
Dear _____ (personalized for the 7 York Region MPPs)

Current social assistance rates threaten people's health and dignity. Even the basics of food and shelter are out of reach for citizens on Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program. For example, in the York Region Food Network document "Hunger in the Midst of Prosperity 2010", housing costs are added to the cost of a Nutritious Food Basket and compared to social assistance rates. This comparison demonstrates that little to nothing remains to cover other basic costs of living. People in our province should not have to choose between paying the rent or eating nutritious food.

I ask you to immediately introduce a \$100 per month Healthy Food Supplement for all adults on social assistance as a first step towards meeting basic needs. I understand that the provincial government will be reviewing the social assistance system over the next eighteen months. Low income Ontarians cannot wait for that review. As well, the federal and provincial governments cannot continue to afford poverty's estimated price tag of \$10.4 to 13.1 billion per year, as reported by the Ontario Association of Food Banks.

The \$100 per month is just the first step. There needs to be a clear process for setting social assistance rates – rates that are based on, and keep pace with, the real costs of living a healthy and dignified life in Ontario.

I look forward to hearing in the media that you have publicly supported the \$100 per month Healthy Food Supplement.

Sincerely

Cc. Hon. Madeleine Meilleur, Hon. Laurel Broten, Hon. Dwight Duncan, Premier McGuinty.