



Dear Finance and Economic Affairs Committee,

My name is Kory Earle, I am the Past-President of People First of Ontario, let me just say that we are honored to be here. People First of Ontario is the voice of people labelled with an intellectual disability, we are an independent organization and all our members have a disability. We are the left behind of the left behind! Our members are way below the poverty line and face struggles each and everyday. We have hundreds of members across this Province!

We have a few important asks that should be added in the Budget, the asks will help with some of the Quality of Life that people so deserve, I will remind each of you so many face struggles each day and many are becoming homeless, it's time we start helping the most Vulnerable People in the Province of Ontario.

We have heard loud and clear from our members, here is some suggestions that should be added in the 2020 Budget and will help so many

Ontario Disability Support Program

We are asking that Ontario Disability be raised to at least of the cost of living, or more, at least by 2.5 percent. ODSP is the only income some people have as working is not always an option for people, as discrimination plays a part.

Recommendations

ODSP be raised to the cost of living or more, or at least by 2.5%. People currently live below the poverty line and this has to change for the most vulnerable people who are continually left behind.

Passport:

This is an opportunity for so many to hire their own support workers, not everyone wants to go through a through a service delivery system, also this provides many opportunities to do recreation etc. right now the Minimum funding is \$5000 per person. Passport needs to continue, as it provides choices and many opportunities, this is a great program, people are concerned that it maybe cut.

Recommendations: That Passport funding be increased to \$10,000 minimum per person annually and that people continue to receive passport.

Affordable Housing

We are in desperate need of affordable housing in Ontario, it is hard to find a cheap home, look at Carleton Place, Ottawa, Huntsville, Toronto, Kenora, the cost is well over \$1000.00 per month for 1 Bedroom or Batchelor, this is for a decent home, so many rents are plus utilities.

Recommendations: We are asking that more affordable housing be available and that the landlords don't do a raise every year. As well that more housing subsidies be available and transferable for all.

Mental Health

This is such an important issue, so many have indicated that they don't want to live anymore, I can get it, I almost committed suicide, having that support person and one on one counselling is so important. People need it now, we have had so many members feeling depressed, not many have family, or even friends, they are put on a waiting list or asked to participate in a group, people want one on one! counselling, I have so much respect for Mental Health Services

Recommendations: That Mental Health Services be increased and that people have one on one Counselling and that counselling services be available in all communities across Ontario. We know there are communities that have limited mental health services that are available such as Huntsville Ontario.

Definition of Disability

Our members are concerned that the definition will change, it will impact so many, which may lead to less services.

Recommendations: That the Definition of Disability be kept the same and not CHANGED!

It's time that the most Vulnerable People have a chance in life, Cuts to the service is not okay, it's time we invest. It is our hope that this Government will listen and make the right decisions!

We need to see investments and not cuts, the most Vulnerable People's lives hang in the balance, they are worried about how they are going to make it on a day to day basis.

We want to work with this Government, we have so many solutions and ideas that would help and save the taxpayer's money.

Please feel free to contact me at 613 451-0051 or e-mail koryearle@hotmail.com

Yours Truly

Kory Earle

Past-President of People of People First of Ontario

