



URGENT BULLETIN

MEMBERS CALL TO ACTION

At the 2014 provincial convention members in attendance approved resolution **ON.14.02 Feathers of Hope – Empowering First Nations Youth**.

The resolution resolves that “the members of the Ontario Provincial Council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, in the 67th annual convention assembled, urge the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth to initiate a meeting of the appropriate Provincial/Territorial and Federal Ministries, First Nations leaders, and First Nations youth to discuss and create a five-year strategy to implement the recommendations set out in the *Feathers of Hope* action plan.” The Office of the Provincial Advocate is important to the ongoing implementation of this initiative and to its role in giving a voice to all vulnerable children and youth in Ontario.

The recent announcement by the Ontario government to absorb the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (Child Advocate) into the Ministry of the Attorney General is concerning. The Child Advocate was appointed by an all-party panel of the legislature and is not a member of the Executive Council. This means the Child Advocate is independent whereas the Premier appoints the Minister of the Attorney General, a member of the Executive Council, and can dismiss him at any time.

In addition, the essential work of the Ministry of the Attorney General has a completely separate and important function including the Office of The Children’s Lawyer. Maintaining the Child Advocate includes independent monitoring of the activities of that office.

We urge members to participate in a rally at Queens Park on Thursday this week if able to do so. We learned of the rally during the government visit yesterday.

In addition, there is a petition coordinated by the opposition Critic, Children and Youth in circulation. Members are encouraged to seek signatures and forward the petitions as instructed within the document. You can gather signatures personally but are reminded that circulation of the petition within your parish requires the permission of your local Bishop and pastor.

You can see the details for Thursday on a Facebook event page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/254964748528576/>

A letter has been forwarded to the Premiere on behalf of all members; however, individual communication has the greater impact in compelling political change. Premier Doug Ford needs to hear from each and everyone of our members that eliminating the Office of the Provincial Advocate is not acceptable to us as Ontario citizens concerned for vulnerable youth and children. Send an email to the Premier: **Navigate** to <https://www.ontario.ca/page/premier> then select the button ‘Contact Us’ and be sure to select yes where it asks if you require a response

Send me a message at cwlrresolutions@tbaytel.net to let me know if you receive a response. I will advise of the responses received in a future directive.