers to Post-Secondary Education," Council of Ministers of Education, Canada Working Paper as part of Postsecondary Education Project, Learner Pathways and Transitions, October, 1998.

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

A Policy to Make Genocide History

Submitted By: Terry Chemij, Etobicoke Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS the genocide in Darfur has been continuing for five years with no end in the foreseeable future;

WHEREAS the international community failed humanity in Rwanda and continues to fail humanity today by their inaction in Darfur;

WHEREAS the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator stated that the number of civilian deaths resulting from the conflict in Darfur had increased by half since 2006, from 200,000 to 300,000;

WHEREAS estimates of displaced persons range from two to three million people;

WHEREAS the situation in refugee and internally displaced camps are deteriorating and the death toll is exacerbated due to malnutrition, disease, and lack of basic necessities of life;

WHEREAS the lack of stability in Darfur has resulted in humanitarian workers being killed, abducted, and hijacked and therefore unable to effectively assist the victims of this genocide;

WHEREAS the conflict in Darfur is spilling over into neighbouring countries threatening the stability of the entire region;

WHEREAS Canada has contributed up to \$275 million in security, diplomacy and aid initiatives, including assessed contributions to UN peacekeeping operations in Sudan and a \$40-million contribution for equipment and training for African troops with the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur;

WHEREAS Canada was a leader in the formation of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, but has not been a leader in creating a precedent for its implementation; and,

WHEREAS China, an ally of Sudan, has appointed a special envoy to Darfur; Canada has not; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the Government of Canada to appoint an envoy to the Darfur region to provide support and coordinated relief and peace efforts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the Government of Canada to support targeted divestment in Sudan's oil, energy, and military industries

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the Government of Canada to be more vocal about China's support of the Government of Sudan;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL advocate for peace in Darfur until the genocide is over; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge young Canadians to make a commitment to never allow our generation to become apathetic to genocide and advocate to all sectors of society why Darfur must be a priority for Canada's foreign policy.

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

A Policy to Improve Public Housing

Submitted By: Terry Chemij, Etobicoke Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS the Dalton McGuinty Government has committed to tackling poverty within one year of its mandate and has made reducing poverty in Ontario a key issue for the provincial government;

WHEREAS the McGuinty Government in the 2008 budget committed to \$100 million that may be used to rehabilitate existing social housing;

WHEREAS the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) is the largest provider of social housing in Canada and the second largest in North America (with 160,000 tenants);

WHEREAS many of the buildings are run down and in dire need of repair with leaky roofs, crumbling walls, mold, and apartments filled with bedbugs and cockroaches;

WHEREAS the Harris government downloaded public housing to the City of Toronto in 2001 along with \$230 million in capital repairs;

WHEREAS the repair bill for all TCH units is currently upward of \$300 million and will reach one billion in six years;

WHEREAS twenty-five per cent of TCH tenants are seniors on fixed incomes;

WHEREAS one-third of murders (81) in Toronto took place on or near TCHC property in the past three and a half years;

WHEREAS on-site security offices were closed down in 2004 in order to save money; and,

WHEREAS 70,000 individuals are currently on the waiting list for TCH units; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the province of Ontario to recognize the fact that the Harper government will not provide funding for TCHC;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the province of Ontario to provide a substantial amount of money for capital repairs and safety measures for tenants of TCH*;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL urge the province of Ontario to support charities, churches, and community organizations to partner with local TCH units to provide positive community support and to assist with community safety measures; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Young Liberals stand up for the poor, the disadvantaged and advocate for tenants living in unacceptable TCH dwellings.

- a “substantial amount” can be defined as hundreds of millions dollars.

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

A Policy to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers

Submitted by: Etobicoke Centre Young Liberal Association

WHEREAS approximately 250,000 to 300,000 child soldiers are currently exploited in situations of armed conflict in approximately 30-40 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 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, resulting in children “volunteering” for military service;

WHEREAS Canada was a key leader behind the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which prohibits the deployment and forced recruitment of children under the age of 18.

