

Minister
of Human Resources and
Social Development



Ministre
des Ressources humaines et du
Développement social

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0J9

JAN 25 2011

JAN 20 2011

Mr. J. Ray Chénier
Chair
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
210 Mead Boulevard
Espanola, Ontario
P5E 1R9

Dear Mr. Chénier:

Thank you for your letter of November 2, 2010, in which you ask the federal and provincial governments to continue their partnership and extend the funding for the Affordable Housing Program and the Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit initiative.

I would like to reassure you and the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board that this government remains committed to affordable housing and to assisting those in need of support.

The Government of Canada has committed to investing \$1.9 billion to housing and homelessness over five years through to March 31, 2014. This includes the renewal of the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI), which provides funding for Ontario's Affordable Housing Program; the federal renovation programs, including the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP); and, the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) at current levels for two years, to March 31, 2011. The five-year investment provided us with an opportunity to consider improvements and new arrangements for housing and homelessness programs between 2011 and 2014.

In the fall of 2009, the federal government engaged all provinces and territories, as well as public and private stakeholders, on how best to use federal housing and homelessness investments, and we have listened. The federal government is renewing the HPS at the current funding level of \$134.8 million per year, for the next three years. HPS program enhancements will include shelter support for rural and remote communities, development of linkages between mental health and homelessness, and improved accountability measures.

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Canada

With respect to housing, the government will continue program funding at the current funding level of \$253 million per year until 2014, and is currently working with provinces and territories on delivery arrangements to best meet the diverse housing needs of low-income Canadians. This funding will ensure that we can continue to assist those who need support, including low-income Canadians, seniors, persons with disabilities, recent immigrants, those who are homeless and those at risk of homelessness, and Aboriginal people.

Canada's Economic Action Plan has also taken action to strengthen Canada's economy with a one-time investment of more than \$2 billion over two years to build new and repair existing social housing. Under a two-year agreement with Ontario, the provincial government is cost-matching the federal investment of \$535 million on a 50/50 basis. The Province is responsible for the delivery and administration of programs, such as the Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit Program, including the allocation of funding throughout Ontario.

In addition, the federal government, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, currently spends just over \$500 million annually in support of an estimated 236,900 households living in existing social housing in Ontario. This funding is provided under a long-term social housing agreement with the Province of Ontario. A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Existing Social Housing is currently examining the financial viability of the existing social housing portfolio when agreements and subsidies expire.

I appreciate your interest in addressing the need for affordable housing. I believe that effective responses are met through co-operation with provincial/territorial governments, municipal governments and other partners. To that end, I remain interested in the work of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board.

Thank you again for your correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Diane Finley".

The Hon. Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.