



MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DISTRICT  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD  
CONSEIL D'ADMINISTRATION DES SERVICES  
SOCIAUX DU DISTRICT DE MANITOULIN-SUDBURY

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February 26, 2009

Honourable Madeleine Meilleur  
Minister of Community and Social Services  
80 Grosvenor Street  
6th Floor, Hepburn Block  
Toronto ON M7A 1E9

Re: Impact on Social Housing of new Accessibility  
Standards for the Built Environment

Dear Minister:

We applaud your government's initiative in improving accessibility across Ontario and lend our support to it.

That said we are however concerned about the substantial cost impact this will have on our District Social Services Board's budget given that it is we - and by extension our eighteen member municipalities - who are responsible for the lion's share of the budgets tied to both our directly operated housing stock and the stock of the third party non-profit housing providers in our service jurisdiction given that it is we, as a municipal service manager, who subsidize their budgets.

While the Social Housing sector continues to receive substantial government subsidies to meet its objectives, this funding comes primarily from the municipal government and from the federal government via the continued block funding that municipal service managers, such as our DSSAB, are funnelled via the province's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Since our DSSAB's Social Housing costs are largely determined by way of the province's Social Housing Reform Act, 2000 and since the OMPF funding that our DSSAB's member municipalities receive from the province to mitigate municipal social housing costs have been frozen at 2001 transfer levels, it is clear that the cost implications of these most laudable and most needed accessibility standard changes will have to be borne by our member municipalities.

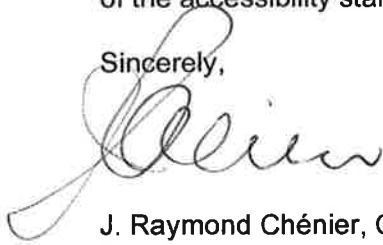
Since the funding impact of these changes is intimately linked to municipal budgeting processes and since Ontario's social housing is at a critical juncture in its 50 year history given that many of the buildings have reached the point where substantial reinvestment is necessary\* and since the introduction of new accessibility standards will further strain already stretched municipal budgets and limit the ability of housing providers to respond

to their regular day-to-day maintenance and repair needs, our DSSAB is requesting that your Ministry fully fund the cost that Ontario's forty-seven municipal service managers will incur to comply with these new accessibility standards when it comes to their Social Housing portfolio.

A housing system that supports Ontarians with disabilities will not only benefit our most vulnerable citizens, it will benefit all Ontarians.

On behalf of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB, I ask that your Ministry fully fund the cost of the accessibility standards for the social housing community.

Sincerely,



J. Raymond Chénier, Chair  
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

c.c. Hon. Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Mike Brown, MPP, Algoma-Manitoulin  
France Gélinas, MPP, Nickel Belt  
Dave Ramsay, MPP, Timiskaming  
DSSAB member municipalities

\*While \$100 million was provided by your government in the 2008 budget for the province's social housing repairs, an estimated \$1.2 billion is required over the next five years to meet general capital repair needs.