

Thursday, Sept 11, 2025



Minister Calandra a Hypocrite for Spending Thousands on Toronto Hotels and Pancakes

(TORONTO, ON) – The Toronto & York Region Labour Council is drawing attention to Minister Paul Calandra's questionable expenses as he accuses various School Trustees of "mismanagement."

Calandra's own expense reports show that since 2023, he's billed taxpayers \$23,000 for a community BBQ in his riding, \$2,200 for Strawberry pancakes and over \$5,700 for stays in Toronto hotels. Calandra lives in Markham: a 20-30 minute drive from Toronto.

This week, Calandra publicly criticized expenses by the Toronto Catholic District School Board Chair Markus de Domenico including a \$15 milkshake.

"Minister Paul Calandra likely receives \$40,000 a year for a constituency office and is expensing tens of thousands to taxpayers for food, hotels and events," said Toronto Catholic District School Board trustee Maria Rizzo. **"My fellow trustees and I don't have a constituency office – it's the local Tim Horton's. The cost of our offices is a coffee or a milkshake for a constituent. It's unbelievably hypocritical to call \$15 expense questionable when the Minister is spending thousands on strawberry pancakes and BBQs."**

The government has ordered various takeovers of school boards across the Province under the false guise of fiscal mismanagement, something that community advocates have called "a sham." Financial reports from PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte and the Ontario Auditor General have found no financial mismanagement at school boards.

Calandra stated that a Thames Valley District School Board senior staff retreat to a Toronto hotel was lack of financial oversight, leading to the province putting the board under supervision Yet, Calandra himself has expensed \$5,700 for stays in Toronto hotels.

"Is Minister Calandra going to pay back all of the \$5,700 he expensed for stays in Toronto hotels?" said Marianne Larsen, a Thames Valley District School Trustee. **"Why is he allowed to bill tax payers almost \$6,000 for hotel stays when he lives so close by, especially as he's accused others in school boards of 'extremely poor judgement' in the use of public funds?"**

Larsen added, **"Spending \$23,000 on 1 BBQ is a flagrant misuse of public funds, when it takes schools 1-2 years to raise that for their own nutrition programs, playground upgrades and classrooms essentials."**

For more information, visit www.fundourschools.ca.

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