

Relief, development and peace in the name of Christ

November 19th, 2015

Mr. Raj Saini
MP for Kitchener Centre
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

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Dear Mr. Saini,

On behalf of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario (MCCO), I would like to congratulate you on your recent successful election as a Member of Parliament. Mennonite Central Committee is the relief, development and peace organization of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches in Ontario and around the world. We at MCCO recognize and appreciate the honour as well as the challenges and opportunities that this position presents for you and your staff team. We wish you God's blessing as you fulfil your mandate and we commit to respond to any requests for information or assistance that you may have of our organization. As in the past, we desire to build and maintain positive working relationships with our members of Parliament as we work in partnership towards common goals.

Mennonite Central Committee is active across Ontario with 6 local programs, 12 Thrift Shops, 7 regional or program offices and our head office in Kitchener-Waterloo which includes our Material Resources workroom and warehouse for vital humanitarian relief supplies. We are active in your constituency area through our Ontario office, warehouse, Circle of Friends program, Circles of Support and Accountability, Thrift shop, and constituency church relationships.

As a non-profit and charitable organization that has worked in the province since the 1920's, we would be delighted to dialogue with you about some of the areas of priority for the federal government. Through our local Ontario programming, we address issues related to poverty alleviation (including living wage), restorative justice, indigenous rights, migration and refugee resettlement. Currently we receive federal funding for some of our restorative justice programs with offenders (Circles of Support and Accountability) and some of our work with newcomers (Low German settlement assistance). In all of our program areas we provide community building and social inclusion efforts that address the needs of marginalized and low income people. MCCO's work also includes our efforts to address basic needs by preparing and providing relief kits, canned meat, and handmade blankets to local and international places of need. All the MCCs in Canada also work with the federal government on refugee issues as MCC Canada is a private sponsorship agreement holder. MCC Canada also operates an Ottawa office which connects with the federal government on policy issues in Canada and globally.

We appreciate that the federal government has partnered with us in these and other ways, and we would welcome further engagement. Attached you will find more information about our organization and the programs we offer. We look forward to continuing to work together towards more giving, compassionate and welcoming communities.

Sincerely,

Rick Cober Bauman
Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee Ontario

CC: Jennifer Wiebe, Director, Mennonite Central Committee Ottawa Office