

Singh calls on feds to fund \$10 billion for child care over next 4 years ^[1]

The Liberals already passed a motion with NDP support to transfer \$2 billion to the provinces for child care.

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EXCERPTS

OTTAWA — NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh is calling on Ottawa to provide the provinces with billions in funding for child care — a demand that could help determine whether the minority Liberal government survives.

With the support of the Liberals, the NDP passed a motion this week calling on the federal government to immediately transfer \$2 billion to the provinces for child care.

Singh is now upping the ante, calling for another \$10 billion over the next four years.

Singh says \$2 billion is needed this year just to ensure there are enough child-care spaces available to allow parents — particularly mothers — to go back to work now that restrictions to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic are being relaxed.

He says another \$10 billion over the next four years is necessary to ensure universal, affordable, accessible child care for all.

With the Bloc Quebecois threatening to bring down the Liberal government this fall, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau can't afford to dismiss the demands of New Democrats, whose support could be the key to avoiding defeat on a confidence motion.

"The federal government must acknowledge that if we want a recovery, we need to make sure women can get back to work and that means assuring that there's affordable and accessible child care," Singh told a news conference Friday in Victoria, B.C.

He noted the Liberals have been promising to bring in universal child care for more than 20 years.

"Now we want to see action. It's not enough to say the words. We need to see Prime Minister Trudeau and the Liberal government back it up."

NDP support could be crucial for Liberals

The Liberals, with 156 seats, are 14 votes shy of a majority in the House of Commons. Support from the NDP's 24 MPs would ensure the government's survival should the Bloc, Conservatives, Greens and Independent MPs join forces to bring it down.

Singh did not frame his call for child-care funding Friday as a condition for NDP support.

In a written statement later to The Canadian Press, he said: "This isn't about us or our support. This is about the government earning the confidence of people across this country.

"They do that by keeping their promises, by working with us to fix (employment insurance) permanently so people get the help they need, and by standing by their support of our call for an immediate investment in child care so parents can go back to work knowing their kids are safe at school or at child care."

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