

# Hon Hugh D Segal, OC, OOnt, CD

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Sheila Regehr,  
Chair  
Basic Income Canada Network  
Ottawa

Dear Sheila,

Before we start the new year, I wanted to write directly to express my deep appreciation, gratitude and respect for the simply outstanding progress on so many fronts you and the Basic Income Canada Network have made in the year past.

On a host of fronts, the work done by BICN volunteers across Canada has helped dramatically move public opinion writ large, including in the labour, business, farming and community sectors, towards a strong national consensus in support of Basic Income.

Engagement with MPs across all parties, including in the Senate has been conscientious and effective.

The Liberal Party's parliamentary caucus has voted Basic Income its top priority among Liberal policy and platform initiatives.

Over fifty Senators signed a letter in favour of Basic Income sent to the Government.

The Conservative Party, under new leadership, has a subcommittee of its Economic Development team of MPs considering the Basic Income.

The PEI Legislature's Special Committee on Poverty issued a report calling for a Basic Income in PEI -- and that report was unanimous, as in it included Progressive Conservative, Green and Liberal members, including provincial ministers who were committee members.

The House of Assembly in Newfoundland and Labrador took a similar position.

Two reports from the Royal Society of Canada, prepared to provide scientific and policy advice to the federal government, strongly recommended a Basic Income. While that may not have been surprising for the report on modernising income security, it was also recommendation number one in the report dealing with economic recovery generally, including issues of taxation, investment, infrastructure trade and the rest.

The Basic Income Youth Coalition, the CEOs for Basic Income and UBI Works have also been immensely active and creative in collaboration with BICN.

A new econometric study from an independent economics analysis group (CANSEA) provided fresh insight on the degree to which the Canadian economy would grow and be more prosperous overall with the impact of a Basic Income on enhanced liquidity, lifting more and more Canadian out of poverty.

A motion on Basic Income was moved in Parliament by an NDP MP from Winnipeg. A motion in the Senate made history by seeking to delay passage of the federal government's financial estimates for the coming year, as a result of the absence of any measures in those estimates to address the three point five million of our fellow residents of Canada living beneath the poverty line. There was no precedent for this 'reasoned amendment' -- but it served notice that returning to 'business as usual' without addressing poverty is simply not on.

This, plus all the work being done planning for further advocacy in Ottawa, is clearly having an impact.

I take the Prime Minister's response to a question a couple of weeks ago, re not seeing " ...any path to a Basic Income at the present time..." as a reflection of the myriad of pressures his government faces on other cascading issues like China, vaccine distribution, the new American administration and the rest.

There is only so much any government can do at any one time. The broad conversation in the country, involving advocacy for progress on Basic Income from the Canadian manufacturers and exporters, the Conference Board, the National Farmers Union, the studies launched by the IRPP and various chambers of commerce and municipal councils reflect the depth and granularity of BICN's work and the immense value of its linkages and relationships nation wide.

Reforming punitive and meagre welfare arrangements in the provinces which trap people in poverty and discourage work, by creating a federal Basic Income for those in need beneath the poverty line, of the kind various polls indicate Canadian want, is closer than ever.

I simply wanted to express my admiration and deep personal thanks as a citizen and fellow advocate for the leadership role BICN has played in all this and continues to play.

All the best for the holidays and the New Year.

Yours truly,



Hugh Segal