



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

**BOARD REPORT**

	<b>REPORT No.: 2018-49</b>
<b>MEETING DATE: JUNE 28, 2018</b>	<b>DATE PREPARED: JUNE 26, 2018</b>
<b>SUBJECT: 2018 ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO BRIEFINGS PACKAGE</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT with respect to Report No. 2018-49 (CAO's Division), we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board), approve of the 2018 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Briefings Package, as presented;

AND THAT we direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to submit deputation requests to the appropriate provincial Ministries;

AND THAT the CAO attend the 2018 AMO conference to provide support to the Board Chair and other Board members in their meetings with provincial officials regarding these issues.

**REPORT SUMMARY**

To provide the 2018 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Briefings Package for review and approval.

**BACKGROUND**

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario will be holding their Annual Conference in Ottawa, August 19-22, 2018. As part of the programming for the Annual Conference, municipal delegations may submit requests to meet with a Province of Ontario Minister or parliamentary assistant from up to 3 ministries.

**COMMENTS**

The Briefings Package contains 4 key recommendations.

- 1) A request to amend the Housing Services Act 2011 to allow social housing providers the ability to charge "maximum shelter allowance" identified in both the OW and ODSP rate scales for tenants that are in receipt of social assistance. In addition, it is requested that the Ontario government adjust Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) shelter as soon as possible.

- 2) A request that the Ontario government continue funding for homelessness and homelessness prevention programs, by maintaining the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Program and Home for Good program funding.
- 3) A request that the Ontario government continue funding for energy retrofit programs like Social Housing Apartment Retrofit Program (SHARP) and Social Housing Apartment Investment Program (SHAIP), to support the effective and efficient delivery of social housing across the province.
- 4) A request that the Ontario government review and increase the financial threshold for families to qualify for Child Care Fee Subsidy to match the Low Income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT) thresholds, adjusted for family size and indexed to inflation.

It is important to note that an increase in the housing charge, from the current scales that are 20 years old, to the maximum shelter allowances would not impact tenants but would result in more of the housing costs being covered by Ontario through the OW and ODSP budget rather than from the Social Housing budget which is covered through the municipal levy.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**



There are no financial implications related to this report.

**CONCLUSION**

It is concluded that the 2018 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Briefings Package be reviewed and approved as presented.

**REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED**

Attachment #1 [Association of Municipalities of Ontario Briefing Package](#)

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Saku Pinta, Senior Social Policy Analyst William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
<b>APPROVED / SIGNATURE:</b>	 William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
<b>SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:</b>	 William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

Hon. XXX

Minister of Community and Social Services

Ontario Works Shelter Rates

August XX, 2018

**Presented by:**  
XXXX



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

## Brief: Ontario Works Shelter Rates

Hon.XXXX

### Summary

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) requests that the Housing Services Act 2011 be amended to allow social housing providers the ability to charge “maximum shelter allowance” rates. Furthermore, in order to address the shortfall between current Ontario Works shelter rates and the actual costs of shelter, the TBDSSAB calls for the Ontario government to increase shelter rates for Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients.

