

Report on Meeting with Glen Murray – MPP (Toronto Centre) Friday, March 3, 2017 – Re ISARC’s Billion or Bust Campaign

Present: Glen Murray, Angus Affleck, David Walsh, Kyle Vose

- Murray said we were two months too late for this budget, but that we should be following up in 8 months re the next budget.
- He said that he is interested in advocating for more funds for social programs, although his actions are ambivalent.
- Kyle asked Murray for the Ontario Government for an increase now in social assistance rates to demonstrate evidence of the government’s recognition that rates are too low. The rates have not even made up the losses since the drastic cuts of Mike Harris
- We talked briefly about the Ontario Government’s study on the Basic Income Program, and asked why the government could not begin to address the problem now, and whether the studies are a distraction.
- We asked Murray about making increases in the minimum wage and investing more in affordable housing, but we could not get any clear responses
- He said that the Ontario government is investing \$8 Billion in programs directed at climate change and global warming, such as building retrofits, and the government does not have any money left after that cost and the large TTC investment and the recently announced hydro rate reduction program.
- Murray said that he had met with another advocacy network the same day as Kyle and I met him – ‘Friends Helping People to End Poverty’ - and he thought we should join forces to push for increases to social spending.
- Murray said that he is part of a small group of MPP’s pushing for greater social spending. He said he is good friends with NDP MPP Peter Tabuns and also collaborates with NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo
- He said that he might be able to find some funding for studies that would support efforts to increase spending on social programs.
- Murray said that if we are interested, he would be willing to set up a meeting with Chris Ballard – the Minister of Housing and Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Glen Murray, MPP Toronto Centre

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Steering Committee Member Rev. Alexander Wilson (left) and The Honourable Brad Dugid MPP for Scarborough Centre and Minister of Economic Development & Growth.