



New release

November 30, 2015

Cutting public jobs and privatization of government services is certainly not going to help the tens of thousands New Brunswickers who are living in poverty

“We are completely confounded by the proposals of Victor Boudreau, Minister of Health and responsible for the Strategic Program Review, when he is saying that the province needs to cut public service jobs and that privatization will help the citizens of this province. How can laying off workers who are making wages above the poverty line, reducing services to the public and centralizing public services or making citizens pay for them, help the more than 88,000 citizens who are right now living in poverty in our province?”, asked Pauline Richard, co-chair of the New Brunswick Common Front for Social Justice.

“We fail to understand how putting a woman or a man out of a job that is not a poverty rate job will help them or their family. We fail to understand where the minister thinks these citizens will find a new job when the level of unemployment is already so high in our province and the private sector is not creating a lot of new jobs. These new unemployed workers will only have two choices, leave the province or join in the short or medium term the rank of the poor. We fail to understand how laying-off workers will help the province’s economy.” continues Ms. Richard.

“Public services are an essential component of the fight against poverty because they are universal, accessible and free. Citizens living in poverty need, perhaps more than others, access to public services like health care. These citizens can’t afford to travel long distance for public services if these services leave their region or are centralized in urban centers. They don’t have extra money in their budget to pay for services if they are privatized. The reality will be an ever increasing financial burden on them and their family and a lack of much needed services,” says Joanne Petitpas, co-chair of the Common Front.

More than five years ago, all political parties adopted unanimously a Poverty Reduction Strategy where they committed to reduce poverty in a significant way.

“How are we going to reduce poverty if we are making decisions right now to put more citizens out of work and reduce public services to available them?” concluded Ms. Petitpas.

For information

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The Common Front for Social Justice is one of the largest democratic and popular organizations in New Brunswick, with close to 75,000 group and individual members. The Common Front brings together individuals as well as local, regional and provincial organizations to work towards the eradication of poverty.