

KINGSTON CITY COUNCIL DECLARES FOOD INSECURITY AN EMERGENCY IN KINGSTON

Moved by: Councillor Tozzo

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Ridge

Whereas food insecurity is defined as the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints, a marker of pervasive material deprivation (poverty), and posing a serious public health problem because of its association with higher rates of numerous diseases and chronic health conditions and a higher risk of early death; and

Whereas chronic stressors like disability, precarious work, and/or the cost-of-living crisis, and acute shocks like COVID-19, illness or eviction, make it more difficult to afford life's basic needs and live free from poverty; and

Whereas current social assistance rates are woefully inadequate, making it impossible to afford a healthy diet; and

Whereas KFL&A Public Health estimates that about 1 in 3 households are food insecure; and

Whereas the City of Kingston has committed to addressing food insecurity through initiatives such as financial support for the expansion of a new building for the St. Vincent de Paul Society, partnering with Lionhearts Inc.'s Fresh Food Market Pop-Ups, and establishing a Fines for Food pilot program; and

Whereas Ontario nonprofits, including food banks, are collectively experiencing stagnant and declining resources amidst climbing demand, and increased reserve use;

Therefore Be It Resolved That Kingston City Council declare food insecurity an emergency in Kingston; and

That Council request the Provincial Government immediately increase its base funding to existing school food programs and increase its financial commitment to enable the expansion of school food programs to additional schools to build a universal school food program; and

That Council request the Provincial Government immediately raise social assistance rates to meet life's basic needs; and

That Council request the Provincial and Federal Governments act to address the causes of food insecurity by establishing a Guaranteed Liveable Basic Income; and

That Council request that the Provincial and Federal Governments include the reduction of food insecurity as a component of all appropriate government policies; and

That Council request that all major federal and provincial political parties address food insecurity as a component of their respective party platforms; and

That a copy of this motion be shared with The Right Honorable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada, the Honorable M.P.P. Doug Ford Premier of Ontario, M.P. Mark Gerretsen, Kingston and the Islands, M.P. Scott Reid, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, M.P.P. Ted Hsu, Kingston & the Islands, M.P.P. John Jordan, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, M.P. Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, M.P. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, M.P. Yves-Francois Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois, M.P. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada, M.P.P. Marit Stiles, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario, Bonnie Crombie, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, M.P.P. Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Public School Boards Association, and the Canadian School Boards Association.