

**Speaking Notes for Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2012
Private Member's Bill Introduced by France Gélinas
Tuesday, May 8, 2012**

Good morning. My name is Sabrina Merali. As an experienced public health nurse and program manager with the International Affairs and Best Practice Guideline Centre, I am pleased to be here today representing the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.

Ontario's nurses are in support of Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2012 as we believe it would be a tremendous benefit to the people of Ontario. With increasingly hectic schedules and the demands of juggling competing commitments, many people each week depend on restaurants to meet their nutritional and social needs.

As RNAO's Best Practice Guideline on Primary Prevention of Childhood Obesity demonstrates, when children eat well and are active every day, they will be healthier now and in the future.

Rising obesity rates put our children and teens at increased risk for numerous health consequences that include diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and cardiovascular disease. Clearly disclosing calorie counts will provide valuable information for those who are dining out.

Consistent with the objectives of RNAO's Best Practice Guideline on Nursing Management of Hypertension, this Bill's provision to flag high and very high sodium content of food and drink is a critical warning for those seeking to curb salt use in their diet.

Ontario's registered nurses support the Health Decisions for Healthy Eating Act as both children and adults will benefit from the opportunity to make more informed decisions for healthier eating.

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario thanks France Gélinas for her steadfast leadership on this important public health issue. We urge our elected leaders from all parties to support its passage.

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