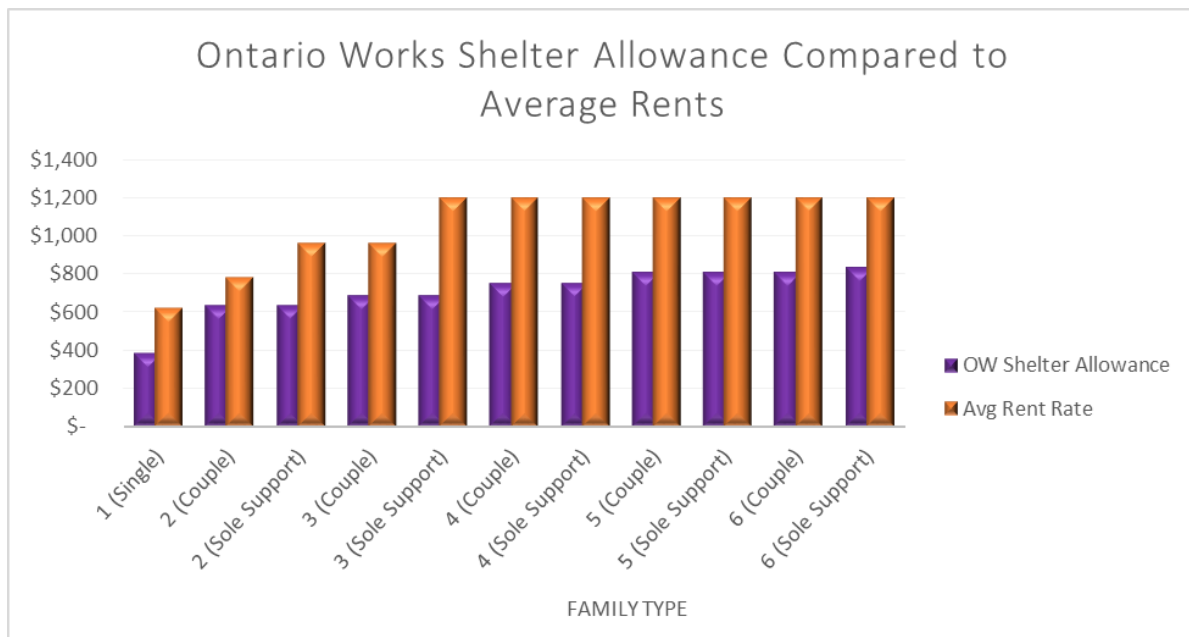
### Background

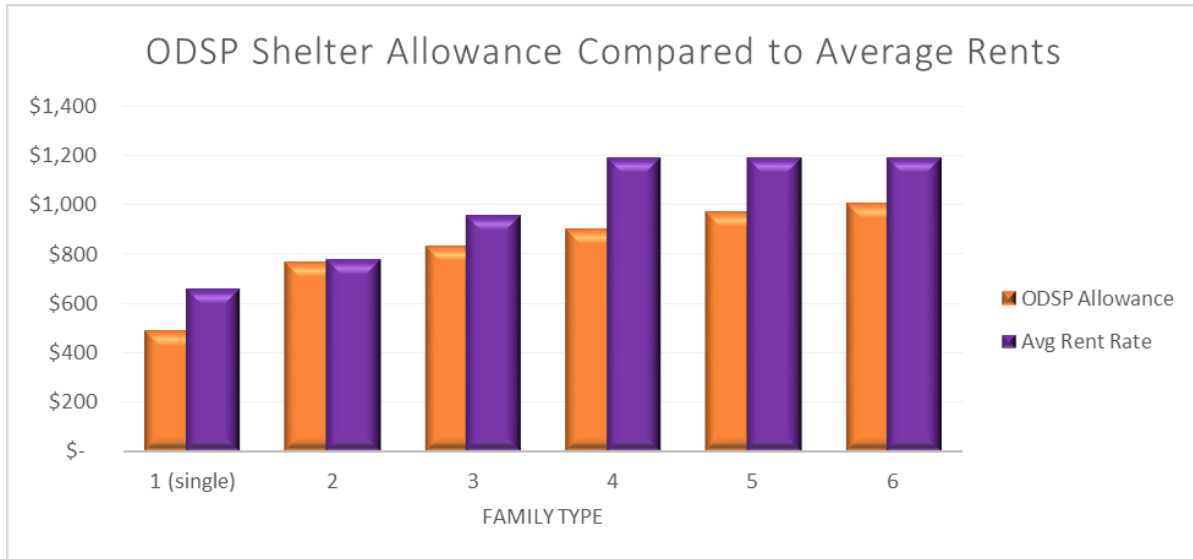
Rent scales for social housing tenants, as outlined in the Housing Services Act, have not been adjusted for 18 years, since the year 2000. Since social housing is funded and administered by municipal governments, the impact to the municipal taxpayer of the “rent scales”, for OW and ODSP recipients, versus the “maximum shelter allowance” rates for these programs is considerable. As the chart below demonstrates, the rent scales contribute to a total lost rent revenue of over \$5.6 million per annum.

