

Nipissing Area Food Roundtable: We're Voting for Food event on April 27, 2018

Platform Summary from MPP candidate Stephen Glass, Liberal party:

- I'd like to thank the Nipissing Area Food Roundtable for organizing this event and offering my fellow candidates and I the opportunity to speak to you about our party's respective platforms that address food insecurity.
- I'd like to right off the bat, urge you to vote. I don't care who you vote for. I hope my remarks will illustrate that your vote makes a difference. Your vote makes you a shareholder in the future government and what they do.
- There are over a million Minimum wage earners in Ontario. As you know the Liberal government raised minimum wage from \$11.60 to \$14/hour – a 20% increase. For a full time employee that's almost an extra \$5000 per year. Next year is another commitment to another \$2000 per year on a one dollar an hour increase.
- Another important measure is eliminating the incentives to hire part time or contract workers by making sure that equal pay is for equal work.
- The basic income pilot is going in Brant County, Lyndsay, Hamilton, Brantford and Thunder Bay. This is a well-researched, well supported initiative.
- But it's not just about income, it's about essential expenses. So already children up to the age of 25 now don't have to make the choice between their medications and food. Seniors 75 years and older will receive \$750 to stay in their home. The ability to stay in your home, that's \$750 they don't have to cough up.
- The average family of 4 will save \$700 each year in dental and drug costs.
- The barriers to employment are being reduced through social assistance programs being streamlined.
- Parents will save \$17,000 for one child under the free preschool initiative.
- Rent controls and social housing initiatives help to keep the price of housing affordable.
- Thanks to the advocacy of the Ontario government to the federal government, seniors can look forward to a 30% higher Canada pension plan, because hunger among seniors can also be a danger.
- I have to skip over a ton of initiatives that the Liberal Ontario government have brought in to fight food insecurity, but let me say this: the people of Nipissing are not selfish people who only think about climbing the ladder of personal success. We are a community that wants everyone to be safe, with a roof over their head and food in their stomach. We are an inclusive community that believes we don't turn our back on anyone, we don't leave anyone behind. We don't kick people when they're down. We believe no one should be left behind. It's not really a question of whether we can afford to do these things, the cost of food insecurity ripples through generations, it's a deficit every bit as real as a budget deficit; an IOU that extorts incredible costs in future life. We can afford to do this. You wouldn't know it listening to our chronic critics, but Ontario has the best economy in all of the G7, the lowest unemployment rate at 5.5% in 20 years, and we created 500 full time jobs every day in 2017.
- I hope you get out and vote for food security.