

# HALTON PUSHING FOR AFFORDABLE CHILD-CARE DEAL

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Halton Region is joining the call for accessible and affordable child care spaces for local families.

During their Nov. 17 meeting, regional councillors unanimously passed a motion that encourages the federal and provincial governments to "reach an equitable child care agreement that acknowledges the provincial investment in full-day kindergarten, and delivers affordable and accessible child care spaces for Ontario families."

The resolution, put forth by Oakville Mayor Rob Burton and Councillor Sean O'Meara, comes on the heels of a similar motion being passed by Oakville town council.

"We don't need tax re-

bates; we don't need more money going into private sector hands. We need affordable child-care spaces to move this economy forward, and I have great optimism that it's going to happen," said O'Meara.

Pressure has been mounting for the Ford government to act on affordable child care in recent weeks, as eight provinces and one territory inked agreements with the federal government under its promise of delivering \$10-a-day child care by 2026.

Ontario education minister Stephen Lecce has argued that the feds' offer of \$10.2 billion over five years will "shortchange" families, while the Trudeau government said it's still waiting to receive a strategy from the province to reduce fees and create child-care spaces that it requested

seven months ago.

"I'm hoping that our resolution will encourage both the prime minister and premier to have their officials get down to it," said Burton.

The motion passed by council says that child-care spaces in Halton and across Ontario have decreased as a result of the pandemic, and the lack of child-care spaces "is a barrier to our economic recovery."

It also notes that under the new national child-care plan, parents in Halton would save \$14,843 per year for an infant's care in 2026.



Santiago Nunez photo

Halton is urging the provincial and federal governments to reach a deal for affordable child care.

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