

For Immediate Release  
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## **IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES**

*Partnership Project Means that More People Can Enjoy a Trip to the Movies*

OTTAWA – The McGuinty government, Cineplex Entertainment and the Canadian Standards Association are working together to provide better service for people with disabilities when they go to the movies, Madeleine Meilleur, Minister Responsible for Ontarians with Disabilities, announced today.

“We’re on the side of Ontario businesses. Better accessibility benefits all businesses and individuals with disabilities,” said Meilleur. “It means more customers, a larger pool of potential employees and long-term business growth. Our goal is to make Ontario an accessible province by 2025, but businesses like Cineplex Entertainment are proving to us that improved accessibility is something we can begin right now.”

Meilleur joined Pat Marshall, Cineplex Entertainment’s Vice President of Communications and Investors Relations today to celebrate the results of Cineplex Entertainment’s participation in the Building Champions program. Through this program, the Canadian Standards Association worked with seven “champion” businesses and organizations to develop and test a voluntary customer service standard for businesses to use when serving customers with disabilities.

As part of the program, Cineplex Entertainment trained employees on how to better serve customers with a disability. The training included such diverse elements as:

- How best to guide a person with a visual impairment
- Simple ways to make the premises more accessible for people with physical disabilities
- How to best serve someone with a mental health illness.

“This program provided our staff with tremendous insight regarding the needs of people with disabilities,” said Marshall. “We employ thousands of teens across the country and working in our theatres is often their first job. I believe the Building Champions program has instilled greater awareness, compassion and understanding of their unique needs that will stay with our staff long after they leave our employ.”

The Canadian Standard Association's Building Champions initiative is one of the innovative projects funded by the Ontario government under the EnAbling Change Partnership program. It is just one of the ways in which the McGuinty government is working to break down barriers to help people with disabilities participate more fully in Ontario's communities. Since 2003, the government has:

- Provided \$28.2 million to help universities and colleges provide services for students with disabilities to help them succeed.
- Improved the Disabled Parking Permit program – now called the Accessible Parking Permit program
- Committed nearly \$276 million in new funding to strengthen community supports for adults with a developmental disability.

Contacts:

Carole Drouin  
Minister's Office  
416-325-5219

Paul Doig  
Communications and Marketing Branch  
416-325-5187

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