



BC ASSOCIATION of  
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June 4, 2020

Honourable Shane Simpson  
Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction  
Room 247 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

E: SDPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister;

Re: Support for Universal Basic Income

Firstly, we thank your government and your ministry for actions taken to reduce poverty in British Columbia and particularly for your more recent decisions to increase support for vulnerable and marginalized people during the COVID-19 emergency. Frontline social workers appreciate the additional resources that enable them to respond more effectively to this crisis.

We eagerly anticipate the release of Dr. David Green's report on basic income models this summer and congratulate you on selecting this well-regarded economist at the University of British Columbia. In advance of the release of the report we wish to encourage you to make certain policy decisions.

Our Associations support a quick implementation of a universal basic income guarantee (uBIG) in British Columbia. Such a program would serve as a foundation upon which social and health programs would be placed rather than as a replacement for existing programs. A uBIG would ensure that every person has an adequate income and that additional income would come in the form of employment or other income assistance programs based on need. BC and Canada already has in place fundamental social and health supports that, together with uBIG, would provide a much more comprehensive, and more easily administered, social safety net for all Canadians.

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Poverty is clearly the most influential determinant of health and well-being of British Columbians. Basic income can be an effective poverty reduction program and will benefit those who have medical conditions as a direct result of low income. The Canadian Medical Association notes that those living in poverty have a much greater chance of having chronic diseases and that poverty has a long-term effect on well-being due to the impact of early childhood development on health.

We applaud your government for taking bold steps toward equality in BC and encourage you to go further and develop a program that ensures well-being for all.

Regards,



Michael Crawford, President  
BC Association of Social Workers



Jan Christianson-Wood, President  
Canadian Association of Social Workers



Dianne Heath, Executive Director  
BC Association of Social Workers



Fred Phelps, Executive Director,  
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