



END CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY IN CANADA

December 17, 2015

The Hon. Bill Morneau, MP
Minister of Finance
By email to: Bill.Morneau@parl.gc.ca

The Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, MP
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
By email to: Jean-Yves.Duclos@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister Morneau and Minister Duclos,

Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty is a non-partisan coalition of more than 120 partners committed to the eradication of child and family poverty in Canada. We recognize the upcoming meeting of Canada's Finance Ministers on December 20-21 as an important opportunity to advance much-needed and long-awaited progress on vital social programs.

With 1.33 million Canadian children living in poverty today, the equitable delivery of the new, bolstered, income tested Canada Child Benefit (CCB) has significant potential to transform both the lives of children and families, and Canada's social safety net.

We are heartened that reducing child poverty is a key policy goal of the CCB. Indeed, a well-designed CCB delivered to those living in low income will be imperative to meet government's explicit goal of reducing child poverty.

The consistent position of Campaign 2000 and its partners is that all children and families in poverty must see a direct benefit in their incomes from any improvements in child benefits. All children should be treated equally regardless of the source of their parents' income. Therefore, we urge the federal government to take the lead on entering into agreements with the provinces and territories to ensure that no clawbacks or deductions are permitted on any portion of the CCB from social assistance/income support benefits. Of course, this could be accomplished by adding this as a condition for receiving the Canada Social Transfer.

Children in families in receipt of social assistance/income support live in legislated poverty throughout Canada, with incomes well below any measure of poverty. The CCB is poised to be a game-changer for these families. A fair and just Canada must enable every child to escape poverty. Permitting clawbacks or deductions of any type would be a step backwards, unjustly punishing children for their family's source of income. For this reason, we hope that the provinces and territories will ensure that increases in the CCB will actually enhance the income of all eligible families and that they will refrain from taxing back or deducting any increases from benefits, in the name of poverty eradication.

Since 1991, our coalition and provincial partners have tracked federal and provincial governments' progress, or lack thereof, on child and family poverty. We formed following the passage of the unanimous 1989 all-party resolution in the House of Commons to eliminate child poverty in Canada by



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the year 2000. While federal parliamentarians pledged to end poverty in Canada twice more, in 2009 and 2015, no federal action plans have ever materialized. It is unfortunate and unjust that child poverty is worse today than in 1989.

Some progress has been made in preventing and reducing child poverty, largely due to federal and provincial transfers. Now, every province and territory – except for British Columbia – has a poverty reduction strategy in place or under development. Without federal leadership, there has not been a sustained significant reduction in child and family poverty in Canada.

Today, however, Campaign 2000 believes Canada is on the cusp of overdue transformation. The federal government's commitment to creating a national poverty reduction strategy presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to end child and family poverty for good.

With a stated goal to reduce child poverty through the CCB, and a national poverty reduction strategy on the horizon, we expect federal leadership to carry Canada forward in the fight against child and family poverty. We are also pleased that the CPP is on the meeting agenda as reducing senior poverty is vital to ensuring a healthy and thriving family unit.

Members of our coalition would be pleased to meet with each of you and your policy advisors regarding the CCB and our comprehensive recommendations to eradicate child and family poverty at any time. Our latest report card on child and family poverty in Canada, entitled *Let's Do This: Let's End Child Poverty for Good*, is available on our website in both French and English at www.campaign2000.ca.

Sincerely,



Anita Khanna, National Coordinator, Campaign 2000

Co-signed by Campaign 2000 Steering Committee Members and Coalition Partners:

- Mary Boyd, P.E.I. Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy
- Marlene Deboisbriand, Interim President and CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada
- Leilani Farha, Executive Director, Canada Without Poverty
- Lesley Frank, Assistant Professor, Acadia University and Research Associate of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Nova Scotia
- Sid Frankel, Associate Professor Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba
- Joel French, Executive Director, Public Interest Alberta
- Martha Friendly, Executive Director, Childcare Resource and Research Unit
- Lyda Fuller, Executive Director, YWCA Yellowknife
- Joe Gunn, Executive Director, Citizens for Public Justice
- Margaret Hancock, Executive Director, Family Service Toronto



