

**TCYL Policies for the Ontario Young Liberals
Toronto Region Policy Parliament**

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Addressing Canada's Economic Challenges By Improving Literacy in New Canadians and At-Risk Canadians

Submitted By: Taras Koulik, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names;

WHEREAS between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of Canadian adults with high literacy skills fell from 24 per cent to 20 per cent;

WHEREAS seven million working-age Canadian adults—about 4 in 10—do not have the literacy skills necessary to function in the workplace;

WHEREAS Canada will be facing employment shortages in certain sectors in the near future requiring residents to contribute to the Canadian economy; residents with skilled trades, professional occupations, and the literacy skills necessary;

WHEREAS the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey showed, the LES of Aboriginal people (aged 16-65) are significantly lower than those of the general population;

WHEREAS Canada's demographics are changing as Canada's baby boomers age and fewer children are born from Canadian born families, resulting in an increase in immigration; with new Canadians facing more pressure in maintaining high literacy rates;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Liberal Party of Canada strive to expose and disrepute the current Harper government's lack of focus on this pressing economic issue;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada assist citizens to engage in formal or informal lifelong learning to maintain their skills, especially literacy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this Plan include an increase in the annual operating budget of the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills with the goal of increasing funding to literacy programs and support to new Canadians with literacy programs dedicated to their needs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this Plan has the effect of committing the Government to striving to bring Canada's literacy rates to be the highest in the world.

Encouraging a Mixed Economy

Submitted by: Jose De Ocampo, Toronto Centre Young Liberals (Federal)

WHEREAS the citizens of Canada would greatly benefit from increased competition by having more firms in the market to choose from;

WHEREAS the citizens suffer from lack of transparency in regards to the externalities derived from the purchasing of products and or services;

WHEREAS a government influenced firm is directly liable to all levels of citizenry;

WHEREAS the private firm is only liable to a limited number of individuals within a society etc. the courts and financial shareholders;

WHEREAS a government influenced firm's profits are directly invested back into society in the form of transfer payments, tax reliefs, infrastructure investments, etc;

WHEREAS the citizens of Canada are being gouged by telecommunications companies; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the federal government utilize unused factors of production for the well being of the citizens of Canada;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the government create firms of varying sizes to compete within markets that have too few firms; and,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the government-influenced firms cannot exceed a size of thirty percent of total market share.

School Safety Policy

Submitted by: Adlan Taramov, Toronto Centre Young Liberals (Provincial)

WHEREAS hundreds of children go missing in Canada every year;

WHEREAS an analysis of CPIC 2009 missing children reports by combining *all categories* of missing shows that 35% went missing from institutions - school, detention and youth centers and those classified as “other” institutions. Less than 1% of all missing children went missing from a shopping mall, place of work, or while on a vacation¹;

WHEREAS safety and security are the primary and most important public goods; and,

WHEREAS it would be against moral values and principles of the Canadians to neglect and disregard the disturbing trend of the increase in daring abductions from Ontario Public Schools in the recent years; therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Young Liberals raise awareness of this issue and urge the government to:

- Enhance the safety measures at Ontario public schools;
- Work with the public and take all necessary action in order to prevent abductions and make public schools a safe environment for the children; and,
- Improve video and other surveillance capabilities at public schools and the surrounding sites.

¹ <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/omc-ned/an-ra/annrep-rappann-09-eng.htm#1>)

Offshore Oil Spill Prevention Policy

Submitted By: Adlan Taramov, Toronto Centre Young Liberals (Federal)

WHEREAS recent events (BP Gulf of Mexico oil spill) in the United States have proven the possibility of massive deepwater oil spills;

WHEREAS oil spills produce enormous environmental impact on wildlife;

WHEREAS oil spills devastate tourism, fishing, and other sectors of coastal economy; and,

WHEREAS stopping deepwater oil spills requires complex technologies; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Young Liberals urge the federal government to:

- Learn from the mistakes made by business and the public sector before and during the BP Gulf of Mexico and other similar crises; and,
- Recognize the importance of offshore oil spill prevention.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Young Liberals urge the government to:

- Introduce regulations requiring oil companies to develop and have the necessary technology and resources in order to prevent and stop potential deepwater oil spills in the future; and,
- Work together with coastal businesses and communities in order to develop action plans and strategies in case of environmental disasters similar to deepwater oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, 2010

