

NEWS RELEASE

SYLVIA JONES, MPP *Dufferin-Caledon*

For Immediate Release
December 8, 2009

MPP Jones Questions Attorney General on Children's Aid Societies Protocol Delays

(Queen's Park) – Progressive Conservative MPP Sylvia Jones (Dufferin-Caledon) today asked the Minister of Community and Social Services Madeleine Meilleur to explain why taxpayers footed the bill for Liberal friend and Acting Chair of the Social Benefits Tribunal Frank Miclash's \$2300 per month Toronto apartment.

Frank Miclash, former Liberal MPP for Kenora was appointed Acting Chair in May 2008. The Ministry of Community and Social Services approved a \$2300 per month apartment rental, even though some months Miclash was in Toronto for a little as four days.

"Streamlining the court records retrieval process will mean vulnerable children in Ontario will have their court cases heard sooner," said Jones. "Children's Aid Societies are trying to find efficiencies but the Attorney General is standing in the way by not signing off on a protocol that will help them save time and his Ministry save money."

During Question Period the Attorney General did not seem to view this as an urgent matter, saying "the lawyers will take all the time they need."

"The Minister's comments and lack of action show a complete disregard for vulnerable children across Ontario," said Jones. "This new protocol has just been sitting on his desk for three months. How many families have to wait for court dates because the Attorney General will not approve a process that will mean quicker access to justice for children, families and Children's Aid Societies?"

Children's Aid Societies were told that their budgets will be cut by \$67 million dollars midway through the fiscal year. 37 of 51 Children's Aid Societies have told the Ministry of Children and Youth Services that they will not be able to work within the new budget cuts, and layoffs have been announced. This new protocol would save valuable time for Children's Aid Societies who are already facing the elimination of employees.

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Sylvia Jones MPP, Working for You