

PM vowing to ease daycare cash cut-off [CA] ^[1]

Compensation promised to provinces Pressure growing for shift in tax powers

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Source: Toronto Star [p.A15]

Format: Article

Publication Date: 22 Feb 2006

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is promising compensation for Ontario and other provinces that stand to lose billions of dollars in child-care funding when the Conservative government cancels the Liberals' national daycare program.

Following up on a campaign commitment, the Conservatives intend to scrap the \$5 billion national child-care system set up by the federal Liberal government and the provinces.

But Harper told Quebec Premier Jean Charest earlier this month that the Tories are willing to negotiate a transition period for payments beyond the March 31, 2007 cut-off date.

Any arrangement made with Quebec will be available to other provinces, Harper told reporters yesterday.

...

The Conservatives plan to provide a \$1,200-a-year taxable child allowance for each pre-schooler instead of the Liberals' national program.

Harper's commitment to work with Quebec and other provinces on child-care funding comes at a time when there is strong pressure to fundamentally alter the way Ottawa raises taxpayers' money and shares it with the provinces.

The Prime Minister, who has promised to look at ways to allow provincial governments to raise more taxes while Ottawa reduces its take, is receiving some strong backing.

...

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

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