

Canadians should expect 'significant' move in budget for child care, early education: LeBlanc ^[1]

Access to 'safe' early learning and care is 'an economic imperative,' said intergovernmental affairs minister

Author: Zimonjic, Peter and Barton, Rosemary

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 11 Apr 2021

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

Access to national early learning programs and child care have become an "economic imperative" and Canadians should expect a "significant" announcement in the forthcoming federal budget, said Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc.

"Access to safe early learning and child care, high-quality child care, we think is now an economic imperative," LeBlanc told CBC's chief political correspondent Rosemary Barton on Rosemary Barton Live.

"It's one social program done properly that has a direct impact on the growth of the Canadian economy."

LeBlanc said that rolling out a national child care and early learning program would be difficult because each of the provinces have different mixes of private and public child-care systems. Despite those challenges the government is determined to push the policy forward.

"I think Canadians should expect our government to do something very significant in this area because it's critical for the rebuilding of the economy as well as the social fabric of the country," he said. "It, frankly, allows parents to participate in the workforce in a way that's not only good for the economy, but it's also good for families."

LeBlanc also said that despite the challenges of rolling out and funding a universal basic income, the Liberal Party was also prepared to consider "any thoughtful policy proposition."

"I have a number of my colleagues in caucus who have been working for, in some cases a number of years, on what a universal basic income might look like," he said.

While LeBlanc said that a discussion around a universal basic income is a valuable one to have, the economic challenges of rolling out a policy that would cost an estimated \$85 billion a year makes it a significant challenge.

"That's exactly the challenge, and that's why it hasn't been [implemented]. If it was very easy, some previous governments would have done it," LeBlanc said, noting that he still felt it is "a policy that we think deserves a lot of consideration."

Will Mark Carney run for Liberals?

The intergovernmental affairs minister also commented on former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney's address to the Liberal convention in which he said he wanted to work to support the party.

"I would hope Mr. Carney might, might consider running for the party. He obviously has a huge contribution to make to Canada, to the discussion, to the policy around fighting climate change," LeBlanc said.

It was very significant when Carney agreed to speak at the Liberal convention, LeBlanc said, noting that while the former central banker was appointed by former prime minister Stephen Harper, he now appears to be fully in the Liberal camp.

"He has an enormous contribution to make to public policy in the country," LeBlanc said. "And the fact that he's chosen to do it with the Liberal Party, I think says something very reassuring about the economic direction of our government."

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: federal budget ^[4]

economic recovery ^[5]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/21/04/canadians-should-expect-significant-move-budget-child-care-early> [2] <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/leblanc-rosemary-barton-childcare-convention-1.5983319> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federal-budget> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9038>