OW					ODSP				
Household Size	Number of Households	Monthly Rent Difference	Months	Lost Rent Revenue	Household Size	Number of Households	Rent Difference	Months	Lost Rent Revenue
1	104	X \$299	X 12	= \$373,152	1	520	X \$404	X 12	= \$2,520,960
2	68	X \$449	X 12	= \$366,384	2	92	X \$586	X 12	= \$646,944
3	85	X \$467	X 12	= \$476,340	3	51	X \$614	X 12	= \$375,768
4	56	X \$483	X 12	= \$324,240	4	25	X \$643	X 12	= \$192,750
5	37	X \$499	X 12	= \$221,334	5	9	X \$673	X 12	= \$72,630
6	12	X \$485	X 12	= \$69,840	6	3	X \$664	X 12	= \$23,904
Average Difference		\$447	<b>TOTAL</b>	= \$1,831,290	Average Difference		\$597	<b>TOTAL</b>	= \$3,832,956
<b>Total Annual Lost Rent Revenue</b>					<b>\$5,664,246</b>				

Benefit Unit Size	ODSP Maximum Monthly Shelter Allowance	Rent Scale	OW Maximum Monthly Shelter Allowance	Rent Scale
1	489	85	384	85
2	769	183	632	183
3	833	219	686	219
4	904	261	744	261
5	976	303	802	303
6+	1010	346	831	346

In addition, current social assistance rates have been insufficient to cover the actual cost of housing in the District of Thunder Bay. The shortfall based on average market rents the TBDSSAB service area is sizeable, contributing to a range of other social issues.





One consequence of this shortfall is that households are compelled to draw on the basic allowance for food and other necessities in order to pay for shelter costs. As a result, households in these circumstances rely on food banks in order to meet their basic needs. Moreover, emergency shelter usage increases when market rent is unaffordable.

**Therefore, TBDSSAB calls on the Ontario government to amend the Housing Services Act 2011 to allow social housing providers the ability to charge “maximum shelter allowance” identified in both the OW and ODSP rate scales. Furthermore, the TBDSSAB urges the Ontario government to adjust Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program shelter as soon as possible.**



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

Hon. XXX

Minister of Housing

Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative and Home for Good Funding

Funding for Energy Retrofits

August XX, 2018

**Presented by:**  
XXXX



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

## Brief: Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative and Home for Good Funding

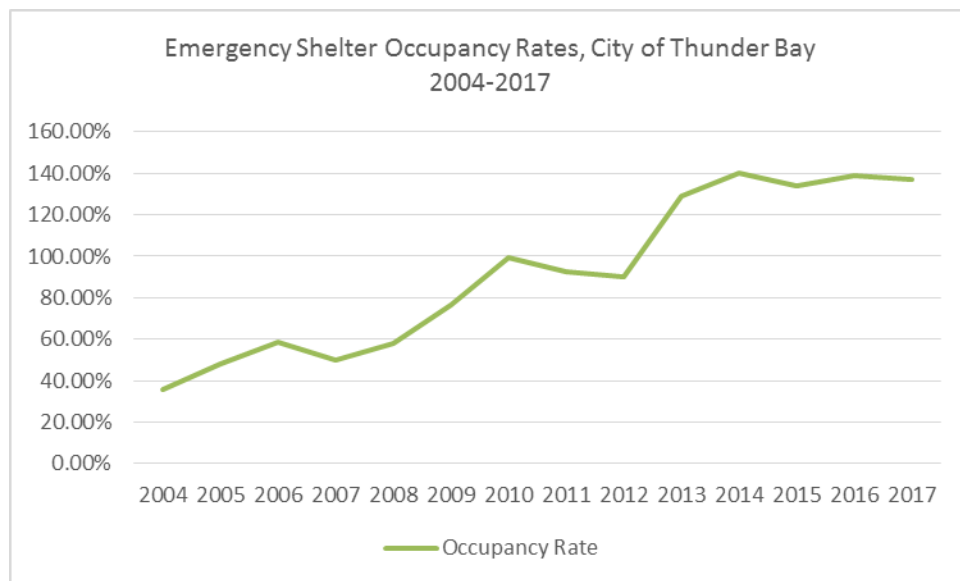
Hon. XXXX

### Summary

To ensure that funding is maintained for programs addressing homelessness and homelessness prevention, the TBDSSAB calls on the Ontario government to maintain current levels of funding for the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and the Home for Good pilot project.