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

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 verify the age of children in conflict zones;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OYL urges the Government of Canada to introduce legislation 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 support the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1612, which established, inter alia, a monitoring and reporting mechanism on the use of child soldiers;

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 opportunities;

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 armed forces or armed groups; 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.

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

Review and Reform of the Ontario Municipal Board

Submitted By: Ben Keen, York University Young Liberals

WHEREAS the Ontario Municipal Board has consistently ruled in opposition to what is in the best interest of municipalities;

WHEREAS the Board is an appointed body and therefore not responsible to the people of Ontario;

WHEREAS cities and/or municipalities and their citizens are most qualified to know what their citted need; and,

WHEREAS this arcane body requires reform and counsel to make it viable for the 21st Century; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Young Liberals call on the Ontario Government to review the Ontario Municipal Board's mandate and reform its structure to make it more transparent and more open to input of municipalities.

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

Harmonized Interest on Student Loans

Submitted By: Ben Keen, York University Young Liberals

WHEREAS the Canada Student Loans Program aims to make the loan experience a positive one by working to: simplify the program for all stakeholders; harmonize it with provincial/territorial programs and reduce defaults by improving services during the in-study period, repayment and collections;

WHEREAS the Ontario portion of the integrated student loan accrues interest at prime + 1% and the federal portion accrues interest at prime + 2.5%;

WHEREAS the Federal Government should not rely on interest from student debt as a source of revenue; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Young liberals advocate for the adoption of a harmonized interest rate for Ontario students at the current Ontario rate of prime + 1%.

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

Reversing the Ban on MSM Organ Donation

Submitted By: Aaron GlynWilliams, Toronto Centre Young Liberals in collaboration with 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.

Addressing Canada's Demographic Changes By Improving the Permanent Residents Process

Submitted By: Denise Lam, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS the backlog to process permanent resident (PR) applications has reached over 900,000 and continues to grow at an alarming rate, due in part to the lack of resources and leadership provided by the Harper government;

WHEREAS long wait times for PR applications causes immigrants to feel considerable anxiety, frustration and disappointment in Canada, as well as cause family strains;

WHEREAS Canada will be facing employment shortages in certain sectors the near future and needs permanent residents to contribute to the Canadian economy, especially in skilled trades and professional occupations;

WHEREAS Canada's demographics are changing as Canada's baby boomers age and fewer children are born from Canadian born families, causing the ratio between taxpayers and those using social services such as health care to increase;

WHEREAS the Harper government recently amended the Citizenship and Immigration Act to give new powers to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration that will permit the Minister to be able to 'cherry-pick' PR applicants and ignore the current points system, decrease the chances that family reunification will occur, and continue to grow the backlog with refugee applicants.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Liberal Party of Canada reverse the amendments to the Citizenship and Immigration Act passed by the Harper government;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada develop a Permanent Resident Action Plan to address the changing demographics in Canada;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this Plan include an increase in the annual operating budget of Citizenship and Immigration Canada with the goal of decreasing wait times for PR applications to be processed;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this Plan include Government of Canada reducing the backlog of Convention Refugee and those applying for Permanent Residents under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds in order to allow applicants to receive clarity in their lives.

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

Increasing Access to Gainful Employment for Internationally Trained Professionals

Submitted By: Yuri Navarro, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS the acceptance and integration of new immigrants is necessary to maintain and increase economic and population growth in the Province of Ontario;

WHEREAS despite higher levels education per capita, new Immigrants are facing poverty at three times the level of Canadians born and educated in the Country, leading to desperation and social unrest;

WHEREAS the inability to adequately incorporate Internationally trained persons into the economy by allowing them to practice in their fields of expertise costs the country upwards of \$5 billion per year in economic opportunity;

WHEREAS Bill 124, Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act does not address more specifically the issue of recognition of foreign credentials in regulated professions including but not exclusive to: engineering, architecture, accounting, finance, medical professions, and teaching;

