



December 15, 2011

Dear community member:

Earlier this year the government of Premier Dalton McGuinty announced the formation of the Commission on the Reform of Public Services in Ontario. The Commission is headed by Don Drummond, former senior vice president for the TD Bank. The Public Services Foundation of Canada (PSFC), a national research and advocacy organization dedicated to the promotion of quality public services and a body to which I was appointed Chair in June, 2011, has serious concerns about the limited mandate and scope of the Drummond Commission.

The Commission for the Review of Public Services in Ontario is conducting its business in secrecy, avoiding the question of growing inequality and unmet needs, and ignoring the question of how we generate funding to pay for our public services.

The PSFC believes there is a better way to investigate whether Ontario is meeting its obligation to quality public services and funding methods through tax fairness. In short, the citizens of Ontario must help shape the future of the public services that meet their needs.

This autumn the PSFC was approached by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and asked whether we might participate in a series of public meetings that take the issue of public services and tax fairness directly to the people of this province. With OPSEU's organizational support, we readily agreed.

The result is the establishment of "The Commission on Quality Public Services and Tax Fairness." The Commission, which I will Chair, plans to visit more than 12 communities across Ontario throughout January and February 2012 where we will hold Hearings and Town Hall meetings.



The Commission wants to hear from you.

It invites citizens, organizations, scholars, service users, business leaders and frontline workers to make submissions at both the Hearings and Town Hall Forums in a community near you.

Hearings

Hearings are designed to give presenters ample time to submit ideas and research related to public services, tax fairness, income inequality, and so on. Hearing presentations are 10 minutes followed by five minutes for discussion.

Town Hall Forums

Town hall forums are intended to give everyone in the community a chance to hear and be heard. Attendees are asked to keep comments to three minutes so everyone gets to speak. Sessions take place in the evening; child care is provided.

1. In your experience, what are the consequences of the underfunding of public services? What would be the impact of cuts?
2. What needs are going unmet in your community which you believe the provincial government has an obligation to tackle now, deficit or no deficit?
3. What is the impact on service quality and public accountability when a service is delivered or financed by a private company?
4. What changes are needed to the tax system to make it more effective at funding public services and enhancing economic equality?

As a federal Member of Parliament for more than 10 years and before that as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in Manitoba, I defended and promoted the role of citizens in shaping their future through collaboration and consultation. I believe the Commission on Quality Public Services and Tax Fairness is an ideal example of one method by which we can work and learn together to meet our common goal of building a better society for all.

I strongly encourage you to participate in the Commission's Hearings and Town Hall Forums. To learn more about how you can participate I kindly invite you to contact Commission officer Luisa Quarta at lquarta@opseu.org or by calling **1-800-268-7376**.

Sincerely



Judy Wasylycia-Leis,
Chair