- John Kolkman, Research Coordinator, Edmonton Social Planning Council
- Randy Hatfield, Executive Director, Saint John Human Development Council
- H  l  ne L  pine, Pr  sidente-directrice g  n  rale, Y des femmes de Montr  al (YWCA Montreal)
- Sylvie L  vesque, F  d  ration des associations de familles monoparentales et recompos  es du Qu  bec (FAFMRQ)
- Stella Lord, Community Society to End Poverty - Nova Scotia
- Mary Marrone, Director of Advocacy & Legal Services, Income Security Advocacy Centre.
- Ryan Meili, Executive Director, Upstream (Saskatchewan)
- Adrienne Montani, Provincial Coordinator, First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
- David Northcott, Executive Director, Winnipeg Harvest Food Bank, Manitoba
- Laurel Rothman, Campaign 2000
- Paulette Senior, CEO, YWCA Canada
- Colette Acheson, Bill Thomas and Charlotte Hrenchuk, Co-chairs, The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition

CC to:

- Hon. Lisa Raitt, MP, Conservative Critic for Finance
- Karen Vecchio, MP, Conservative Critic for Families, Children and Social Development
- Guy Caron, MP, NDP, Critic for Finance
- Brigitte Sansoucy, MP, NDP Critic for Families and Children and Social Development.
- Honourable Cathy Bennett, Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, Newfoundland & Labrador
- Honourable Allen F. Roach, Minister of Finance, Prince Edward Island
- Honourable Roger Melanson, Minister of Finance, New Brunswick
- Honourable Randy Delorey, Finance and Treasury Board Minister, Nova Scotia
- Honourable Carlos J. Leit  o, Minister of Finance, Quebec
- Honourable Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance, Ontario
- Honourable Greg Dewar, Minister of Finance, Manitoba
- Honourable Kevin Doherty, Minister of Finance, Saskatchewan,
- Honourable Joe Ceci, Minister, Treasury Board and Finance, Alberta
- Honourable Michael de Jong, Minister of Finance, British Columbia
- Honourable J. Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Finance, Northwest Territories
- Honourable Darrell Paslosky, Premier and Minister of Finance, Yukon
- Honourable Keith Peterson, Minister of Finance and Chairman of the Financial Management Board, Nunavut



- Honourable Gerry Byrne, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, Newfoundland & Labrador
- Honourable Sherry Gambin-Walsh, Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, Newfoundland & Labrador
- Honourable Doug W. Currie, Minister of Health and Wellness and Minister of Family and Human Services, Prince Edward Island
- Honourable Cathy Rogers, Minister of Social Development, New Brunswick
- Honourable Joanne Bernard, Minister of Community Services, Nova Scotia
- Honourable Gaétan Barrette, Minister of Health and Social Services, Quebec
- Honourable Francine Charbonneau, Minister of Families, Quebec
- Honourable Deb Mathews, Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Deputy Premier, President of the Treasury Board, Ontario
- Honourable Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services, Ontario.
- Honourable Kerri Irvin-Ross, Minister of Family Services, Manitoba
- Honourable Melanie Wight, Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities, Manitoba
- Honourable Donna Harpauer, Minister of Social Services, Saskatchewan
- Honourable Irfan Sabir, Minister of Human Services, Alberta
- Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, British Columbia
- Honourable Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Children and Family Development, British Columbia
- Honourable Bob McLeod, Premier, Northwest Territories
- Honourable Mike Nixon, Minister of Health and Social Services, Yukon
- Honourable George Kuksuk, Minister of Family Services, Minister Responsible for Poverty Reduction and Minister Responsible for Homelessness, Nunavut

Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty in Canada is a non-partisan, cross-Canada network of 120 national, provincial and community partner organizations committed to working to end child and family poverty. For Campaign 2000's 2015 report cards, visit <http://www.campaign2000.ca>

