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George H. Powell  
Religious Social Action Coalition of NL  
3 Elton Place  
St. John's, NL A1A 5B8

November 19, 2015

Dear Mr. Powell,

Thank you for your interest in the NDP's position on poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador. Some of the measures we have proposed for ending poverty are described below.

Poverty is not an inevitable condition. As a society we can choose to direct resources to the elimination of poverty, or we can allow social programs to stagnate and direct investment elsewhere. The NDP believes that, if we invest now to eliminate poverty, we will achieve a more prosperous society for everyone in the future.

An important step in closing the wage gap and getting rid of poverty is to put more money into people's pockets so everyone has enough money for food, shelter and other necessities.

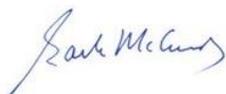
That is why we have supported increases in the minimum wage and income support rates, and other income measures to ensure that low-income groups do not keep falling behind. We tabled a Private Member's Motion in the House of Assembly in 2014 calling on government to accept the recommendations of its own review committee and raise the minimum wage to keep up with cost of living increases. We have also supported a strong union movement because it provides decent wages and benefits to so many workers in the province.

The NDP supports strong social programs that enable children and adults with low incomes to be fully-functioning members of our society. We have pledged to top up EI parental benefits to 80% of income so that parents can stay home with their newborn children with less financial hardship.

We have committed more funds to the NL Prescription Drug Program to provide more help to seniors to pay for their medications. We have also committed to a higher investment in the Rent Supplement Program to provide supplements to more people and make them portable. We will amend the Pensions Benefit Act and the Personal Property Security Act to better protect members' pensions when companies restructure or enter insolvency.

The NDP will reverse the tuition and residence fee hikes, and ensure the grants system is maintained, because fee hikes are a barrier to low-income students obtaining post-secondary training and education to improve their life chances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Earle McCurdy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Earle" being more prominent than the last name "McCurdy".

Earle McCurdy  
Leader, NL NDP