

Postcards of hope ask for poverty reduction plan

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Hamilton anti-poverty representatives hope to bombard a cabinet minister with postcards to draw attention to the province's poor.

The Hamilton Working Group on Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy plans to hand-deliver 5,000 postcards to Deb Matthews, the provincial Minister of Children and Youth Services and the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, at Queen's Park on Monday. The postcards, each signed by a community member, urge Matthews to set a specific target to reduce poverty.

The project is part of the 25 in 5 poverty reduction strategy, which urges the province to reduce overall poverty by 25 per cent in five years and 50 per cent by 2018.

The artwork on the postcard is a photograph of a quilt designed by residents at the Arrell Youth Centre, a secure custody facility in Hamilton that houses youth who have broken the law.

The quilt is divided into two parts: the left side, called "Poverty is...", depicts dark appliques of a wilted flower and storm clouds.

The right side, called "Hope is...", is filled with hearts, a peace sign, and even a box of macaroni and cheese.

"This thing has gone way beyond what we ever hoped for it," said Angelo Mosca Jr., program co-ordinator at the Arrell Youth Centre.

The quilt will be displayed at Queen's Park when the group delivers the postcards, said Dierdre Pike of the social planning council.

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