

'Stroller Brigade' rolls up to B.C. justice minister's office in plea for \$10-a-day childcare ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Frustrated parents pushed strollers Saturday to push the B.C. Liberals into supporting \$10-a-day child care.

Sharon Gregson, spokeswoman for the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C., said dozens of parents concerned by B.C.'s "child-care crisis" participated in the "Vancouver Stroller Brigade." They marched upon B.C. Justice Minister Suzanne Anton's office, pushing their children in strollers, to let the minister know they want \$10-a-day child care to solve the problem.

"We chose her office because she is a woman with power and influence as attorney general in the province," Gregson said. "We wanted to tell her the childcare experiences of mothers in the crowd and ask her to be a child-care champion."

Gregson said the grassroots action came after a coffee-shop conversation between B.C. moms who decided they wanted to let all politicians know their stance on affordable child care. Saturday's brigade took place just before an opening celebration at Anton's Fraserview election campaign office.

Provincial NDP leader John Horgan has promised to introduce \$10-a-day child care if his party is elected May 9.

The federal government plans to spend an additional \$7 billion in child-care spaces across Canada beginning in 2018-19, federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau said Wednesday during his presentation of the 2017 budget. That's in addition to \$500 million for 2017-18 announced last year.

Morneau estimated the new cash could support 40,000 additional subsidized, child-care spaces within the next three years.

But Wednesday, B.C. Finance Minister Mike de Jong said the federal commitment hadn't changed his position on the subsidized plan championed by the provincial NDP.

Gregson said that the rally had already wrapped up by the time Anton arrived at her office Saturday. Anton did not return requests for comment before deadline.

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