

RAISE the RATES CAMPAIGN!



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To Members of Ontario Provincial Parliament,

We are visiting your office today as part of a Province-Wide Raise the Rates Week of Action from October 12th – 20th. For too many years, people living on social assistance have been forced to live in sub-poverty conditions, unable to afford a place to live and to put food on the table. In 1995, the Mike Harris government cut Ontario Works by 21.6% and froze Disability. Since the Liberals came in to power, not only have they failed to reverse the Harris cuts and keep up with inflation, but have also implemented their own devastating cuts to benefits such as the Special Diet Allowance and Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit. The reality is that today, welfare rates are at least 55% below where they should be. We also know that this government is moving towards a merger of Ontario Works with Ontario Disability Support Program that would result in a vicious cut to not only income but also the rights of those with disabilities.

We are tired of empty promises about poverty reduction - poor people in this province have joined with allies to take action across Ontario this week.

We call on you today to:

- Stop the attack on ODSP (Disability) benefits: commit to no merger of programs
- Restore Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit
- Raise the Rates of Social Assistance 55%
- Raise the Minimum Wage to \$14 Now

Sincerely,