**Ontario Federation of Labour Submission to the Social Assistance Review Commission**

**Summarized by Oladayo Odutayo & Jeff Wingard, McMaster University, for the McMaster Community Poverty Initiative**

*Submission to the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario by the Ontario Federation of Labour September 1, 2011*

The Ontario Federation of Labour addressed its concerns about social assistances as a whole. It feels that social assistance should be given out in different ways to tend to different needs.

This group has taken on the role to represent Ontarians. They raise issues that they feel the capitalist based societies will not raise. They want to make a difference in the lives of individuals instead of focusing on people as a whole.

**Perspective and Vision of Federation of Labour:**

* Bring understanding to the importance of social assistance
* Provide service to the community

**Recommendations:**

* Add a $100 per month basic food allowance
* Index social assistance rates
* Increase asset levels so people do not have to lose everything before starting on assistance
* Allow people to share homes, cars, and other assets who are on assistance without facing penalties.
* Increase Child Benefits to $125
* Introduce a housing benefit to all low income Ontarians
* Eliminate rules that punish sensible money management or set unfair rules about income (treating loans as income)
* Allow recipients to continue receiving OW/ODSP while attending post-secondary school instead of OSAP
* Set caseload limits so that caseworkers can be most effective
* Implement new technology to manage OW – SDMT has never been effective