

April 28, 2017

ONTARIO BUDGET 2017

Reading through a Budget can certainly be ‘taxing’, and quite honestly, some things will be missing from the summaries below. The first chart will still give you an idea of what CFUW Ontario Council prioritized in our last Pre-Budget Consultation paper, and what happened to those requests.

The second chart lists other areas of interest to CFUW Ontario that were mentioned in this year’s Budget, but not requested in our last submission.

One area not mentioned, especially in second chart, are those that were a repeat from the 2016 Budget. Governments are notorious for doing this.

CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL ‘ASKS’ from our Pre-Budget Consultation submission, 01.20, 2017 http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/Issues/PDFs/2017-01-20_PRE-BUDGET.pdf	ONTARIO BUDGET 2017 http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2017/
That financial stresses affecting women, families and communities in Ontario be considered	Much of the budget dealt with this
That social infrastructure means jobs not just buildings	Social Infrastructure Fund – while welcomed - was for capital expenses. There is mention of workers such as child care workers, nurses, support workers for FASD found throughout the Budget.
Early Learning and Child Care: That a quality, affordable, universally accessible and comprehensive early learning and child care program which emphasizes the development of the whole child continue to be developed, that staff be paid commensurate with training and that funding for an ELCC program involve all levels of government through cost-sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs.	\$65.5 million to create 3400 child care spaces in fall 2016 – subsidies for 60% of those 2017-2018 – 24,000 more spaces up to 4 years of age, with the new subsidy program; mix of school, community and home based; expand five on-reserve programs and work to create more
Education:	
That the Community Hubs be expanded	Supporting community hubs in schools; creating and retrofitting where necessary; also looking at best use of properties no longer needed for their original purpose; Community Hub Summit, May 2017
That a fund for the building and renovating of schools be available	\$16 billion in capital grants: 1.2 billion for repairs and renewal – 95 new schools, renovating 54 existing ones

Ontario Student Assistance Program: that the debt burden for students is very high in this province.	Major changes to make tuition free for some, and to reduce costs for others, changing salary amounts for repayment schedule.
Gender Wage Gap:	
That a “Close the Gender Wage Gap by 2025” plan be initiated, with funding to include monitoring and where necessary investigation by the bodies involved.	Not specifically mentioned, instead ‘women’s economic empowerment strategy’ in the coming months
Supports requested:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care and child fee subsidy 	See above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term care system, home and community care - sufficient capacity 	Additional help, also added help for caregivers – does not help the gender wage gap
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Shared leave 	Not mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase women in skilled trades 	Not specifically mentioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender based analysis of government programs 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper funding of Pay Equity Commission, Pay Equity Hearing and Tribunal, etc. 	Not mentioned
Poverty:	
<p>That there be funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Income Pilot Project for Ontario • Income Security Reform Working Group • Bill 185, Social Assistance Research Commission • Changing Workplace Review <p>These four, together with a number of other programmes (Promoting Affordable Housing Act 2016, Ontario Student Assistance Program [OSAP] among others) have the potential to assist Ontarians dealing with economic problems.</p> <p>There is potential that the work done in 2017 can suggest a positive direction, but only with proper and full funding vis-à-vis the provincial budgets both for 2017 and 2018, and with support to municipalities which, in the case of affordable housing, must find ways to ‘afford’ it either through direct funding, taxation, or some determined action.</p> <p>The high cost of poverty to both the individuals and to services should always be remembered. A person who cannot afford medication will continue to be ill, affecting both medical and emergency services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Income Pilot Project funded • Affordable Housing added • OSAP extended • Pharmacare – 24 and under • Social Assistance – raising asset limits; raising benefits by 2%; increase the Remote Communities Allowance
Water:	
That there be funding for the necessary research required for the water-taking	Not mentioned
That a designated fund - with assistance from the Federal government – to pay for the clean-up of mercury in the English-Wabigoon river system (Grassy Narrows) be created.	No mention, but may have started before Budget 2017

Other items mentioned in the Budget – not requested in this year’s Ontario Council Pre-Budget submission - that are of interest to CFUW Ontario Council:

Pharmacare for children and youth – 24 and under;	Mental health and addiction services – continued support to services and to supportive housing;
Senior care – increase the number of Elderly Persons centres, develop a new Dementia Strategy for both the affected and the caregiver, continuing support for Long Term Care;	Autism – assisting with transfer to post-secondary, support in schools and after-school programs, 5 new diagnostic hubs to be established;
Financial literacy provided by the Ontario Securities Commission and the Financial Service Commission of Ontario;	Child welfare reform – support for the new Act, extending the care age to 18 from 16;
Multiple mentions of the North from education, to health to transportation and infrastructure (but is it enough?)	Health Care - new investments in health care from primary care, to reducing wait times to home care, especially support to caregivers;
Indigenous Education Strategy	LHINs to assume responsibility for the planning of primary care and the delivery of home and community care through smaller sub-regions;
Indigenous post-secondary: \$200 million over 3 years to encourage more to post-secondary and training, support to the Aboriginal Institutes, agreement with the Anishinabek Nation	Continued funding for Ontario’s commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including continued support to <i>Walking Together: Ontario Long-Term Strategy to End Violence against Indigenous Women</i>
Career Kick-Start Program to help students to get the experience that they need - \$190m over 3 years	Affordable housing for Ontario, including investing \$30 million over the next three years in the Survivors of Domestic Violence Portable Housing Benefit Pilot to eventually support up to 3,000 survivors of domestic violence and provide them with the flexibility to choose where they want to live; more units for seniors, renovate current social housing and shelters.
Ontario Lifelong Learning and Skills Plan for adults with poor numeracy, literacy, and technology skills, providing a three part program;	A Summit on the health of the Great Lakes fall 2017.
Support for adults with developmental disabilities - \$677 million over 4 years	
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) monies for support, research;	