Welcome to the webinar

Where is BC's Poverty Reduction Plan?

JOIN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

We will start in a few minutes
Where is BC's Poverty Reduction Plan?

JOIN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN
Highest Poverty Rate in Canada

Poverty Rates, BC and Canada, Low Income Cut-Off (After Tax), 1986-2010

About half a million British Columbians
Others are Taking Action
Tweet Away!

- @PovReductionBC

Talk to political leaders:
- @christyclarkbc
- @adriandix
- @janesterk
- @CumminsforBC

Join the conversation: #bcpoverty, #bcpoli
1 Support Those Who Aren’t Employed
raise the rates
eliminate barriers to accessing welfare
MLA Welfare Challenge
CAN YOU LIVE on $6.10 A MONTH?
Most of one week's food. Spend $22.76. Only $3.24 left of the $26 for a week.
Do You Want to Lose Weight?  
Tired of Expensive Diets?  

TRY THE 610 DIET

On this plan you are guaranteed to lose over 20 pounds in a month, without buying special food or membership of a fitness club. In Fact You Will Save $$.  

Mr. E lost 30 lbs. in 49 days  
Mr. J lost 26 lbs. in 31 days  

To find out more, go to: 610dietplan.com  

Lose Weight at the Welfare Rate  
Brought to you by the Government of British Columbia
What happened to the Social Safety Net?

RAISE THE RATES

WALK for WELFARE JUSTICE

Wednesday, March 27

JOIN US:
9 am  Meet at Carnegie
Main & Hastings
Transport available

10:15 Christy Clark’s office,
3615 West 4th Ave.

Noon Broadway & Granville

1:10 pm Broadway & Main

2:05 pm Broadway & Commercial

4 pm Rally at
Adrian Dix’s office,
5022 Joyce Street

Contact Raise the Rates:
http://raisetherates.org/
bill50@vcn.bc.ca

We are walking from the office of the Premier, Christy
Clark, to the office of the Leader of the Opposition,
Adrian Dix.
We demand action to raise welfare rates and end
poverty in BC.
Make Work Pay

- Most poor people in BC are working
- $10.25 not enough to lift full-time worker over poverty line
The recently released Rich 100 list shows the extreme wealth at the top. For most of us, it’s a very different story. We’re working harder than ever before but still falling behind.

Over half a million British Columbians live below the poverty line, and most of them have a job. Those on social assistance are working hard too, struggling to meet their basic needs. BC has no plan to tackle these problems. This affects real people and these are their stories.

This is the poverty line.
minimum wage
$10 NOW
.bcfed.ca
Why are some workers still not earning the minimum wage?

75¢ less now per hour than a minimum wage earner: $8.75 vs $9.50

$1.25 less per hour in May 2012 when minimum wage goes up $9.00 vs $10.25

Servers shouldn’t have to pay for Christy Clark and the BC Liberals’ sweetheart deal with the Liquor Lobby.

What else does a lower rate mean for servers?

With a lower wage servers now receive less

- Vacation & stat holiday pay
- Overtime pay
- Severance pay

When Christy Clark increased the minimum wage she included everyone but servers. It’s not fair and is open to abuse.

Whether servers at your local breakfast diner or bartenders at nightclub or pub, servers are told they will be paid less because they make it up in tips.

In fact many bars and restaurants force staff to pool their tips and share it with their non-server co-workers and management.

Other management, while it’s illegal, force staff to pay for any “dine and dash” thefts or breakage and spillage.

Tell Christy Clark to end the unfair server wage.

SIGN THE PETITION AT serverwagepetition.com
Deal With the Housing Crisis

- Increasing numbers of homeless and under-housed
- Immediately start building new social housing units
At least **116,000** people in BC are in housing crisis.

At the tip of the iceberg are **11,000 people**, the visibly homeless who have no homes at all.

Just below the surface of the water are **40,000 hidden homeless** who sleep with family, in cars, or couch surf.