### Background

Emergency shelter usage in the City of Thunder Bay has been at overflow capacity since 2013. In recent years, the TBDSSAB has adopted unique approaches to address homelessness through the use of CHPI funding and a successful Home for Good pilot project grant. These programs have had positive impacts and it is imperative that they continue, given the demonstrable need for them.



Since the establishment of the CHPI program in 2014 the TBDSSAB has received year over year increases to the CHPI budget from \$1,892,371 in 2014/15 to 3,263,274 in 2018/19.



Through these increases the TBDSSAB has been able to shift programming beyond servicing the homeless population, through funding to Emergency Shelters and various other homeless services, to an increased focus on programs that are designed to prevent homelessness by addressing some of its root causes.

The programs that the TBDSSAB has been able to invest in through the CHPI increases include Tenant Support Coordinators for individuals living in Social Housing units that are experiencing a variety of issues including mental health and addictions that jeopardize their tenancy. There were more than 2,100 support visits made by Tenant Support Coordinators in 2017. In addition, the TBDSSAB has been able to invest increased funding to the Housing Security Fund which assists individuals experiencing rent and utility arrears that threaten their current housing. In 2017, the amount utilized in for the Housing Security Fund was \$623,000. Through this program evictions are prevented and the threat of homelessness is overcome. The expansion into preventative programs provides tremendous value for the investment given the high social and financial costs of homelessness.

Through the Home for Good Pilot program, in the 6 months since the TBDSSAB has received funding we have been able to assist 31 individuals residing at Emergency Shelters with Support Services. Of these 31 individuals we have successfully housed 20 individuals that were previously living in emergency shelters. The program will house and support an additional 60 individuals from the emergency shelters, most of whom have significant mental health and addiction issues. Without the Home for Good pilot program, these individuals would remain in emergency shelter or be out on the streets.

Further evidence of the effectiveness of the Home for Good program is powerfully demonstrated by a recent experience relayed by one of the Transitional Outreach and Support Workers:

“I had been working with a fellow who was chronically homeless and a chronic substance user, namely alcohol and non-beverage alcohol. He bounced back and forth between both emergency shelters and frequently had interactions with police for public intoxication. His health began to suffer as a result of his substance use. He didn't look well and he began to experience seizures. One night, he was out and doesn't remember what happened, but woke up at the hospital. He was told that the police picked him up and brought him there after they saw him having a seizure on the side of the street. The hospital staff were amazed that he was still alive, given his blood-alcohol levels and his overall health. Through case management and the Home for Good program, we helped him connect to health care services and a physician picked up his case. We successfully housed him and his physician assisted him in his successful application for ODSP. Since being housed, he has ended a toxic relationship with his past girlfriend and has been sober. He reports that his doctor has told him his health has improved immensely and that right now, he is as healthy as he likely will ever be. He called me last week to tell me he is now applying for employment and feels fantastic. He thanked me again for the support of the program. This is a complete turn around and I honestly don't think any of it would have happened without case management.”

As part of the Home for Good initiative, TBDSSAB is partnering with St. Joseph's Care Group to establish a 30-bed facility to transition individuals experiencing homelessness or exiting provincially-funded institutions. The facility will be a home-like environment where staff provide 24 hour on site supports with other clinical services and programs provided by specialized resources in collaboration with other agencies. The proposed transitional housing program will offer flexible lengths of stay, providing a range of services and supports that are specifically designed to meet the unique care needs of people who are chronically homeless, live with chronic and complex health, mental health and substance use issues and who typically have difficulty accessing and maintaining relationships with traditional health and social service providers. Services include access to primary and specialized medical care, mental health and substance use treatment, as well as basic necessities such as food and clothing, life skills coaching and social supports. Though the capital for this facility is in place, the operating funds are only provided until March 31, 2020. Ongoing operational funding is required beyond this date, to ensure the individuals in this facility are not turned out into the street, with no supports.

