Volpé: "We must live within our means" [CA-NB]

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EXCERPTS

EDITOR'S NOTE The following are excerpts from the provincial budget delivered March 30, 2004 by New Brunswick Finance Minister Jeannot Volpé:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the house today to present to the people of New Brunswick the first budget of our second mandate. It is a budget with one clear message: we must live within our means and we must focus on priorities.

The two go hand in hand. Unless we live within our means, we will not have the money to invest in the priorities that matter most to people.

What are those priorities? This budget makes it clear that the top priorities of this government are the top priorities of New Brunswickers: health and senior care, education and children, jobs and prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing this budget, we set clear objectives to guide our decisions. We have stuck with them in making our decisions...

Mr. Speaker, Investing in People is one of four building blocks in our Prosperity Plan. Providing our children with quality learning opportunities is the best way to invest directly in our future.

Mr. Speaker, investing in early childhood development, early learning and child care is another priority of the Government. Helping children get the best start in life is a key to our commitment to family-oriented policies. I am pleased to announce that we will invest a record \$5.7 million in initiatives that will directly benefit child care facilities. This includes \$4 million to continue improving the salary and working conditions of child care workers, and \$1.3 million for their training.

Just as we know it is important to improve the quality of our child care facilities, we also know how important it is to improve the affordability of child care for working families. That is why I am pleased to announce that we will invest a further \$1.7 million for a total of \$8 million per year in the Day Care Assistance Program.

- reprinted from the New Brunswick Telegraph Journal

Region: New Brunswick [2]

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