
DATE: March 9, 2010

REPORT TITLE: **RESOLUTION TO FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL ANTI- POVERTY ACT**

FROM: Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Region of Peel Council endorse the resolution for a *Federal Anti-Poverty Act*, proposed by the City of Calgary to the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), attached to this report as Appendix II.

And that copies of the report of the Commissioner of Human Services of March 9, 2010, "Resolution To Federation Of Canadian Municipalities In Support Of *Federal Anti-Poverty Act*" be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association and the FCM.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The City of Calgary has circulated to other municipalities a draft resolution for consideration at the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, advocating for a *Federal Anti-Poverty Act* to complement the growing number of provincial Acts setting targets for poverty reduction
- This position is consistent with the request of the Ontario Government for federal support for its poverty reduction strategy approved in 2008.
- It is also consistent with key recommendations from the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology report, *In from the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*.
- The Region, in concert with the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee, is on record as supporting the provincial request for a complementary federal poverty reduction strategy.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

On November 24, 2009, the House of Commons passed the following motion: "That, with November 24th, 2009 marking the 20th anniversary of the 1989 unanimous resolution of this house to eliminate poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000, and not having achieved that goal, be it resolved that the Government of Canada, taking into consideration the committee's work in this regard, and respecting provincial and territorial jurisdiction, develop an immediate plan to eliminate poverty in Canada for all."

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In the Ontario Poverty Report in 2008 the Province makes the case for partnership with the federal government in poverty reduction;

The federal government must play a significant role, through the various levers it has at its disposal, in achieving the target. Meeting this target will also depend on a growing economy. Specifically, we are asking the federal government to work with us by taking the following actions:

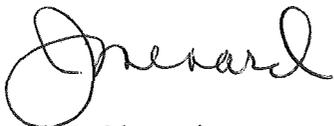
1. Double the amount of the Working Income Tax Benefit, a refundable tax credit available to low-income individuals or families, to \$2,000 a year per family.
2. Increase the National Child Benefit Supplement by \$1,200 per child.

Six Provinces—Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Manitoba—have legislated poverty reduction plans in place.

In December 2009, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology released *In from the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*. The report calls on the federal government to work with the Provinces towards the goal of eradication of poverty; specifically to “adopt a core poverty eradication goal that all programs dealing with poverty and homelessness are to lift Canadians out of poverty rather than making living within poverty more manageable, and that the federal government work with the provinces and territories to adopt a similar goal.” (Appendix I)

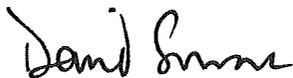
In response, the City of Calgary is proposing a resolution (Appendix II), advocating for a federal anti poverty act, for consideration at the upcoming annual meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. This draft resolution has been forwarded to other municipalities for their support.

The upcoming FCM annual Meeting will be an opportunity to put municipal governments across the country behind the efforts to bring the federal government to the table on poverty reduction. The City of Calgary proposed resolution deserves the support of the Region of Peel.



Janet Menard
Commissioner of Human Services

Approved for Submission:



D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

For further information regarding this report, please contact Gurpreet Malhotra at extension 4862 or via email at gurpreet.malhotra@peelregion.ca

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APPENDIX I

Extract from the Foreword to

**IN FROM THE MARGINS:
A CALL TO ACTION ON POVERTY, HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS**
The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology
Report of the Subcommittee on Cities

There are 72 recommendations in this report. Some key examples of recommendations to the federal government include:

Adopt a core poverty eradication goal of lifting people out of poverty [Recommendation 1];

Establish with the provinces a goal that all welfare recipients receive support totalling at least after-tax LICO levels [Recommendation 4];

Further examine a basic annual income based on a negative income tax [Recommendation 5];

Coordinate a nationwide federal/provincial initiative on early childhood learning [Recommendation 16];

As a step toward eradicating child poverty, increase the National Child Benefit to reach \$5,000 by 2012 [Recommendation 34];

Commit to increasing the WITB (Working Income Tax Benefit) to bring recipients at least to the LICO line [Recommendation 35];

With the provinces, develop a national housing and homelessness strategy [Recommendation 44];

Establish a basic income floor for all Canadians who are disabled [Recommendation 53]; and

Use the Urban Aboriginal Strategy as a platform for greater investment and collaboration in addressing the poverty and housing problems facing urban Aboriginal peoples [Recommendation 66].

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APPENDIX II

**Proposed Resolution by The City of Calgary to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities
(FCM)**

Whereas in 1989, the Parliament of Canada unanimously endorsed a motion to end child poverty by the year 2000; and,

Whereas Canada continues to have a high rate of poverty, by one standard measure, with 4.7 million people living in low-income households across Canada in 2006; of whom almost 1 million were children; and,

Whereas poverty is largely concentrated in urban areas, with two-thirds of Canada's poor (over 3 million people) living in Canada's largest urban areas in 2006; and,

Whereas the current economic recession has resulted in significantly deteriorating economic conditions for many Canadian families; and,

Whereas the impacts of poverty significantly impact urban municipalities including costs of Social Assistance, affordable housing, homelessness, policing, fee subsidies and other social supports; and,

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council called on the Government of Canada in 2009 to develop a national strategy to end poverty; and,

Whereas organizations, led by Canada Without Poverty and Citizens for Public Justice, have launched the pan-Canadian *Dignity for All Campaign* that calls for vigorous and sustained action by the federal government to combat the structural causes of poverty in Canada through:

- A federal plan for poverty elimination that complements provincial and territorial plans.
- A federal anti-poverty Act that ensures enduring federal commitment and accountability for results.
- Sufficient federal investment in social security for all Canadians.

Whereas on November 24, 2009, the House of Commons passed the following motion: "That, with November 24th, 2009 marking the 20th anniversary of the 1989 unanimous resolution of this House to eliminate poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000, and not having achieved that goal, be it resolved that the Government of Canada, taking into consideration the Committee's work in this regard, and respecting provincial and territorial jurisdiction, develop an immediate plan to eliminate poverty in Canada for all."

Therefore be it resolved that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities endorses the "Dignity for All Campaign" and calls on the federal government to develop a federal anti-poverty Act that ensures enduring federal commitment and accountability for results with sufficient federal investment in social security for all Canadians; and,

Be it further resolved that the federal government actively consult with municipalities in the development of the announced poverty elimination plan and any forthcoming anti-poverty Act.