**Therefore, the TBDSSAB urges the Ontario government to continue funding for homelessness and homelessness prevention programs, by maintaining the CHPI and Home for Good program funding.**



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

## **Brief: Funding for Energy Retrofits**

**Hon. XXXX**

### **Summary**

To address ever-increasing utility costs, and reduce this growing expense in the operation of social and affordable housing, the TBDSSAB calls on the Ontario government to maintain current levels of funding for energy reduction retrofits and continue to support energy enhancement rebate programs.

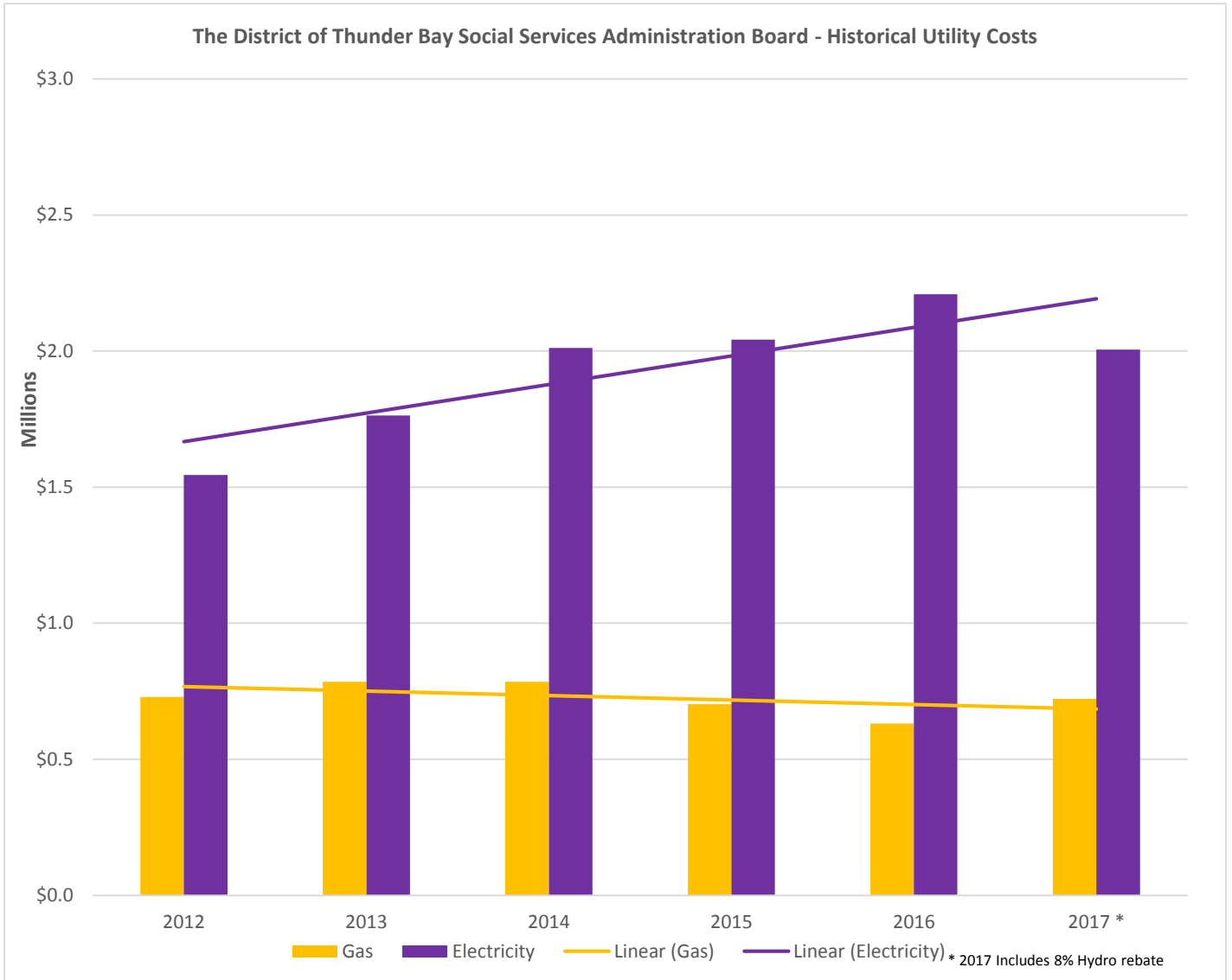
### **Background**

Social and affordable housing is designed to assist those most in need by providing shelter and a safe and secure home. Across the province, Service Managers struggle with an ever increasing demand for housing and longer waitlists. With longer and colder winters, the burden of utility costs disproportionately impacts housing providers in the north in being able to provide housing to meet demand.

