Federal homelessness cuts:  
Bad now, worse to come

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Summer 2006 cuts: Homeless funding cuts in 7 communities (so far)
The federal government committed $134.8 million in funding in fiscal 2006 for its national homelessness program (called the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative). Most of the money is assigned to 10 large communities; with the rest shared among more than 50 other areas. To date, cuts to 2006 funding have been reported in:

- Peel (Ontario) - $144,000 cut
- Guelph (Ontario) - $22,000 cut
- London (Ontario) - $367,000 cut
- Windsor (Ontario) - $187,000 cut
- Ottawa (Ontario) - $1,000,000 cut
- Yellowknife (NWT) - $416,00 cut

The single biggest 2006 cut is $5,890,000 in Toronto. Federal officials committed $17.29 to Toronto for fiscal 2006. As of this week, the actual allocation is $11.4 million.

Winter 2006 cuts: Entire $134.8 million program to be shut down
The homelessness program, launched in 1999, will die in March of 2007 unless it is renewed by the federal government. If the funding is not renewed by the fall of 2006, then services across Canada will start to wind down programs and lay off staff. Hundreds of valuable services delivered by thousands of experienced staff people will be terminated. It will be a bleak winter for the homeless.

Services / programs funded by federal homelessness program
The National Homelessness Secretariat reports that in the first four and one-half years of the program (from December of 1999 to March of 2004):

- more than 9,000 beds in transitional housing were created
- 725 homeless shelters received funding for necessary upgrades, plus 403 food banks, soup kitchens and drop-in centres
- 49 federal properties were made available for the creation of 203 new homes
- 3,600 services (including housing placement, food and clothing distribution, transportation, information/referrals/follow-up, psychosocial services, emergency health and addiction services, education/life skills, training/employment, legal/financial services, identification acquisition) were funded
- more than 1,000 capacity activities (local research studies, training, project development and management support, enhanced service coordination) were supported, and
- 29 knowledge and research activities were completed at the national and regional levels.

Backgrounder prepared by:
Michael Shapcott, Senior Fellow, The Wellesley Institute
Tel.: 416-972-1010, x231 // Cell: 416-605-8316
www.wellesleyinstitute.com