Deeper under water are **65,000 people at risk of homelessness** who spend more than 50% of their income on rent. Many of them live in substandard housing conditions.
SOCIAL HOUSING NOW!

Facing the housing crisis in BC

Tuesday February 5th
Vancouver Public Library
Alice McKay meeting room
(350 W Georgia St)
7pm

Rally in the main VPL room to hear voices from communities throughout BC facing the housing crisis.

We demand 10,000 new units of social housing in BC for the hundred-thousand facing homelessness.

Organized by Social Housing Coalition BC
web: http://socialhousingbc.com
fb: facebook.com/socialhousingcoalitionbc
twitter: @standHousing
email: socialhousingbc@gmail.com
Demands to end the housing crisis in BC

We demand immediate provincial government housing action to solve the housing crisis in BC:

1. **Build** 10,000 units of good quality social housing per year.
2. **Prioritize** social housing units for Indigenous Peoples, migrants, women, seniors, youth, people with mental health and physical disabilities including HIV/AIDs, and vulnerable low-income people who are disproportionately at risk of homelessness and hidden homelessness.
3. **Save** existing low rent housing by enforcing maintenance standards; maintain non-market projects whose operating agreements are expiring; freeze rents & don’t allow increased rents when tenants move; and close loopholes in the Residential Tenancy Act to stop renovictions.
4. **Protect** tenants. Recognize tenant unions and their power to negotiate with landlords; Make all supportive & student housing fully covered by the Residential Tenancy Act.
5. **Include** everyone who needs housing. End eligibility discrimination and make all BC residents eligible for BC Housing. Extend housing rights to temporary migrant workers by granting them permanent legal status.
6. **Fund** social housing through taxation as a social responsibility of the government, and support residents of communities to develop and manage their social housing themselves.

More info: http://socialhousingbc.com
Bring in Universal Child Care

- Comprehensive framework for a high-quality, universal, publicly-funded early learning and child care program
$10 a Day Child Care Care Plan
The BC Child Care Crisis

- High Fees
- Low Wages
- Too Few Spaces
- Growth of Commercial Child Care
The Poverty Reduction Solution

• No user fee for families earning under $40,000

• $10 a Day

• A living wage for Early Childhood Educators
5 Poverty reduction as a prescription for Health
Life Expectancy

Source – Presentation slide, M. Pennock, Provincial Health Services Authority
Prevalence of Heart Disease by Income

(Data source: Statistics Canada Canadian Community Health Survey Cycle 3.1 2005; Percentages were standardized to the 2004 Canadian population as the reference with bootstrap weight valued provided by Statistics Canada. Confidence intervals for age-standardized percentages (45-64, 65+) were calculated with the method based on the gamma distribution developed by Fay and Feuer in 1997)
Hospitalization Rates

Pan-Canadian Age-Standardized Hospitalization Rates by SES Group*

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**Note**
* For each indicator, all rates are significantly different between low-, average- and high-SES groups at the 95% confidence level.

**Source**
CPHI analysis of 2003–2004 to 2005–2006 Discharge Abstract Database and National Trauma Registry data, Canadian Institute for Health Information.
Causes of the Causes

- Poverty and Low Income
- Early Childhood Experiences
- Exclusion and Racism
- Literacy and Education
Health and Social Problems are Worse in More Unequal Countries

Index of:
- Life expectancy
- Math & Literacy
- Infant mortality
- Homicides
- Imprisonment
- Teenage births
- Trust
- Obesity
- Mental illness – incl. drug & alcohol addiction
- Social mobility


www.equalitytrust.org.uk
6 Train and Educate

- Properly fund K-12 education to mitigate inequalities
- Increase accessibility of post-secondary education
ROCK THE VOTE BC
a campaign of the Canadian Federation of Students – BC
Who we are:

- 15 students’ unions across BC;
- students from all regions of the province;
- college and university students
  - domestic, international, graduate, undergraduate, and trades students.
Background

