



5 Baintree East Street, Toronto, ON M3H 3X4 (416) 843-7403

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Families to Protest Delays to Autism Program

Parents of children with autism will protest near MPP Merrilee Fullerton's constituency office in Kanata on Saturday afternoon between 1:00 and 3:00 pm at the corner of Eagleson Rd and Micheal Cowpland Dr. The parents are angry about continual delays and dithering by the Ford government in fixing the autism services that they broke.

At Fullerton's first news conference as Minister of Children, Community and Social Services she could not state how many children were in the autism program or provide a date when the program will be functional. Fullerton's predecessor, MPP Todd Smith, had committed to having 600 children in Core Services by April, and 8,000 children moved off the waitlist and into the program by the end of 2021. This promise has no reasonable prospect of being kept given that at the end of July only 451 children had been enrolled in the program.

Children on the autism waitlist have been delayed nearly 3 years since the Ford government froze the waitlist in the Fall of 2018 and the outlook for them to receive services anytime soon is grim. The waitlist currently stands at 48,000, double its size from when Ford came to power. This is an absurdity given that the government's entire reason for creating the new program was that the waitlist was too long.

Enough is enough. Parents' frustration has turned to anger, they will be expressing that anger on Saturday afternoon.

Parents will be available for interviews and comment.

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For more information please contact:

Angela Brandt, President, 416-843-7403

Scott Corbett, Director, 613-617-0240

Kate Logue, Political Action Committee, 613-882-5285

#AutismDoesntEndAtFord

The Ontario Autism Coalition is a non-profit Ontario corporation dedicated to advocacy and political action on behalf of people with autism.

www.ontarioautismcoalition.com