

Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador
Anglican, Baptist, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Moravian, Mennonite, Muslim, Presbyterian,
Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Sikh, and United Church worshippers
committed to ending the injustice of poverty

February 24, 2014

The Honourable Darin King
MHA, Minister Responsible for the Labour Relations Agency
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Confederation Building
P. O. Box 8700
St John's NL, A1B 4J6

Dear Hon. Minister,

Thank you for your letter of November 28, 2013 regarding the minimum wage announcement for October 2014 and 2015. You have kindly extended an invitation to us for further dialogue.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the views of the Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador. The point of our original request for increase of minimum wage effective January 2013 and subsequent increases each year was to give relief to minimum wage earners as they had fallen behind in real wages due to inflation and the persistent gap between the incomes of these workers compared to other workers. The 75 percent increase in minimum wage in 10 years mentioned in your letter does not address the fact that minimum wages in NL and rest of Canada started at such low rates that they were inadequate to meet the basic needs of these workers.

Equally important to note is that out of 13 jurisdictions in Canada, 7 have higher minimum wage rates than our province at this time. This will most likely remain after the announced date of October 2014 with an increase of 25 cents. NL may even fall further behind as it's likely other jurisdictions will also increase their rates. Some of them have in fact tied their minimum wage rates to Consumer Price Index and the rates will go up accordingly. For example, last month Nova Scotia announced an increase that put it ahead of NL.

We believe our request to make the increases more significant and with immediate effect is quite reasonable. I would like to urge you to reconsider this matter and take the necessary corrective action. People of Newfoundland and Labrador will applaud you and the government for a just decision to revise the previous announcement.

Yours Truly

David Burrows
Coordinator
Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador

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