

July 5 2017

TO: Councillor Gian Carlo Carra , Chair Community and Protective Services City of Calgary

FROM: Yvonne Stanford, Calgary Social Workers for Social Justice

Dear Councillor Carra,

Calgary Social Workers for Social Justice is an interest group of the Alberta College of Social Workers. We are an active member of the Basic Income Calgary Action Group. The profession of social work could be called “the boots on the ground” on the fight to eliminate poverty, working with and for people living in poverty, and at risk of living in poverty.

In February, 2016, the ACSW passed a resolution in support of an assured annual income. I have attached that resolution.

The City of Calgary, and municipal governments in Alberta, in general are at the front-line in delivering a wide range of public services to local residents. We applaud Enough For All, and the hard work that is being done, raising awareness of the extent of poverty in our community. But we recognize that welfare programs devalue their clients by treating them as untrustworthy, and meddling in their lives. The charity model of giving, rather than the justice model of human rights.

So as social workers, we are working for a Basic Income, that would ensure everyone an income sufficient to meet basic needs, to live with dignity, and to enable full participation in the community. An income that is regular and predictable and unconditionally available to all who need it.

We distinguish income support from the need for adequately funded public services, such as health care, child care, and supports for people with disabilities, and others who face historical disadvantage.

We encourage our City, and all of us working with Enough For all, to advocate to the federal and provincial governments, to work together to consider, investigate, and develop a BI for all Canadians, so everyone “has the income and assets needed to thrive”.

Thank you for listening and for your support.

Yvonne Stanford, Calgary Social Workers for Social Justice

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Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) Resolution on an Assured Annual Income

Whereas, the Health Profession Act, Schedule 27, Profession of Social Workers, defines social work practice and among others includes, “contributing] to the development and improvement of social policy;”

Whereas, ACSW members have recommended that Alberta College of Social Workers actively engage with the Canadian Association of Social Workers and the effort to create agreement for a federal Social Care Act by lobbying the Government of Alberta and its MLAs;

Whereas, there are national, provincial and local efforts to create an assured annual income program using a variety of names such as a Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) a Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI), Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI), Negative Income Tax (NIT) and a Universal Demogrant (UD);

Whereas, all of these efforts share a common purpose, namely, to provide an income to everyone;

Whereas, the principles of the proposed Social Care Act are designed to guide the allocation of federal payments through the Canada Social Transfer (CST) to the provinces;

Whereas, the common good of all Albertans is best served by the principle of universality without a test of eligibility thereby ensuring the means for a modest lifestyle; and,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Alberta College of Social Workers actively promote and support the development of an assured annual income that is consistent with the principles of the CASW proposed Social Care Act, universal in its application and ensuring the means for a modest life style by formally advocating the Alberta Government.