

WHEREAS routine eye care is critical in early detection of eye diseases like glaucoma, cataracts, and macular degeneration, and the health of eyes is critical to overall health and quality of life; and

WHEREAS conditions that may be detected with an annual eye exam include Diabetes mellitus, Glaucoma, Cataract, Retinal disease, Amblyopia (lazy eye), Visual field defects (loss of part of the usual field of vision), Corneal disease, Strabismus (crosses eyes), Recurrent uveitis (an inflammation of the uvea, the middle layer of the eye that consists of the iris, ciliary body and choroid), Optic pathway disease; and

WHEREAS payments from OHIP have only increased 9% over the last 30 years, which has not come close to matching inflation of costs (which include rent, staff, utilities, equipment, taxes and supplies); and

WHEREAS the lack of funding makes it difficult to invest in modern technology, and newer technology means earlier detection of eye disease; and

WHEREAS the Provincial government's refusal to formally negotiate with Optometrists for more than 30 years has forced the Optometrists to absorb approximately 173 Million dollars annually in the cost to deliver eye care to Ontarians; and

WHEREAS the 2021 Ontario Budget did not address OHIP-insured eye care, Ontario Optometrists took action and voted to withdraw OHIP services starting on September 1, 2021, unless the government agrees to legally-binding negotiations to fund these services at least to the cost of delivery; and

WHEREAS this job action will jeopardize good eyecare for those who need the care of an optometrist the most and will have the greatest impact on the most vulnerable groups. Children, who's lifetime ability to learn and develop depends on good vision and to the elderly, who are at the greatest risk for vision- threatening ocular diseases;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Municipality of the Town of Kingsville requests that the Provincial government recognize the value that access to quality eye care brings to all Ontarians and act now to protect it; and further

THAT the Provincial government address the OHIP-insured eye care immediately and enter into legally-binding negotiations with Ontario Optometrists to fund these services at least to the cost of delivery, prior to any job action taking place; and further

THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Premier Ford, Ontario Minister of Health Christine Elliot, MPP Taras Natyshak, to the Ontario Association of Optometrists, and to all municipalities in Ontario.