(insert date)

(insert MPP name and address)

Dear (insert MPP name),

The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit has released the [2019 Cost of Healthy Eating](https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/community-data-reports/resources/Health-behaviours/Report-Cost-of-Healthy-Eating-2019.pdf) report. Yet again, the report shows that accessing nutritious, adequate and culturally appropriate food may not be possible for those in our community living with low incomes.

Food insecurity is defined as insecure or inadequate access to food due to financial constraints, or not having enough money to buy healthy food. Approximately 1 in 7 households in our area experience food insecurity. Food insecurity greatly impacts health and wellbeing. It is associated with higher rates of chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, mental health concerns such as depression and anxiety. As a result, food insecure results in higher health care use.

Based on the Cost of Healthy Eating report and [income scenarios](https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/health-topics/resources/Healthy-eating/2019-Income-Scenarios.pdf), it is clear that social assistance rates are inadequate. A **family of four** needs to spend **$936 on food** each month. After food and housing costs, a family of four on social assistance is left with only $529.68 for heat, hydro, telephone, child care, transportation, hygiene costs, clothing, out of pocket health costs and all other expenses. An **individual** on social assistance having to spend $600 on rent and **$314.10** on food is in debt by **$76.10** a month before paying for any other basic needs. Clearly, social assistance rates need to be raised, indexed to inflation and reflective of the costs of living in the Nipissing District.

However, food insecurity is not just a concern for households relying on social assistance. Of the 12% of Ontario households who struggle to put food on the table, 59% of these households are in the workforce. This shows that there is a lack of high paying, quality jobs with full time hours.

(add additional information and/or personal context)

Thank you for your consideration and attention to the important matter of food insecurity in our district and across Ontario.

Sincerely,