Education Shouldn’t be a Debt Sentence campaign, launched summer 2009

Campaign goals

• progressively reduce tuition fees to 2001 levels
• reinstate a provincial system of needs-based grants
• eliminate interest rates on student loans
• restore FTE (full-time equivalent) funding to post-secondary institutions

Rock the Vote BC re-launched as final stage of debt sentence campaign, fall
Campaign Goals

‣ Increase voter turn-out among students
‣ Identify issues that matter to students and young people
‣ Translate student issues into votes
Only 1 in 4 British Columbians under the age of 25 voted in the 2005 election.
Tuition fees. Tankers. Transit

- tuition fees | record high tuition fees in BC
- tankers | environmental protection
- transit | improve access and frequency of BC’s public transit system
Focus on Marginalized Groups

- Children
- Aboriginal people
- People with disabilities and mental illness
- Immigrants and refugees
- Single senior women
2012 CHILD POVERTY REPORT CARD

NOVEMBER 2012

PRODUCED BY

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition

firstcallbc.org
CHILD POVERTY RATES BY PROVINCE, 2010

Source: Statistics Canada, Income in Canada 2010, Table 802, Cat. no. 75-202-X
CHLDR POVERTY RATES FOR CANADA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1976-2010

Source: Statistics Canada, Income in Canada 2010, Table 802, Cat. no. 75-202-X; LICO Before-Tax
CHILD POVERTY RATES IN HIGH-RISK FAMILIES, CANADA, 2005

POOR CHILDREN WITH ONE OR MORE PARENTS EMPLOYED FULL-TIME, FULL-YEAR, 2010

Source: Statistics Canada, special data run, using LICO Before-Tax, 2010
A LIVING WAGE FOR FAMILIES

www.livingwageforfamilies.ca
FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL SHARES OF WELFARE INCOMES, 1989 AND 2010

Disability Without Poverty Network

In April 2011, the BCCPD formed the Disability Without Poverty Network. In addition to the BCCPD the Network’s members are the BC Association for Community Living (BCACL), Canadian Mental Health Association - BC and Yukon Division (CMHA), Social Planning and Research Council (SPARC) and the Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS).

The goal of our network is to develop positive recommendations for change so that British Columbians who have a disability and who receive the Persons with Disabilities Benefit (PWD) are not living in poverty.

In July 2012, we completed our paper entitled, Overdue: The Case for Increasing the Persons with Disabilities Benefit in BC, which includes the following key proposals:

- Increase the PWD benefit to $1,200 per month
- Index the PWD benefit
- Establish a shelter assistance program for people with disabilities

Our paper makes a strong case that these changes are needed to help ensure PWD recipients are not living in poverty.

Download this paper here.

If you support our proposals and want to write to the Minister of Social Development Moira Stilwell or Premier Christy Clark, please copy us on your correspondence. Minister Stilwell can be reached at moira.stilwell.mla@leg.bc.ca and Premier Clark can be reached at premier@gov.bc.ca.

If you have any questions or comments about our paper, please contact Jane Dyson at jwd@bccpd.bc.ca.
The “Business Case” for Immigration

- Immigration is a means to:
  - Address the province’s labour shortage
  - Address skills shortages

- Immigrants will account for 100% of net growth in the labour force by 2016- Conference Board of Canada

- Immigration of highly skilled professionals provides a “diversity advantage”

- Public opinion polls show strong support for the notion that immigration has a positive impact on the economy
Key Themes and Challenges: Labour Market - Lower employment earnings

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB)
Key Themes and Challenges:
Child poverty rate in BC is worse for recent arrivals

Poverty rates by period of immigration

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Themes and Challenges: Social Justice and Social Cohesion

- Racialized Poverty
- Lack of engagement in civil society
- Lack of services and rights for TFWs and Refugee Claimants
- Systemic barriers faced by immigrant women dealing with domestic violence
  - Lack of language and culturally competent service
  - Lack of knowledge and info on the systems
- “Brain waste” - underutilizing the skills and education of qualified and capable immigrants (e.g., recognition of credentials)
About COSCO BC

COSCO briefly...

