

Sample Letter

My Elected Official
22 Address Rd.
Halifax, NS

Date

Dear

I have been involved with the Food Security Projects of the Nova Scotia Nutrition Council and Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre in Nova Scotia. Through my involvement I have become very concerned by the fact that many Nova Scotia families cannot afford a basic nutritious diet.

In Phase II of the food security projects we held story sharing workshops throughout Nova Scotia where people came together to share their experiences of food insecurity. One issue that was raised by most of the women in the workshops was the stress they experienced about the fact that they knew they weren't feeding their children the food they know they need for healthy development. The women said the high cost of fresh fruits, vegetables and milk prevented them from buying such foods because with a limited grocery budget they were more concerned about ensuring their kids had enough to eat —food that would fill their stomachs. In sharing such stories, the participants and facilitators of the workshops were often moved to tears —situations like this should not occur in our communities.

An inadequate diet can have short and long term consequences for health. For children in particular, a poor diet can adversely affect cognitive development and success at school. Moreover, the stress associated with not having enough food to eat, or the food one knows they need, can also have negative consequences for health. Implementing healthy public policies that ensure all families can afford a basic nutritious diet can prevent greater health problems in the long run.

Because of the implications for health, this issue must be addressed, and must be brought to the attention of the provincial government. Policies must be implemented to ensure that social assistance rates reflect the cost of a nutritious diet. Such policies would make nutritious foods more available to all Nova Scotians, and reduce some of the stress experienced by parents.

I encourage you to use the information and stories in this letter, as well as the additional fact sheets that I have attached, to bring this issue forward in the provincial legislature. I look forward to hearing from you regarding your reaction to this information and any plans that you have for using it to affect a positive and healthy public response.

Sincerely,

Name:

Contact information: