



**Thunder Bay District
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March 29, 2006

The Hon. Sandra Pupatello
Minister of Community and Social Services
Hepburn Block
6th flr, 80 Grosvenor St
TORONTO ON M7A 1E9

Dear Ms. Pupatello:

**re: Meeting Food Costs for All Low Income and Social Assistance
Recipients
TBDHU Resolution 06-29**

At its Regular Meeting of March 21, 2006, the Thunder Bay District Board of Health endorsed Resolution 06-29, urging the Ontario Government to review the adequacy of Ontario Works and Disability Support Program rates from a health perspective, and to advocate that allowances for basic needs and shelter be based on actual current representative costs.

The Thunder Bay District Board of Health respectfully requests your support of, and action on this resolution:

"WHEREAS the cost of eating well in the District of Thunder Bay is consistently an average of \$60 per month higher than the provincial average for a reference family of four and continues to increase, with the largest rise in one year occurring between 2004 and 2005;

AND WHEREAS current social assistance and minimum wage rates create a significant barrier to accessing adequate nutrition in order to support health and well-being;

AND WHEREAS adequate nutrition is essential for proper growth and development as well as a significant factor in preventing many chronic diseases;

AND WHEREAS barriers to food access include both economic and physical factors such as higher food prices, poor selection of healthy foods, and long distances to food retail outlets;

AND WHEREAS people with low incomes are the most vulnerable to poor health;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Thunder Bay District Board of Health support aLPHa Resolution No. A05-18 that "the Government of Ontario be further urged to review the adequacy of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates from a health perspective and that allowances for basic needs and shelter be based on actual current representative costs" and that "the Government of Ontario be urged to review the current minimum wage from a health perspective and establish a living wage for all Ontario workers";

AND FURTHER THAT the Thunder Bay District Board of Health endorse the recommendation of November 29, 2005 made by the Toronto Board of Health to the Government of Ontario "that all low income and social assistance recipients get an increase for food in addition to the special diet requirements related to any medical condition";

AND FURTHER THAT the Thunder Bay Board of Health urge the Ontario Minister of Community and Social Services to take hunger issues into consideration, if and when dealing with any amendments proposed to the Special Diet Allowance;

AND FURTHER THAT copies of the letter be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Minister of Health Promotion, the Minister of Children and Youth Services, local members of the Provincial Parliament, the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA), the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa), Ontario Boards of Health, the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB), and member municipalities for their support and action.

Sincerely,



Connie Bryson, Chair
Thunder Bay District Board of Health

copy: see following page

copy: The Hon. D. McGuinty, Premier of Ontario
Dr. S. Basrur, Chief Medical Officer of Health
The Hon. G. Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
The Hon. J. Watson, Minister of Health Promotion
The Hon. M. A. Chambers, Minister of Children and Youth Services
Mr. M. Gravelle, MPP, Thunder Bay - Superior North
Mr. B. Mauro, MPP, Thunder Bay – Atikokan
Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA)
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA)
Ontario Boards of Health
Member Municipalities
Thunder Bay District Social Service Administration Board (DSSAB)