

Minister of  
Families, Children and  
Social Development



Ministre de  
la Famille, des Enfants et  
du Développement social

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0J9

MAYOR'S OFFICE  
JUL 11 2016  
VICTORIA, B.C.

Her Worship Lisa Helps  
Mayor of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

JUN 09 2016

Dear Madam Mayor: / *Dear Lisa,*

I am responding to your letter of April 27, 2016, in which you expressed your support for a national conversation on a Basic Income Guarantee for all Canadians. I also received the copy of your letter that the Office of the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, forwarded to me on May 5, 2016.

I appreciate your sending your perspectives for my consideration. As Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, my overarching goal is to increase economic and social security for all Canadians, especially those among us who are the most vulnerable. As a result, our government is taking a number of steps to improve the quality of life of Canadians and to assist those who are living with low income. We are also committed to working with our partners and stakeholders to improve Canadians' quality of life.

Our government has committed to developing a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy that will align with existing provincial and municipal strategies. We intend to set targets to reduce poverty and to measure and publicly report on progress. As part of the development process, my department is creating a plan for engaging partners and stakeholders to explore a variety of options for reducing poverty and strengthening the middle class.

For example, seniors receive basic income through the Old Age Security (OAS) pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). Our government recognizes the importance of these benefits for seniors and is committed to strengthening them to improve seniors' quality of life. Therefore, my department is working with the Department of Finance to increase the GIS by 10 percent for lower-income seniors living alone, to index OAS and GIS payments to a new Seniors Price Index, to cancel the increase in age of eligibility for OAS (65 to 67) and to work with provinces and territories to ensure adequate and coordinated support programs to address poverty among seniors.

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Supporting families and ensuring that every child gets the best possible start in life is another priority of our government. As a result, our government has committed to introducing the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) in July 2016. Similar to the GIS for seniors, the CCB will act as a basic income, but for families with children. The proposed CCB will be a tax-free, income-tested benefit that will be more generous than the current suite of federal child benefits and will be targeted to families who need it most. The CCB will provide a maximum annual benefit of up to \$6,400 per child under the age of 6 and up to \$5,400 per child for those aged 6 through 17. With the introduction of a better-targeted child benefit, about 300,000 fewer children will be living in low income in 2017 than in 2014.

I hope that this information is helpful in addressing your concerns.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JY Duclos'.

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

*P.S.: Looking forward to further engagement!*