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MUNICIPALITIES

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Ottawa, ON

June 12, 2017

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

It was a great pleasure to have your presence and participation at our Annual Conference last week in Ottawa.

On behalf of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), thank you for your government's productive partnership with local governments, particularly as it relates to your recent engagement with FCM on both the forthcoming National Housing Strategy and the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. Your outreach to local governments through FCM regarding the connected issues of poverty and housing is essential towards ensuring federal action enables local solutions. We are especially appreciative for the productive roundtable discussions focused on poverty reduction held with you and a diverse group of local government representatives that took place alongside the FCM Annual Conference earlier this month in Ottawa.

Each year at the Annual Conference, members consider resolutions submitted by its 2,000 member municipalities from across Canada. Adopted resolutions help inform FCM's policy and advocacy priorities with the Government of Canada. These resolutions represent municipal issues of national significance that fall within federal jurisdiction and therefore require a strong federal partner to help find a solution.

The attached resolution, **Intergovernmental Dialogue on Poverty Reduction**, was submitted by the City of Prince George, B.C., and was adopted at the 2017 FCM Annual Conference in Ottawa. Enabled by the opportunity brought about by your government's commitment to develop a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy, local governments are keen to share their experiences in working to reduce poverty at the local level.

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Poverty is complex and all governments must work together if lasting solutions are to be found. All orders of government must come together to understand how their respective efforts to reduce poverty can align in order for the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy to have a deep impact. A formal intergovernmental table to begin this dialogue would be an important first step.

At the same time, we recognize the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy must reflect the distinct needs and reflect the unique aspirations of Indigenous people. Indigenous-driven solutions to poverty are imperative to the Strategy's success, for which local governments cannot and should not speak.

In support of the attached resolution, FCM calls on Government of Canada to facilitate a Federal/Provincial/Territorial/Municipal (FPTM) dialogue on poverty reduction to ensure that the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy aligns with and supports local and regional actions. FCM also calls on the Government of Canada to engage in dialogue with Indigenous organizations to ensure the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy meets the distinct needs of Indigenous communities.

If you or your staff have any questions about our submission, please contact Dallas Alderson, Policy Manager, at dalderson@fcm.ca, or (613) 907-6284.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Gerbasi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jenny Gerbasi
Deputy Mayor, City of Winnipeg
FCM President

Enclosure

May 16, 2017

Intergovernmental Dialogue on Poverty Reduction

WHEREAS, across Canada – from large urban centres to rural townships, to coastal communities and northern hamlets – poverty is pervasive with between 3 million to 4.5 million Canadians living in poverty.

WHEREAS, from an international perspective, Canada ranks 20th out of 31 industrialized countries in terms of the number of people whose income falls below the poverty line.

WHEREAS, key indicators demonstrate that the negative impacts of poverty are growing, including that food bank use has increased in Canada by 27.8% since 2008 and a 6 % increase in households in Nunavut who are unable to find decent, suitably sized housing they can afford.

WHEREAS, the federal government has committed to developing a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy and is currently conducting consultations pursuant to its development, which is scheduled to end in June 2017.

WHEREAS, poverty may manifest itself differently across communities and regions, whether it is being unable to find affordable housing in large centres, hidden homelessness in rural and northern communities or access to transportation for aging populations in rural communities without public transit; locally driven solutions to this national issue are key to effectively addressing poverty in Canada.

WHEREAS, many municipal governments are developing local poverty reduction strategies, and play a vital role in poverty reduction locally, such as by prioritizing public transit route upgrades in low-income neighbourhoods, providing discounted access to recreation services for low-income families and by employing a social procurement lens to corporate operations.

WHEREAS, poverty is complex and cannot be addressed by one single actor or order of government alone, all three orders of government must act in a coherent manner to address poverty.

WHEREAS, given that Indigenous Canadians experience a disproportionately high rate of poverty both on- and off-reserve in large part as a modern legacy of Canada's Indian Residential Schools and other legacies of colonialism, it is imperative that the Government of Canada work directly with Indigenous organizations to ensure that the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy is shaped by the distinct perspectives and needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis and supports Indigenous-driven solutions to poverty.

RESOLVED, That the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) call on Government of Canada to facilitate Federal/Provincial/Territorial/Municipal (FPTM) dialogue on poverty reduction to ensure that the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy aligns with and supports local and regional actions to maximize the Strategy's impact on the individuals, families and communities experiencing poverty across Canada;

RESOLVED, That the Government of Canada equally engage in dialogue with Indigenous organizations to ensure the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy meets the distinct needs of Canada's Indigenous communities.

City of Prince George (B.C.)

FCM 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE DECISION: Category "A"; RESOLUTION ADOPTED