



March 16, 2021

Re: Bill C-273- A National Strategy for Guaranteed Basic Income

Dear Mayor Letham,

We are writing to you in support of Bill C-273, an Act to establish a national strategy for a guaranteed basic income in Canada.

We are writing on behalf of the Food Security Working Group of the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition, a group bringing together representatives from agencies in social services, health care, and individuals committed to working with all levels of government to address food insecurity. Our advocacy is grounded in research and evidence-based policy, guided by the positions espoused by organizations such as the World Health Organization, PROOF-Food Insecurity and Policy Research, Universal Basic Income (UBI) Works, Ontario Dietitians in Public Health, and Food Secure Canada. The fundamental principle guiding our work is that household food insecurity (HFI) is not a food availability problem; it is rooted in inadequate and insecure income.

**This problem has unquestionably become worse with the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The number of Canadians who did not have enough money to put food on their tables in 2017-2018 is estimated to be 4.4 million (12.7% of households) – higher than any previous national estimate<sup>1</sup>. In addition to deteriorated circumstances for many people, now even more Canadians are experiencing HFI resulting from widespread work stoppages and job losses associated with the pandemic.

We urge you and City of Kawartha Lakes Council to support Bill C-273 by writing a letter of support to our local MP, Jamie Schmale and Federal Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland. As described by UBI works “the Act would provide much-needed answers about how a guaranteed Basic Income could work in partnership with the provinces; what effect it would have on the efficiency of government; how it could support entrepreneurship and job creation in a new economy; how it would impact labour market participation and civic action; and how it would impact recipients and their communities at large.

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<sup>1</sup> Tarasuk V, Mitchell A. Household food insecurity in Canada, 2017-18. Toronto, ON: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF); 2020 [cited 2020 April 25]. Available from: <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>.

The economic recovery from COVID-19 may be the most asymmetric in history, with the bottom 60% of Canadians representing the bulk of lost income, while higher-income workers have largely already recovered. Meanwhile, 4 in 10 recent business closures and layoffs may be permanent. Many will never recover their income, as the adoption of job-displacing technology continues to accelerate. The time to look at how to improve our social safety net in order to better serve Canadians is now.

A national Basic Income in Canada could grow our economy more than it costs, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs, and supporting Canadian businesses, while ending poverty and growing the middle class. Bill C-273 sets out a path for our government to make this a reality.”<sup>2</sup>

We have signed this petition along with our other partners at <https://UBIWorks.ca/basicincomebill>.

Please support Bill C-273. The insight it would provide will enable us to build a more resilient Canadian economy that leaves us all better off.

Sincerely,



Aisha Malik, RD  
Chair, Food Security Working Group



Heather Kirby  
Chair, Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition

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<sup>2</sup> [Canada's First Basic Income Bill C-273 - Add Your Voice and Tell Your MP to Support the Bill Today \(ubiworks.ca\)](https://ubiworks.ca)