



February 13, 2013

Toronto City Councillors  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N1

**Re: Community Development and Recreation Committee Recommendations on Undocumented Workers in Toronto, Motion 18.5**

Dear Councillor;

I am writing on behalf of Health Providers Against Poverty, a group of physicians, nurses, and students committed to improving the health of individuals who live in poverty. We ally with other community organizations to promote policy that recognizes social factors as the key determinants of health of individuals living in Ontario.

Today, we join Toronto-based community groups and the Solidarity City Network in supporting the *Access Not Fear Campaign* in calling for improved access to services for undocumented workers in our city.

As you know, the Community Development and Recreation Committee recently adopted motion 18.5, which commits the City of Toronto to providing services for undocumented workers, as well as advocating on behalf of undocumented workers at the provincial and federal levels.

As reported by York University Professor Luin Goldring, there are an estimated 200,000 workers residing in Toronto without legal authorization to work. These individuals face many challenges including denial of services offered to other Torontonians, such as health services, housing, and social support. Individuals without legal status are also particularly likely to have to accept work for low wages, under poor and unsafe work conditions. This poses a serious threat to their mental and physical health. We believe that increased access to city services will mitigate the health impact of living as undocumented members of the community and lessen health risks for those living in poverty.

Undocumented workers abide by our laws, pay taxes, and make significant contributions to our community. They perform jobs that have benefited many of us, without being recognized for the difficult working conditions experienced. Yet, undocumented workers are not afforded the same access to health and social services as those with legal status. This is deeply unjust and tarnishes Toronto's historical reputation as a welcoming city.

Beyond the impacts on individuals, it seems critical for the City to review the contributions made by undocumented workers to our economy and within our communities. We must reflect on the economic and social consequences of excluding these valuable members of our society from the services provided to other Torontonians.

We look forward to an opportunity for consultation on this issue, and for Toronto to defend the human rights of residents in this city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Dorman".

Katie Dorman

For the Steering Committee of  
Health Providers Against Poverty