WHEREAS Bill 124, Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act does not address the specific issue of assisting foreign trained professionals to achieve gainful employment in their field through pressuring for the recognition of foreign work experience in their field;

BE IT RESOLVED that the OYL ask the Government of Ontario to further promote the integration of internationally trained persons at the regulatory level by asking the Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals to establish standardized guidelines and/or a point system to judge the educational value of foreign credentials against those gained in Ontario, and make said information public so that it may be used by both employers and regulatory organizations in determining the qualifications of individuals based on their international credentials;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the that the OYL urge the Government of Ontario to further promote the integration of internationally trained persons at the regulatory level by asking the Fairness Commissioner to establish guidelines to prevent discrimination based on "foreign experience" and put into place enforceable measures to ensure that both regulatory organizations and employers do not place undue hardship on internationally trained professionals based solely on the origin their education and experience;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL encourage the Government of Ontario to further promote the integration of internationally trained persons at the organizational level by creating a mandate for the Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals to enter into relationships with professional organizations in order to promote the recognition of international credentials and experience through the use of mentorship programs, financial incentives and educational campaigns; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that where significant regulatory hurdles exist that will limit the ability of internationally trained individuals to attain gainful employment in their field of practice, and where such hurdles cannot be reasonably removed so as to ensure quality standards in said field of practice, this information be made public internationally through the Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals so that prospective immigrants may adequately prepare for such hurdles upon immigrating to Canada.

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

Improving Contracts with Telecommunication Companies

Submitted By: Adlan Taramov, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

Ban Asbestos Exports to Developing Countries

Submitted By: Angela De Campo and Chris Drew, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS Canada is one of the leading countries in the world to export asbestos;

WHEREAS asbestos is a toxic and deadly material which is no longer used in many developed countries and about 75 per cent of Canadian asbestos is shipped to Asia where, along with India, the biggest customers are Indonesia, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand (source: Globe and Mail);

WHEREAS Canada exports asbestos to mostly developing countries where there are poor safety practices which results in serious health consequences for workers and the World Health Organization estimates asbestos kills at least 90,000 people a year — about half of all occupational cancer deaths (source: Globe and Mail);

WHEREAS there are alternatives available for asbestos; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada ban the export of asbestos to developing countries; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada establish transition program for employees in the Canadian asbestos mining industry to find new sources of employment.

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

Creation of a VIA Rail Act

Submitted By: Mark Drew, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS VIA Rail Canada does not have its own act of parliament, unlike other crown corporations such as Canada Post and the CBC;

WHEREAS VIA Rail was created over 25 years ago as an emergency measure to resolve the 1970s crisis in passenger rail;

WHEREAS VIA cannot make its own decisions on which routes to serve nor can it make any investment without Treasury Board approval;

WHEREAS a *VIA Rail Act* should be enacted without delay, to correct these structural problems and give VIA a clear mandate to provide service wherever sufficient demand exists and the means to do so (Source: Transport 2000); therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada pass a VIA Rail Act and develop a strategy to increase the use passenger rail between cities and towns in Canada; and,

BE IT FURHTER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada commit to long-term and predictable funding for VIA Rail to ensure that the strategy can be fully implemented.

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

Using Low-Speed Vehicles to Fight Climate Change

Submitted By: Chris Drew, Ryerson Young Liberals

WHEREAS gas prices continue to rise;

WHEREAS Pollution spewing from vehicle tailpipes kills about 440 people in Toronto and costs the city's economy \$2.2-billion every year, according to a new study from the city's public health unit that one critic says falsely suggests our air is poisonous (source: National Post);

WHEREAS Canadian companies such as ZENN Motor Company have faced regulatory obstacles from Transport Canada that have prevented the commercial sale of Low-Speed Vehicles (LSV);

WHEREAS Low-Speed Vehicles present an environmentally friendly alternative and meet the safety requirements

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada change all federal regulations to permit low-speed Vehicles (LSV); and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada offer similar tax credits and training funding to LSV producers similar to those provided to the major auto producers.

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