New Legislation to Replace Canada's Current Unmerited Cannabis Laws

Submitted By: Salim Dhanani, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS Canada's current Criminal Code and the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* prohibit the possession of cannabis resin whilst a majority of Canadians believe it should be legalized;

WHEREAS Cannabis is the second most widely used recreational drug in Canada, second to alcohol and yet bill S-10 proposes to implement mandatory minimums creating a large increase in cost to taxpayers;

WHEREAS there is no medical evidence to show the adverse affects from the intake of Tetrahydrocannabinols (active substance in Cannabis). There have been zero fatalities that have occurred as a result of the psychoactive effects of cannabis use. Furthermore, new medical evidence is showing numerous benefits affiliated with cannabis usage (Harvard Medical Review);

WHEREAS It can be seen through past precedent that prohibition of such a widely used and readily available drug is more detrimental to society as it lacks the necessary regulations to limit use and prevent abuse;

WHEREAS Current expenditure on the prohibition of Cannabis exceeds \$500million per year and it does not include the expenditure by the Correctional Services of Canada to hold inmates incarcerated due to their involvement in the cannabis industry;

WHEREAS the legalization of Cannabis will not only eliminate the costs of prohibition but will create substantial tax revenue for governing bodies;

WHEREAS the legalization of Cannabis will allow the formation of regulation that prevent abuse and facilitate restrictions to usage; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED The Government of Canada legalizes the possession and use of Cannabis. That it regulates the usage to those over 21 years of age and in specific cafés to enforce regulation. That trafficking is still illegal and possession above 28grams is considered trafficking. That cannabis usage can only take place in designated cafes. Cafés can only sell cannabis that they are the proprietors of and cannot obtain liquor licenses; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Cannabis will be taxed at a considerable rate, similar to cigarettes and alcohol. That a portion of the taxes collected will be spent on responsible Cannabis use and addiction counseling. That a portion of the taxes collected will be spent to offset the healthcare costs created by smoking cannabis cigarettes (normal smoke-related problems).

Addressing Canada's Demographic Changes by Improving the Permanent Residency 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; and,

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; therefore,

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; and,

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.

Neighbourhood Revitalization and Development Policy

Submitted By: Adlan Taramov, Toronto Centre Young Liberals

WHEREAS Low-Income Neighbourhoods can experience:

- Increases in income inequality
- Challenges to the social fabric of the community
- Decreases efficiency of social institutions

WHEREAS Low-Income Neighbourhoods can experience:

- High rates of unemployment and underemployment
- Increasing risks of depression - mental health related
- Lower school graduation rates
- Increase in crime/organized crime rates
- Deterioration of housing and general quality of life

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Young Liberals urge the government to work with local governments, businesses, nonprofit and community organizations in order to find development plan and strategies that would unlock existing resources and potential for the economic development, improving public services, and quality of life;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the government introduce:

- A Neighbourhood Investment Tax Credit in order to encourage businesses and individuals to support development projects and services; and,
- A Community Development Grant in order to improve motivation, skills, and quality of life of the residents
- Small Business Loan Program in order to provide financing for business start-up and expansion
- Neighbourhood Energy Retrofit/Conservation Projects in order to create more local jobs and increase energy efficiency of the housing. These projects will pass on the savings from energy conservation directly to the residents thus helping low-income and single-parent families

Increased Funding for Legal Aid Ontario

Submitted By: Gloria Li, Toronto Centre Young Liberals & York University Young Liberals

WHEREAS community legal clinics in Ontario are understaffed and underfunded, thus, affecting the quality of service and sustainability;

WHEREAS Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) is cutting administrative costs by closing local Legal Aid offices and substituting the former service with a toll-free service, which can leave clients frustrated as the waiting time can become lengthy;

WHEREAS LAO is making changes to the Clinic Resource Office (CRO) leading to the loss of specialization, a resultant decrease of its efficiency and a reduction in resources made available to the 79 community legal clinics throughout Ontario;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT each community legal clinic be properly staffed with a team of staff lawyers and community legal workers reflecting the numbers of potential clients in its catchment area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT LAO create a service which provides real-time interactive human assistance machines, which cuts administrative costs but also maintain the value of visual interaction between LAO staffs and clients; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT LAO reinstate the barrister service which it has cut from CRO to assist clinics in working on big cases.