COSCO is the largest federation of seniors’ organizations in the Province of British Columbia, representing seniors for over 50 years.

COSCO continues to grow and is

- registered under the Societies Act in 1981 as 'The Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of British Columbia'
- an umbrella organization made up of 75+ seniors’ organizations as well as a significant number of individual associate members
- volunteer run and operated by an elected board of directors
- working to protect and enhance the many social programs that over the years we fought and paid for, and are now being eroded by both the Provincial and Federal Governments
- a member of the BC Centre for Policy Alternatives, the BC Health Coalition, The British Columbia Public Interest Advocacy Centre and the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens' Federation

COSCO directors and members collaborate with others in a common cause.

COSCO’s PURPOSE (excerpt from the constitution)
We Can Afford This
WE PAY NOW, OR PAY LATER
The cost of BC’s tax cuts: Tax options for paying for a poverty reduction plan

Seth Klein
March 2013

www.policyalternatives.ca
The context

• To pay for action on poverty and homelessness, we need additional revenues. But...

A decade+ of tax cuts = provincial tax revenues as share of GDP ↓ 1.6%

= $3.5 billion/year foregone revenues
Provincial income tax revenue as a % of GDP

If BC taxes were equal to the Canadian average, we’d have $2.4 billion more
If personal income taxes were raised on some individuals in BC so the revenue could be used to reduce income inequality, protect the environment and improve access to public services, at what income level should people start paying more taxes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All income levels</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$55,000 per year</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70k</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$85k</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$100k</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$150k</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$200k</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$250k</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Only 10% say there should be no tax increase at all at any level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>% Willing to Pay</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide more access to home and community based health care services for seniors</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate Medical Service Plan premiums</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect BC’s forests and endangered species</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase welfare rates to ensure the poorest British Columbians can meet basic food and shelter needs</td>
<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce class sizes in K-12 education</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invest in an affordable housing strategy</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make public transit more accessible and convenient</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce the provincial debt</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce tuition fees for post secondary education by 50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a $10/day child care program</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund home and building retrofits to reduce BC's greenhouse gas emissions</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Scenario #1

income tax change $\rightarrow$ raises $\rightarrow$ could fund

Increase existing top bracket from 14.7% to 17%
(only top 5.5% of BC tax-filers affected)

$375$ million increase in welfare rates of $\$200$ to $\$400$/month
Scenario #2

income tax change → raises → could fund

New tax bracket:
Income over $150k taxed at 18%
(only top 2% of tax-filers affected)

$400 million

2,000 units of social housing per year
Scenario #3

income tax change → raises → could fund

2 new brackets @

$150k of income (18% tax rate)

$200k of income (21% tax rate)
This bracket would only affect top 1%

$700 million

2,000 social housing units/yr

PLUS

$300 million to restore class sizes, composition and specialist teachers to level 5 years ago
Scenario #7

20% increase to all tax brackets plus two new upper-income brackets

**Raises ~$2.3 billion**

Could fund social housing; welfare increases; restore class sizes, composition and specialist teachers to where they were 5 years ago; 1st phase of child care plan; and needed investments in community health care; and MCFD increases; and post-secondary increases; and substantial increase to environmental protection
OTHER OPTIONS

- Carbon tax

- Close loopholes and reduce deductions (personal and corporate)
  - RRSP deduction costs BC $459 million
  - 50% exclusion of capital gains costs $3.6 billion federally

- Reform the home-owners grant
  - costs BC $780 million

- Increase corporate taxes, currently the lowest in the country (each 1% increase raises ~$200 million)

- Increase resource royalties

- Luxury taxes

- Vehicle taxes

- Regulating and taxing cannabis
Community Action

Most other places have plans due to community pressure
One quarter of BC children live in poverty. A hungry learner is a struggling learner.
END CHILD POVERTY
WE DON’T NEED BANDAID SOLUTIONS
WHAT YOU CAN DO
Join the Election Campaign

› Download the election resources on our website:
  › Poverty Reduction Plan factsheet and poster
  › Election Guide
  › Cost of Poverty factsheet
  › and more...
bcpovertyreduction.ca

Where is BC's Poverty Reduction Plan?

