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The Honourable Dr. Marie Bountrogianni
Minster of Children and Youth Services
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March 9, 2005

As the Executive Director of the Foster Care Council of Canada and as a survivor of sixteen years in foster care who suffered abuse while under the government's care, I wanted to congratulate you on behalf of all Children in foster care today for mentioning that your Ministry will keep its commitment to ensuring that the Ontario Child Advocates office must *"truly be free of political influence and must be independent and have the same powers as the Auditor General and an ombudsman"*.

This is a much needed step in the right direction as you are already aware of the fact that our previous Government attempted to muzzle the Ontario Advocates office and render them ineffective by not ensuring they had the required funding to print posters for the purpose of educating children and youth in care of their right to access the Child Advocates office when they are being abused, neglected or denied their rights while in the care of the Government.

Many reports have recommended the total independence of the Child Advocates office from the influence of Government, and it is good to hear you acting on those recommendations today.

I am also looking forward to hearing the results of your year long review of the Child and Family Services Act and hope to see them released to the public on your Ministry's web site.

Sincerely,
John Dunn
Executive Director
The Foster Care Council of Canada