



Jan 5, 2018

Ministry of Community and Social Services
80 Grosvenor St - Hepburn Block - 6th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1E9

Dear Minister Jaczek,

We are writing on behalf of the Nipissing Area Food Roundtable to provide feedback on the recently released report “Income Security: A Roadmap for Change”.

The Nipissing Area Food Roundtable is a collaborative of community stakeholders and food champions, working to create a healthy and sustainable food system for the Nipissing area. Our group was formed to work toward achieving the vision of a healthy, sustainable food system that is outlined in the [Nipissing Area Food Charter](#).

The Nipissing Area Food Charter highlights social equity as a key value, and includes a statement of support related to recognizing adequate income is needed to ensure dignified and secure access to food. There is an urgent need to improve the income security system in Ontario, because poverty is the root cause of food insecurity. Social assistance recipients are at great risk for being food insecure. [Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014](#) states that 64% of households receiving social assistance experience food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined as inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints, which points to income as the root of the problem. Our vision is to create a healthy and sustainable food system in our district, and in order for this to be achieved, adequate incomes are required.

On November 30, 2017, our group hosted an event called [Hungry for Change: Food Insecurity Forum](#). About 60 community members from various organizations attended and there was much discussion related to why an income solution is required to truly address food insecurity. Our event included a panel of local speakers who shared stories and perspectives of food insecurity from a local perspective as well as two guest speakers involved with food insecurity research across the province. Based on the interest and momentum on this issue leading up to and after our event, it is clear that our community recognizes the need for increased incomes to truly address food insecurity.

“Income Security: A Roadmap for Change” is the first report in 30 years that recommends major investments and improvements for programs that affect the lives of low-income people in Ontario. It reflects a fundamentally different approach to supports and services that puts people – and their needs and rights – at the centre of the system.



Our organization supports the vision, principles and recommendations of the Roadmap. However, the 10 year implementation period proposed within the report is too long. Please consider adopting a shorter timeline to reflect the urgency required to increase incomes in Ontario for people receiving social assistance.

Thank you for taking the time to review our letter and we will look forward to hearing the next steps for improved income security in Ontario.

Sincerely,

The Nipissing Area Food Roundtable, Social Equity Subgroup