Hydro rates have seen a steady increase over the past number of years, having the greatest impact on increased housing operating expenses for TBDSSAB. Given that most of TBDSSAB's multi-unit buildings are electrically heated, the rising cost of electricity has had a negative impact on the operating budget (from \$1,011,797 in 2011 to \$2,005,561 in 2017, or a 98% increase, despite an 8% hydro rebate in 2017).

Significant energy related projects were implemented through capital planning and the Social Housing Apartment Retrofit Program (SHARP) in order to reduce energy consumption. Energy efficient products replaced high energy usage products to reduce consumption. In 2017, through the capital budget, SHARP funding and the Social Housing Improvement Program (SHIP), \$2.8 million was allocated toward energy reducing projects. Further, under the Social Housing Apartment Improvement Program (SHAIP), TBDSSAB received \$2,489,627 in 2017-18 (Year 1) and a total allocation of \$7,360,537 in 2018 through 2021 (Years 2, 3, and 4). This investment has been used to improve the efficiency of mechanical systems, reduce the consumption of gas and electricity and provide improved insulation and weather sealing on TBDSSAB buildings.

This program funding has the added benefit of addressing the long-term capital funding shortfall for social housing in Ontario. Specifically, TBDSSAB has an estimated \$240 - \$300 million dollar capital investment need over the next 35 years. Energy retrofit programs can directly impact this capital investment need, while reducing the overall energy consumption and operating expenses.



**Therefore, the TBDSSAB urges the Ontario government to continue funding for energy retrofit programs like SHARP and SHAIIP, to support the effective and efficient delivery of social housing across the province.**



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

Hon. XXX

Minister of Education

Increase Financial Threshold for Child Care Fee Subsidy

August XX, 2018

**Presented by:**  
XXXX



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

## Brief: Increase Financial Threshold for Child Care Fee Subsidy

Hon. XXXX

### Summary

To ensure a more affordable early years and child care system, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) recommends updates to the regulatory framework for child care fee subsidy.

### Background

The current financial threshold for families to qualify for waived child care fees is \$20,000 or below in annual income. After the \$40,000 threshold in annual income, the percentage of eligible fee subsidy decreases drastically. The reduction in fee subsidy is dependent on a combination of income, number of children, and the number of days per week in child care. However, the current financial thresholds used to calculate fee subsidy are set too low, and thus, serve as a barrier to affordability. It is recommended that the financial threshold for families to qualify for child care fee subsidy be increased to match the Low Income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT) thresholds, adjusted for family size and indexed to inflation. Based on the 2015 LIM-AT calculation, adjusted for inflation, the current thresholds are as follows:

Household Size	After-Tax Income
2 Persons	\$ 32,212
3 Persons	\$ 39,450
4 Persons	\$ 45,554
5 Persons	\$ 50,931
6 Persons	\$ 55,793
7 Persons	\$ 60,262

Such an increase would greatly enhance the affordability of the early years and child care system while improving the ability of low income families to access child care. Recent research suggests that for every dollar invested in child care there is a two dollar benefit. This is due in part to long-term benefits, such as the positive outcomes associated with early childhood education, as well as immediate benefits, especially the ability of mothers to enter the labour force.<sup>1</sup>

**Therefore, the TBDSSAB urges the Ontario government to review and increase the financial threshold for families to qualify for Child Care Fee Subsidy to match the Low Income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT) thresholds, adjusted for family size and indexed to inflation.**

---

<sup>1</sup> See for example [http://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/BNgoodinvestment\\_0.pdf](http://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/BNgoodinvestment_0.pdf)