

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
www.rsacnl.com

October 2021

Mr. Clifford Small, Member of Parliament, Coast of Bays-Central-Notre Dame District, NL

Dear Mr. Small:

On behalf of the Religious Social Action Coalition (RSAC) of Newfoundland and Labrador, I congratulate you on your election in the recent federal election in our country. You have won the favour of the majority of voters in your district and we look forward to your leadership to our province and country.

During the campaign we called upon you to pledge your support, if elected, to work towards a **guaranteed basic income** (guaranteed livable income) for all residents of Canada in need. While we did not hear from you, we sincerely hope that you will work to implement this most-needed program so that all people in Canada can obtain the basic necessities of life, participate in social activities, contribute to society as they are able and live with dignity. I am confident that you will agree that this is the right of every person in your district, our province and country.

Unfortunately, the Conservative Party of Canada has not declared a guaranteed basic income among their plans. At the same time, some Conservative politicians, senators and party supporters have seen the benefit of guaranteed basic income and have indicated their support as a rightful benefit to individuals and as an asset to the Canadian economy.

As an example, I would refer you to an engaging book by former Senator Hugh Segal (Conservative): **Bootstraps Need Boots: One Tory's Lonely Fight to End Poverty in Canada.** (On Point. A UBC Press Imprint 2019). His first quote is compelling and one with which most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians can identify: **"It's all right to tell a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps, but it is a cruel jest to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps."** (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Elements of a basic income are contained in the Canada Child Benefit of 2015. Certainly, when considering the Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement for Seniors, these benefits constitute a guaranteed basic income, with the evidence that these programs have greatly reduced poverty among seniors. The next natural step is the **inclusion of all people for a guaranteed basic income.** The people of Newfoundland and Labrador and the people of Canada deserve no less.

We know that providing leadership in this way is challenging and involves considerable sacrifice. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. We do look forward to hearing from you.

Marion Pardy (Very Rev. Dr.), Coordinator
Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador

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; The Rev. Dale Caren – Anglican Diocese of Eastern NL

Copy: The Honourable Erin O'Toole, Leader of the Opposition