

NEWS RELEASE

SYLVIA JONES, MPP *Dufferin-Caledon*

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MPP Jones Questions Premier on Layoffs at Ontario's Children's Aid Societies

(Queen's Park) – Progressive Conservative MPP Sylvia Jones (Dufferin-Caledon) today asked Premier Dalton McGuinty to take responsibility for the \$67 million budget cut to Ontario's Children's Aid Societies.

Ontario Children's Aid Societies are mandated to perform certain tasks under legislation, and are required to have a balanced budget approved by the Minister of Children and Youth Services at the beginning of each year. This year, a record 37 of the 51 Children's Aid Societies have filed Section 14 reviews, which means they are unable to balance their current mandate with their budget. In these Section 14 reviews, individual Children's Aid Societies warned the Liberal government that front-line workers would be laid off in order to meet their new budget.

“Front line care workers have already been given layoff notices,” said Jones. “Children's Aid Societies have a legislated responsibility to provide front-line care for the most vulnerable children in this province, and a reduction in staff will inevitably put more children in harms way.”

In Dufferin County, Family and Child Services was handed a 17.1% cut halfway through their fiscal year. Peel Children's Aid Society will be forced to cut 24 front line workers; in Halton 34 workers; and Durham will need to cut 63 workers to meet the new budgetary restrictions. At York Children's Aid Society, 16 workers have already been let go, with more cuts to come.

“Ontario families have a right to be concerned,” said Jones. “Who is going to be there to answer the phone when an at-risk child needs help? How much longer is it going to take for a worker who now has a heavier caseload to get to the home of a child in need? I do not believe Premier McGuinty has thought about the repercussions budget cuts and forced layoffs will have for vulnerable children in Ontario.”

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Sylvia Jones MPP, Working for You