Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses

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The Honourable Sandra Pupatello
Minister Responsible for Women's Issues
Ontario Women's Directorate
777 Bay Street, 6th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J4

December 7, 2006

Dear Minister Pupatello:

On behalf of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH) I am writing to request your support for women across Canada in expressing concern about, and opposition to the federal government cuts to the Court Challenges Program and the Status of Women Canada.

I am sure you are aware of the growing concern of women and women's groups across the country about the cuts, as well as the presentations on the cuts to the Status of Women Canada that have been taking place at the House of Commons Committee on the Status of Women.

We would urge you to join with women across the country that support access for women to equality rights and democratic process to ask both Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Honourable Beverley Oda, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women to reverse recent decisions to cut by almost half the Status of Women staff and to close Women's Program offices across the country. In addition, I know you will agree that the mandate of the Women's Program should again include women's equality in its goals and include women's advocacy and independent research as eligible activities for funding under the Program.

The Court Challenges Program is critical to the achievement of equality rights for all marginalized groups, including women, and we would urge you to also support the reinstatement of funding for this program, which has been instrumental in assisting marginalized women to gain access to equity.

Tomorrow and Sunday, the UN International Day for Human Rights, women from across Canada will be demonstrating and sending a message to the federal government to reverse the ill-conceived cuts to these important programs. Please join other women in this effort. For your information, I am attaching a letter from the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women in Manitoba, who has also expressed her concerns to Minister Oda.

Sincerely,

Eileen Morrow, Coordinator
Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH)