



December 2, 2019

Carol Hughes, MP Algoma/Manitoulin/Kapusksing
289-A Hillside Drive S.
Elliot Lake, ON
P5A 1N7

AND

Michael Mantha, MPP Algoma-Manitoulin at Province of Ontario
18 Mary Walk
Elliot Lake, ON
P5A 2A1

Dear Mr. Mantha and Ms. Hughes,

Further to our meeting with Carol Hughes on Nov 28, we are requesting your assistance in assuring that the Minister is briefed on our concerns. As you are aware, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board passed a resolution on November 28, 2019 to discuss with you the Direct Shelter Subsidy (DSS) program and its advantages as opposed to accepting the Canada-Ontario Portable Housing Benefit (PHB) program.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been administering the DSS program for over 10 years. The attached report shows the benefits of our program and further indicates that the needs in our community are being met in achieving affordable housing for our clients in the district.

The government's vision of a Canada-Ontario Portable Housing Benefit is associated with two overarching outcomes: decreasing the number of people who are homeless; and increasing the number of families and individuals achieving housing stability. The DSS program has proven to be very successful in ensuring clients have the ability to pay all of their shelter expenses and ensure all of their basic needs are covered. Once their basic needs are taken care of, they can focus other priorities such family, education, skills training and employment in order to become financially independent.

The province's Portable Housing Benefit is a cookie cutter approach and would not work in our district. If we apply the current Portable Housing Benefit calculation, as designed in Ontario, **196 or 70% of our singles and families receiving Direct Shelter Subsidy would not qualify.**

Based on the statistics in the attached report, the Direct Shelter Subsidy program is providing more benefits to our singles and families as it shows that:

- our Direct Shelter Subsidy includes all shelter expenses (rent, heat, hydro etc...) therefore all expenses are considered when determining eligibility;
- **the savings to the province based on 120 clients exiting social assistance is in excess of 1 Million dollars a year;**
- more people will have more access to housing;
- reduces the overall cost factor by eliminating the need for ongoing operating dollars that are a requirement of having bricks and mortar.

Ms. Hughes, we thank you for meeting with us and we look forward to working with you and Michael Mantha as you raise our concerns to the of Federal and Provincial parliament.

Thank you for your commitment, and we look forward to receiving a response from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Les Gamble".

Les Gamble
Board Chair

Encl. Board Resolution
Issue Report