



January 10, 2008

Dalton McGuinty
Premier
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A1

Subject: A Coordinated Approach to Crime Prevention for Ontario

Honourable Mr. McGuinty,

Congratulations on your recent electoral win. We look forward to working with you and members of your government towards increasing community safety and crime prevention in Ontario communities.

We are writing in response to your letter of October 3, 2007 in which you respond to our call for a greater emphasis on crime prevention and coordination of services with a list of investments that your government has made in enforcement. We understand that policing is important and that in context of an election campaign the focus often reverts to enforcement. We would have hoped, nevertheless, that your response could have spoken of crime *prevention* measures. In parallel to investments in the criminal justice system what is needed is sustained investments in prevention, investments in those services that address the risk factors for crime and victimization.

A wide range of issues contribute to community safety and crime prevention. Whether it is school failure, family conflict, unstable neighbourhoods, anti-social values or any other risk factor (or absence of protective factors), there is a wide array of individual, family, community and institutional dimensions to the problem. The provincial government makes policy and legal frameworks in many fields, such as education, health, housing and child welfare, that, separately but especially together, can have an important influence on crime prevention. Because crime prevention affects such a wide range of ministries, it appears to us that there is no natural home for policy or programming that focuses on prevention.

.../2

Crime Prevention Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1
Tel. (613) 580-2424 ext. 28518
Fax: (613) 580-2593
CPO@ottawa.ca

Prévention du crime Ottawa
110, avenue Laurier Ouest
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 1J1
Tél. (613) 580-2424 poste 28518
Télé. (613) 580-2593
PCO@ottawa.ca

A strong *prevention* lens coupled with an integrated approach to planning and delivery of these services would optimize the effectiveness of a prevention approach. Furthermore, this would save money across ministries as research has shown over and over again that prevention is far more efficient than suppression and enforcement. Often these savings are “invisible” because the actions of one ministry creates savings in another.

Enclosed you will find Crime Prevention Ottawa’s submission to the Review of the Roots of Youth Violence in which our Board once again calls upon the Provincial government to create a Coordinating Body that would seek to coordinate planning and policy with regards to *preventing* crime and enhancing community safety across a wide spectrum of provincial ministries.

In this submission we propose that three key criteria for the success of such a coordinating body are: public accountability, oversight capacity with regards to related ministries and financial strength. Public accountability could be ensured by mechanisms such as an annual report to the legislature and an independent Board of Governors with a broad scope of expertise and experience. Oversight capacity would mean that there would be an ability to make recommendations with regards to the policies, programs and procedures of Ministries who are central to this issue such as the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Finally, there must be real financial resources attached to this coordinating body both in the ability to influence the spending decisions of other ministries and in dedicated resources.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Nancy Worsfold
Executive Director

cc. The Hon. Alvin Curling and the Hon. Roy McMurtry