

Open letter to Canada's Premiers: Remember that poverty affects all Canadians for the upcoming annual Council of the Federation meeting in Halifax ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Letter in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts:

Across Canada, 4.3 million people, including 979,000 children and their families, live in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2010 Incomes in Canada, LIM-AT). That's about one in eight (13 per cent) people who are living in dire straits in our wealthy land.

For the health of all Canadians, the health of the economy and the health of the Canadian federation, the premiers need to strengthen their poverty reduction strategies and call on the federal government to adapt its own comprehensive and co-ordinated plan.

A well-developed plan, in co-operation with other levels of government, civil society, the non-profit and private sectors and environmental stewards, will help to sustain the Canada we want. That is a Canada where no one has to choose between going hungry and paying the rent, where employment and a living wage for workers is the norm, and where federal-provincial co-operation achieves environmentally sustainable ways to better the lives of all peoples within Canada.

Income is a key determinant of a person's health. The higher one's position on the income ladder, the more likely one is to live in good health. Income inequality, on the other hand, impairs health and increases premature mortality. Yet all of us will benefit from less poverty and inequality.

...

Provinces and territories control minimum wages, employment standards, some consumption tax credits, and health care and social services provision. However, the federal government is a necessary partner in funding the latter and in addressing taxation levels and key income security measures, including Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement, the Canada Pension Plan, and the Canada Child Tax Benefit/National Child Benefit Supplement.

When federal, provincial, territorial and First Nations governments work together, they can achieve a great deal to address poverty, build social solidarity, and develop confidence in our governments. Great social advances have come when provinces and territories lead (as in medicare) and work with the federal government (pensions, child benefits, child care). Indeed, the 2010 House of Commons report, Federal Poverty Reduction Plan: Working in Partnership Towards Reducing Poverty in Canada, supported by all parties, outlines what is needed to move forward.

The civic, moral and economic imperatives for poverty eradication are well-established and understood among growing numbers of Canadians. Now is the time for the provinces and territories to call on the federal government to build on their commitments to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty.

Related link: Premiers must remember poverty affects all Canadians ^[3]

Region: Canada ^[4]

Tags: poverty ^[5]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/07/open-letter-canadas-premiers-remember-poverty-affects-all>

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