JOIN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN
WHERE IS BC’S POVERTY REDUCTION PLAN?

JOIN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN!

A call is building across British Columbia for a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy. You’ve heard the call and joined the call, and now you want to pass it on to your local MLA candidates. The lead-up to May’s provincial election is a window of opportunity for you to get the attention of candidates in your riding.

BC has the highest poverty rate in Canada, but is one of the last provinces left without a poverty reduction plan.

The basic necessities of housing and food are out of reach to many in our province. Over half a million British Columbians live below the poverty line and 87,000 of those are children. Now is the time to let candidates from all parties know that you want to vote for someone willing to make a commitment to a poverty reduction plan — a detailed and accountable strategy with concrete and legislated targets and timelines to dramatically reduce homelessness and poverty in our province.

You can be more effective if you take some time to prepare and this guide is designed to help you do that.

This guide will give you some tips for Getting Started, provide you with a brief overview of the Political Context, the Breakdown of poverty in BC, and offer suggestions for some engaging questions.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Over 375 organizations around the province and thousands of individuals have joined the call for a poverty reduction plan.

A recent poll commissioned by the BC Healthy Living Alliance found that 78% of British Columbians think it is important for political leaders in BC to address poverty with a provincial poverty reduction plan with clear targets and timelines.

All but two provinces in Canada either have poverty reduction plans or are in the process of adopting them, and many are already seeing success. They’re saving lives and money by tackling the issue of poverty head on.

In most places it was community pressure that convinced the government to take action. That’s why we need you to take action today.

bcpovertyreduction.ca
A Poverty Reduction Plan For...

Healthy People and Healthy Communities

**Higher Wages**
Most people living in poverty have a job, and almost half the poor children in BC live in families with at least one parent working full-time. Increase the minimum wage and index it to inflation, and encourage employers to adopt the Living Wage.

**Welfare**
Welfare and disability benefits are far too low at $610 for a single person and $906 for a person with a disability. Significantly increase welfare and disability rates, and index them to inflation.

**Housing**
BC has the worst record of housing affordability in Canada and increasing numbers of homeless and underhoused people. Re-commit to building thousands of new social housing units per year.

**Child Care**
The high cost of child care is a huge burden for many families and makes it completely inaccessible to others. Adopt the $10/day child care plan.

**Health**
Poverty is a fundamental determinant of health, and the health care costs of poverty add up to $1.2 billion/year. Expand essential health services, like dental and optical, and enhance community health care for seniors and people with disabilities.

**Education**
Without meaningful, long-term training and education, people cannot access stable, well-paying jobs. Adequately fund schools and make post-secondary education and training more accessible.

**Focus on Marginalized People**
Aboriginal people, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, single mothers and single senior women have high poverty rates. Focus on the structural barriers faced by each group.

BC has the highest poverty rate in Canada, but is one of the last provinces left without a poverty reduction plan.

Join the call at BCPOVERTYREDUCTION.CA

We acknowledge the support of our funders:
Tell Your Candidates

- Organize or attend All Candidate’s Meetings in your local community
- Talk to candidates or volunteers who knock on your door
- Tell them you want a poverty reduction plan with clear targets and timelines
Make Your Voice Heard

‣ HOLD community events, e.g. STAND for Housing
‣ TELL newspapers
‣ CALL in to radio talk shows
‣ TALK with friends and family
Connect

www.BCPovertyReduction.ca

Join us on Facebook:
facebook.com/BCPovertyReductionCoalition

Follow us on Twitter: @PovReductionBC

Email me at trish@bcpovertyreduction.ca