

THE WEEKLY VOICE

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# Opposition Flays Move On Basic Income Plan

Continued from page 3

say how much the change was expected to cost. "This decision isn't about saving money, this decision is about fixing a broken system," she said.

The province will also wind down Ontario's basic income pilot project, which provided payments to 4,000 low-income people in communities including Hamilton, Brantford, Thunder Bay and Lindsay. Single participants receive up to \$16,989 a year while couples receive up to \$24,027, less 50 per cent of any earned income.

Asked how the government determined the pilot was ineffective before it was over, MacLeod simply said the program was "not doing what it's intended to do and it's quite expensive."

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said the government's plan was "appalling" and would push people who were already struggling into deeper poverty.

"Mr. Ford's attack on low-income people is disgusting," the Opposition leader said in a statement. "And cancelling the unfinished and promising basic income pilot project is a waste and a shame."



Ontario Premier Doug Ford is applauded by his PC Party members during Question Period at the Ontario Legislature- THE CANADIAN PRESS/Chris Young

The announcement was also panned by Green party Leader Mike Schreiner, who said assistance rates were too low even with the increase promised by the Liberals. "They (the Tories) certainly seem more interested in tearing things down than building things up," he said.

Advocates for basic income

initiatives said such programs are more effective in lifting people out of poverty than social assistance and require less bureaucracy to run.

Sheila Regehr, chair of the Basic Income Canada Network, said demographic groups such as seniors and parents with young children receive support that fol-

lows the basic income model, with better outcomes than social assistance. Basic income give people "the ability to have some security, to have some autonomy, to have the feeling that you're in control, that you are making decisions that are best for your life, not some bureaucracy that thinks it knows best," she said.

# Protecting The Integrity Of Immigration System

Continued from page 3

cation Centre (VAC) presence in the next 2 years. Canada has one of the largest VAC networks in comparison with other countries; more than 97% of applicants can access a VAC in their country of residence. By November 2019, Canada will have a network of at least 157 VACs in 105 countries. In addition, applicants living in the U.S. can use the extensive network of 135 U.S. Application Support Centers for biometrics collection. In advance of additional VACs opening this summer and fall, some Canadian embassies in Europe will offer interim biometrics collection ser-

vice points for applicants who have applied online or by mail and have received a Biometrics Instruction Letter. Please see: To support biometrics expansion, Canada is opening new Visa Application Centres and offering interim services at some missions.

More than 70 countries are using biometrics in immigration and border management. Canada's Migration 5 partners – the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, and New Zealand – have implemented biometric programs; so have the 26 Schengen states in Europe, and other countries around the world like Japan, South Africa and India.



Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, said: "Each year, Canada welcomes millions of visitors and accepts hundreds of thousands of students, workers and permanent

residents. Canadians understand the importance of immigration and travel to our country's economic and social well-being. By expanding our biometrics program, we facilitate entry into Canada and protect the integrity of our immigration system by quickly and accurately establishing a traveller's identity. A key feature of biometrics expansion is that temporary residents will only have to provide their biometrics once every 10 years".

Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, said: "Biometrics are a reliable and accurate tool to confirm the identity of legitimate travellers. As of 2018, biometrics-required travellers may have their fingerprints verified by border service officers during secondary examination at 57 ports of entry across Canada. This will help streamline the entry of genuine travellers, identify those who pose a security risk and stop known criminals from entering Canada".

- Biometrics:
  - are the measurement of unique physical characteristics
  - for Canadian immigration programs, biometrics include fingerprints and a photograph
  - have been collected from asylum claimants since 1993; visa-required temporary residents from 30 nationalities since December 2013; and overseas refugee resettlement claimants since November 2014.

- The scope of the expansion project includes 3 components:

- Collection of biometric information from all foreign nationals (excluding U.S. nationals) applying for a temporary resident visa, work permit, study permit, or temporary resident permit; and all PR applicants.

- Verification: Systematic fingerprint verification at major airports, and expanded fingerprint verification at additional ports of entry (airports and land borders), for travellers who have provided their biometrics.

- Information-sharing: Increased biometric-based information-sharing between Canada and the U.S. and automated biometric-based information-sharing with the other Migration 5 partners: Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

- Exemptions include:

- Canadian citizens, citizenship applicants (including passport applicants), or existing permanent residents

- visa-exempt nationals coming to Canada as tourists who hold a valid eTA

- children under the age of 14

- applicants over the age of 79

- heads of state and heads of government. Page 3 Pic: Rachmaninoff/Wiki.

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