

Poor need more federal assistance, poverty group says [CA] ^[1]

Author: Canadian Press

Source: Canadian Press

Format: Article

Publication Date: 17 Jun 2004

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The National Anti-Poverty Organization released a report yesterday that calls for a series of actions aimed at assisting impoverished women.

The report, titled "Voices: Women, poverty and homelessness", was released in Summerside. It traces the lives and personal stories of homeless women in Halifax, Ottawa and Vancouver.

The NAPO report recommends a series of policy changes be implemented by the next federal government, including:

- Funding for a national housing strategy;
- Funding for a national child-care program;
- Increases in transfer payments to the provinces, specifically for social housing and income-support programs;
- Increases in spending on social housing to at least 1 per cent of total expenditures.

The organization is also calling on the provincial and territorial governments to raise income-support levels such as social assistance and disability pensions to provide poor people with an income at least equal to the poverty line.

Provinces are being asked to raise minimum wages to provide annual income at least to equal the poverty line and services that adequately address the needs of individuals living with mental-health issues and addictions.

NAPO wants anti-poverty legislation and recommends that all levels of government develop budgeting processes that include participation of poor and homeless individuals and groups dealing with poverty and homelessness.

Paulette Halupa, an Island anti-poverty activist, was disappointed with the turnout for the release of the report, particularly with the lack of federal candidates running in this year's election.

"This is not supposed to be a political statement here today but the political statement has been made," she said.

Ms. Halupa said the report is not a bunch of statistics but rather the real-life stories of women who are facing poverty and homelessness.

- reprinted from the Canadian Press

Tags: poverty ^[2]

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