



**For immediate release**

**November 4, 2015**

## **Family Caregiver Day in Ontario**

**Ontario Caregiver Coalition** - The Ontario Caregiver Coalition (OCC) is pleased to announce that the Ontario NDP Health Critic France Gelinias is introducing a bill to increase recognition and awareness of family caregivers by proclaiming the first Tuesday of every April as Family Caregiver Day. The first Tuesday of April was selected to align with the motion of the Parliament of Canada.

Over 2.6 million Ontarians (1 in 4 over the age of 15) are caregivers to a family member, a friend or a neighbor. These caregivers devote countless hours of unpaid care to those who are most in need and their efforts, often unrecognized, form the backbone of our health care system.

“Many of us do not identify ourselves as caregivers,” says Lisa Levin, Chair of OCC. We think that caring for and assisting family members, friends and neighbours when they are ill, fail or in need of help is simply our moral obligation. But, sometimes, in today’s increasingly strained health care system, the help we extend to others can involve so many demands on us that it impacts our own physical and emotional health. We want family caregivers to recognize the important role they play and feel comfortable to reach out and ask for assistance when needed. The Ontario Caregiver Coalition is very grateful to the NDP and France Gelinias for introducing the *Family Caregiver Day Act*. We hope and trust

that this will bring deserved attention to the valuable contributions of Ontario's many caregivers of all ages and will lead to a greater awareness and understanding of their need for recognition and support."

The bill will be introduced for first reading at approximately 3:15 p.m. Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup> in the Ontario Legislature.

Please see attached for additional quotes from members of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition.

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**Media contacts:** Lisa Levin, Chair, OCC, 647-545-6736 or Joanne Bertrand, OCC Coordinator, 416-500-5308