

Discussion Points on the 2019 Provincial Budget:

Budget:

- The PC budget puts profits before people, with deep cuts to the programs and services that Ontario families need to fund for nearly \$4 billion in corporate tax cuts.
- Ontario has the lowest per-person spending of any province. The government should be taxing big corporations to increase revenue, not cutting services to families.
- Ontario doesn't have a spending problem. Ontario has a revenue problem.
- More pages of this budget are devoted to drinking and gambling than making Ontario more affordable and funding public services.
- Poverty is not mentioned once in the budget, but alcohol is mentioned 35 times.
- The 2019 budget disguises cuts as increases (and sometimes, it just outright cuts spending) – and the government is doing this -- by taking from the vulnerable and giving to the rich.

Health care:

- Creating a health care “Super Agency” to force hospital mergers and allow privatization will only benefit the rich.
- Cutting OHIP+ for young people means families with sick kids are hit hardest.
- Ontarians will have limited access to health care with the creation of a new health “Super Agency” with sweeping powers to force privatization, cuts, megamergers, movement of services from one town to another and closure of local health care services.

Education:

- Students should not have to pay for government cuts.
- The massive cuts to education in the budget will take thousands of educators out of classrooms. Every student deserves high-quality public education.
- Students will fall through the cracks because of larger class sizes and less funding to education.
- Mandatory e-learning for high school students reduces access to education.
- The government's cuts to autism programs are shameful. Kids need supports to succeed.

Post-secondary education:

- Changing OSAP grants into loans means low-income students are paying more, while those from high-income families pay less. Fewer students will be able to get a post-secondary education.
- The Student Choice Initiative means cuts to essential services that support mental health, educate students about issues like consent, and provide leadership opportunities for young people.

Public services:

- Ontario's spending on public services per person is the lowest in Canada. It's time to fund public services, not cut them.
- Public services build equality. This government's budget only helps the rich.

Equality and justice:

- Cuts to legal aid will affect people when they need services most. The people affected will include those fleeing abusive relationships, those facing unfair evictions, refugees, and people with mental illness.
- Cancelling legal services for immigrants and refugees leave vulnerable newcomers without access to justice and is totally unacceptable.

Child care:

- Without publicly-funded, publicly-delivered, affordable child care, parents will be forced to rely on unregulated and for-profit providers that undervalue care work, putting children's safety at risk.
- Many families will not qualify for the child care tax credit and will continue to pay the most expensive child care costs in Canada.
- Low-income families in particular will be left out by the PC childcare plan.

Dental care for seniors:

- Don't be fooled. Most seniors will not qualify for free dental care – in fact, 95 per cent of seniors will be excluded from this program.

Health and safety:

- Recently the government reduced workplace inspections, and the budget allows employers themselves to determine, online, whether they are in compliance with the *Employment Standards Act*. Pro-active workplace inspections are essential for worker safety.