



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 4.1

Request for Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee Consideration		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least 5 working days prior to the meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/> Added Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least one day prior to meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor
Date of Meeting: July 20, 2017		
Subject: Correspondence from Basic Income Nova Scotia dated May 18, 2017		
Motion for Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee to Consider: That the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee refer the correspondence from Basic Income Nova Scotia dated May 18, 2017 to staff for a report regarding the requests from Basic Income Nova Scotia.		
Reason: To gain further information with respect to Basic Income.		
Outcome Sought: Staff response to the correspondence dated May 18, 2017 from Basic Income Nova Scotia.		
<i>Councillor Lindell Smith</i>	<i>District 8</i>	



*Basic Income
Nova Scotia*

May 18, 2017

Liam MacSween
Legislative Assistant
Halifax City Council

Dear Mr. MacSween,

We are writing to urge the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) to actively support the institution of a Basic Income in Nova Scotia. Specifically, we request that the City Council of HRM: 1. Issue a proclamation, pass a resolution (similar to that passed by the City Council in Kingston Ontario and subsequently by more than 58 municipalities in Ontario), or in some other way publicly declare support for instituting a Basic Income in Nova Scotia; 2. Encourage other municipalities throughout Nova Scotia to do the same; and 3. Indicate publicly that the HRM City Council is willing to co-fund a feasibility study to determine how best to implement a Basic Income in Nova Scotia, subject to a similar commitment from the Provincial and Federal governments.

While the HRM and other municipalities in Nova Scotia are not responsible for funding programs that directly alleviate poverty and its impacts, we know that the City Council and the Mayor of the HRM are acutely aware of the disastrous effects of poverty on the citizens of HRM. The HRM City Council's recent unanimous decision to partner with the United Way on a poverty strategy is a testament to its commitment to doing what it can to better the lives of people with inadequate incomes. We feel that the above initiatives would be in keeping with the attested poverty strategy and could be included as part of that strategy.

Poverty is a significant problem throughout Canada and the HRM is no exception. In 1989 the House of Commons of Canada passed a resolution to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000. Today the level of child poverty in Canada is higher, not lower, than it was in 1989. Recently, the overall rate of child poverty in Nova Scotia was estimated to be 22.5%, with the poverty levels in the HRM itself ranging from a high of 28.2% in Halifax to a low of 5% in Hammonds Plains (Frank, 2016). Of course, not only children live in poverty. In 2013, the overall poverty rate in Nova Scotia was estimated to be 14.6% (LIM after tax; Stats Canada, 2015).

The conventional approach to combatting poverty has been to provide a meager social assistance payment, set at a low enough level to compel people to find jobs. The problem is that work is becoming increasingly precarious. Full-time, permanent, well-paid positions are becoming less available throughout Canada. With the increasing precarity of work, many adults are under- or unemployed and have little to no job security (Lewchuk et al., 2015). People in precarious jobs tend to have trouble thinking far into the future, focused as they are on whether or not the next paycheck will cover their

expenses. Precarious work aside, many other people are unable to earn an adequate income through employment anyway, due to, for example, mental or physical illness or disability, or care responsibilities.

In this employment context in Nova Scotia and in Canada in general, our current social assistance programs fail to lift individuals out of poverty. Indeed, social assistance levels in Nova Scotia provided only a shocking 42.1% of the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) level for a single employable person and 72% of LICO for a couple with two children (Tweddle et al., 2015). LICO is the level of income estimated to be necessary to meet the basic needs of individuals or families such as housing, clothing, and food.

The negative impacts of poverty are well understood. The poorer you are, the more likely you will experience mental or physical illness. The Canadian Medical Association currently estimates that 50% of health problems are caused by the social determinants of health. People who live in poverty are more likely to live in unsafe or inadequate housing or be homeless, to be exposed to environmental toxins, to live with a disability, to experience food insecurity and inadequate nutrition, to have less education, to be under or unemployed, and to be socially excluded (Raphael, 2009). Children's physical, social and cognitive development can also be deleteriously affected (Bornstein & Bradley, 2003).

In a society as wealthy as ours, we, the members of Basic Income Nova Scotia, believe that no child or adult should live in poverty. Further, we believe the best solution to poverty and the increasing precarity of work is to ensure that all people have a Basic Income. A Basic Income is an income adequate to meet their basic needs and other resources that facilitate social engagement such as travel and communication. A Basic Income should lift a person out of poverty and ensure that they have the ability to participate as a full citizen in society and to live with dignity and security, regardless of their status in the labour market. A Basic Income would not replace our publicly funded health care system, disability support payments, or employment insurance (which is already funded entirely by employers and workers), although it might replace other systems of support currently provided such as social assistance and old-age security. A Basic Income can and should be financially viable.

Studies have already documented the positive impacts of a Basic Income including reduced health care costs and the flexibility to choose to stay at home and care for children, to pursue self-employment, and to stay in school or seek further educational opportunities (Forget, 2011; 2013; Glewwe & Kassouf, 2012; Reynolds, 2015). Across the world, charities and development aid organizations are reorienting their efforts toward the simple premise that giving people money, with no strings attached, is actually a much more effective and sustainable solution to poverty than payments or programs with more specific targets. Furthermore, the introduction of a Basic Income in Nova Scotia will stimulate urban and rural economies, thus benefitting all Nova Scotians.

