

RELIGIOUS SOCIAL ACTION COALITION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

POST OFFICE BOX 21094, ST. JOHN'S NL A1A 5B2

Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and others committed to ending the injustice of poverty

January 2021

To: Candidates Seeking Election in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2021

Dear Candidate:

We are writing to you on behalf of the Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador, a coalition of faith groups that desire to see more done to **eliminate poverty** in our province.

We urge you to pay urgent attention to a Private Member's Resolution (PMR) which, we understand, was passed unanimously by the House of Assembly on October 28, 2020. The PMR states: **...BE IT RESOLVED that the House consider truly ending poverty in this province by establishing an all-party Select Committee on basic income with the mandate to review and make recommendations on eligibility, minimum income amounts, interactions with existing income supports, cost-benefit analysis, potential models for such program and a timeline for implementation; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House ensures that the Select Committee has the resources it needs to conduct this work.**

The provided background information is compelling:

- Income equality in Canada and in Newfoundland and Labrador, in particular, has been on the rise in recent decades;
- Canadians from all parties and all walks of life, including CEOs, senators, doctors, community support workers and economists are now championing some form of basic income programs;
- during the height of the pandemic the federal government pioneered a provision of income support to numbers of persons in need through the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit;
- the current income support system in our province (and country) amounts to a poverty trap and still leaves many to fall through the cracks;
- Canadian data from the basic income pilot projects have shown that programs increase public health, foster improvements in nutrition, improve mental health & well-being, lower the immense public costs associated with poverty, encourage entrepreneurship and allow people to pursue education and train.

We believe that a Guaranteed Liveable Income (or Basic Income that is liveable) is a goal that must be pursued despite the difficult fiscal situation in which the province finds itself. We would like to know if you and your party would make the above PMR **binding**, if elected, or better still, conclude that sufficient research information is available and commence the work immediately to implement a Guaranteed Liveable Income as a major and manageable way to eliminate poverty in our province. Candidates who do can be assured of our vote on Election Day. If you do, please sign the attached form and send it to us at the address above or email: m-pardy@nf.sympatico.ca

Marion Parady (Very Rev. Dr.)

Coordinator, Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador
(The United Church of Canada)

Directors: Dr. Mohammed Nazir-Muslim Association of NL; Dr. Steven Wolinetz-President, Jewish Community Havura; Dr. Veeresh Gadag-Hindu Temple of NL; George H Powell-Baptist; Rami Wadhwa- NL Sikh Society; The Rev. Father Paul Lundrigan-Roman Catholic Church; Haseen Khan-Muslim Association of NL; Captain Steven Barrett-Salvation Army

CANDIDATES SEEKING ELECTION, NL, 2021

To: The Religious Social Action Coalition of NL

If elected in the Provincial Election on February 13, 2021, **I Pledge to:**

- Work towards securing a Guaranteed Liveable Income for everyone who lives in the Province
- Work towards reducing the gap between the rich and the poor in our Province.

Name of Candidate: _____

District: _____

Party: _____

Email: _____

Please email your completed form to:

m-parady@nf.sympatico.ca

or

Send to: The Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 21094
St. John's, NL, A1A 5B2

Our prayerful support is with all Candidates seeking Election.