



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**JUNE 12, 2017**

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## **Cross-Canada Forums Call for Strong Federal Action against Poverty**

**TORONTO** – The federal government must act on urgent recommendations to eradicate poverty, according to Campaign 2000, a coalition of anti-poverty groups. Canadians in Winnipeg, Toronto and Charlottetown will connect public forums in their communities by Skype this evening to discuss their priorities for the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy (CPRS).

Participants will insist the government's strategy provides an effective plan to drastically reduce the number of Canadians – nearly five million – living in poverty. Consultations on the strategy continue until June 30.

“After decades of broken promises to end poverty, Canada’s first national Poverty Reduction Strategy must deliver a sea change in Canada’s infrastructure of supports and services that prevent and reduce poverty,” says Campaign 2000 National Coordinator Anita Khanna. “Poverty deprives millions of people of their dignity, health and opportunities. A comprehensive action plan must redraw the social contract for the tough realities families face today – precarious, low-wage work, skyrocketing housing and food costs, unaffordable childcare and unequal opportunities for marginalized people.”

“The countries that have surpassed Canada in action against poverty have built strong social safety nets while our governments have cut them back,” says Mary Boyd of the PEI Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy. “The organizers of PEI’s public forum tonight believe there is no time to waste. People are suffering and getting sick due to lack of action. We look forward to connecting our national movement for poverty eradication tonight online to share our priorities and call for bold change.”

Released today, Campaign 2000’s comprehensive CPRS submission, “Federal Action Plan to Eradicate Poverty,” outlines solutions with clear targets and timelines for success. It draws on decades of experience and research by the Campaign 2000 coalition in the areas of employment, income security, childcare and housing and demands solutions to inequities that cause Indigenous and racialized people, immigrants, people with disabilities and lone parents to live in poverty in greater numbers.

“Research affirms that the CPRS must be a shared, cross-Canada priority with the Federal Government taking a substantial leadership role providing vision, taking accountability for progress, maintaining investment and enabling provinces, territories and First Nations governments to play active roles,” says Dr. Sid Frankel of the University of Manitoba. “The CPRS’ guiding targets and timelines must be bold, comprehensive and unrelenting to catch up for lost time. We call for a 50 per cent reduction in child poverty by 2020 and for Canada’s poverty rate to be reduced by 75 per cent in 10 years.”

“We have called for poverty to be a national priority and are pleased that government is committed to action in this area,” adds Khanna. “Now, Canada must move pledges to eliminate poverty from rhetoric to reality and finally put people in poverty first. After decades of waiting, there is no choice – we must act now and get this strategy right.” Campaign 2000 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 more, visit <http://www.campaign2000.ca>.

## **Contacts**

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**Vancouver:** Adrienne Montani, First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 604-877-4932  
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**Charlottetown:** Mary Boyd, PEI Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy, 902-892-9074 or 902-388-2693

## **June 12<sup>th</sup> Forums (Cross-site online feed starts at 6:30pm EST)**

### **Toronto:**

Shaping Canada's first Poverty Reduction Strategy  
6-9 pm EST, Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil Street.

**Speakers include:** Dr. Gary Bloch (St. Michael's Hospital), Neethan Shan (Ward 42 City Councillor), Maya Roy (CEO YWCA Canada), Damon Johnston (Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg), Lubna Khalid (Working for Change) and more.

Host: Campaign 2000

### **Winnipeg:**

Shaping Canada's first Poverty Reduction Strategy  
5-8 pm CST, Winnipeg Harvest, 1085 Winnipeg Ave.

Host: Winnipeg Harvest

### **Charlottetown:**

Public Meeting: Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy

7:00 pm ADT, Murphy Community Centre, 200 Richmond St. Room 207, Charlottetown

Hosts: PEI Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy & MacKillop Centre for Social Justice

## **June 14<sup>th</sup> Forum**

### **Vancouver:**

Community Conversation on Federal Poverty Reduction Strategy

9-11:30am, BC Teachers' Federation Building, 550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver

Host: First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition and BC Poverty Reduction Coalition