In conclusion, given the degree of poverty that exists in Nova Scotia and throughout Canada and the precarity of work for many people, we urgently call on the Mayor and City Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality to take steps to alleviate the misery these circumstances cause by supporting a Basic Income in the ways indicated.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth (Mandy) Kay-Raining Bird, Karen Foster, Pierre Stevens, Jennifer Brady, Wayne MacNaughton, Jennifer Parker, Lina Yaeger
Members, Basic Income Nova Scotia

Whereas the 2011 National Household Survey confirmed that 14.9% of the population live in low income circumstances, a percentage exceeded in the Province of Nova Scotia where the percentage of the population living in poverty has been documented to be 15.3% and matched in Halifax where the percentage of the population living in poverty has been documented to be 14.2%; and

Whereas income insecurity and inequality continue to increase as a result of precarious employment; and

Whereas existing income security programs have not proved sufficient to ensure adequate, secure income for all; and

Whereas insufficient income, income insecurity and inequality have well-established, strong relationships to a range of adverse public health outcomes, and are root causes of many social ills such as illiteracy and short-fall of educational attainment, chronic stress, alienation, and criminal activity, all of which undermine the social fabric; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would reduce income insufficiency, insecurity, and inequality and ensure everyone an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live in dignity regardless of work status; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would provide an income floor for those doing socially essential but unpaid work, supporting the choices of those who engage in it; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would provide additional direct personal income which would be spent locally, thereby revitalizing local economies; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would enable individuals to pursue educational, occupational, social and wellness opportunities relevant to them and their families; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would support entrepreneurship and job transition for those trying to establish a new productive role for themselves in response to a persistently changing economy; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would resemble income guarantees already provided in Canada for seniors guarantees which have contributed to health and quality of life improvements in this age group; and

Whereas basic income has been studied in Canada for approximately forty years and has demonstrated improved physical and mental health and educational outcomes; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee program would involve the redistribution of the administrative functions of existing income support programs to the nation as a whole and to senior government partners in the same manner as Medicare and the existing seniors and children's programs;

Therefore be it resolved that the Halifax Regional Municipality endorse a national discussion of a Basic Income Guarantee for all Canadians; and

That the Halifax Regional Municipality encourage the provincial and federal governments through their respective responsible Ministers, including the Nova Scotia Minister of Finance, the Nova Scotia Minister of Health, the Nova Scotia Minister of Community Services, and the Nova Scotia Minister of Justice to work together to consider, investigate, and develop a Basic Income Guarantee for all Canadians; and

That this resolution be forwarded to all municipalities in Nova Scotia with the request that they consider indicating their support for this most important initiative; and

That this resolution be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Nova Scotia and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities including the Big City Mayors' Caucus, with the request that they include proposing a Basic Income Guarantee in their respective engagements with the provincial and federal governments; and

That copies of this resolution be shared with the Premier of Nova Scotia, the Prime Minister of Canada, and all opposition leaders at both levels of government.



Office of the City Clerk

I hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution, being New Motion 2 unanimously approved by Kingston City Council at its regular meeting held on December 15, 2015:

Whereas the 2011 National Household Survey confirmed that 14.9% of the population live in low income circumstances, a percentage exceeded in the City of Kingston where the percentage of the population living in poverty has been documented at 15.4%; and

Whereas income insecurity and inequality continue to increase as a result of precarious employment; and

Whereas existing income security programs have not proved sufficient to ensure adequate, secure income for all; and

Whereas insufficient income, income insecurity and inequality have well-established, strong relationships to a range of adverse public health outcomes, and are root causes of many social ills such as illiteracy and short-fall of educational attainment, chronic stress, alienation, and criminal activity, all of which undermine the social fabric; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would reduce income insufficiency, insecurity, and inequality and ensure everyone an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live in dignity regardless of work status; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would provide an income floor for those doing socially essential but unpaid work, supporting the choices of those who engage in it; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would provide additional direct personal income which would be spent locally, thereby revitalizing local economies; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would enable individuals to pursue educational, occupational, social and wellness opportunities relevant to them and their families; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would support entrepreneurship and job transition for those trying to establish a new productive role for themselves in response to a persistently changing economy; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee would resemble income guarantees already provided in Canada for seniors guarantees which have contributed to health and quality of life improvements in this age group; and

Whereas basic income has been studied in Canada for approximately forty years and has demonstrated improved physical and mental health and educational outcomes; and

Whereas a basic income guarantee program would involve the redistribution of the administrative functions of existing income support programs to the nation as

The Corporation of the City of Kingston

216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

Phone: (613) 546-4291 ext. 1247

Fax: (613) 546-5232

jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

a whole and to senior government partners in the same manner as Medicare and the existing seniors and children's programs;

Therefore Be It Resolved That the City of Kingston endorse a national discussion of a Basic Income Guarantee for all Canadians; and

That the City of Kingston encourage the provincial and federal governments through their respective responsible Ministers, including the Ontario Minister of Health and the Ontario Deputy Minister in Charge of Poverty Reduction, to work together to consider, investigate, and develop a Basic Income Guarantee for all Canadians; and

That this resolution be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario with the request that they consider indicating their support for this most important initiative; and

That this resolution be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, including the Big City Mayors' Caucus, with the request that they include proposing a Basic Income Guarantee in their respective engagements with the provincial and federal governments; and

That copies of this resolution be shared with the Premier of Ontario, the Prime Minister of Canada, and all opposition leaders at both levels of government.

**Dated at Kingston, Ontario
This 18th day of December,
2015.**

ORIGINAL SIGNED


John Bolognone, City Clerk