

## Updates

- **The Province**

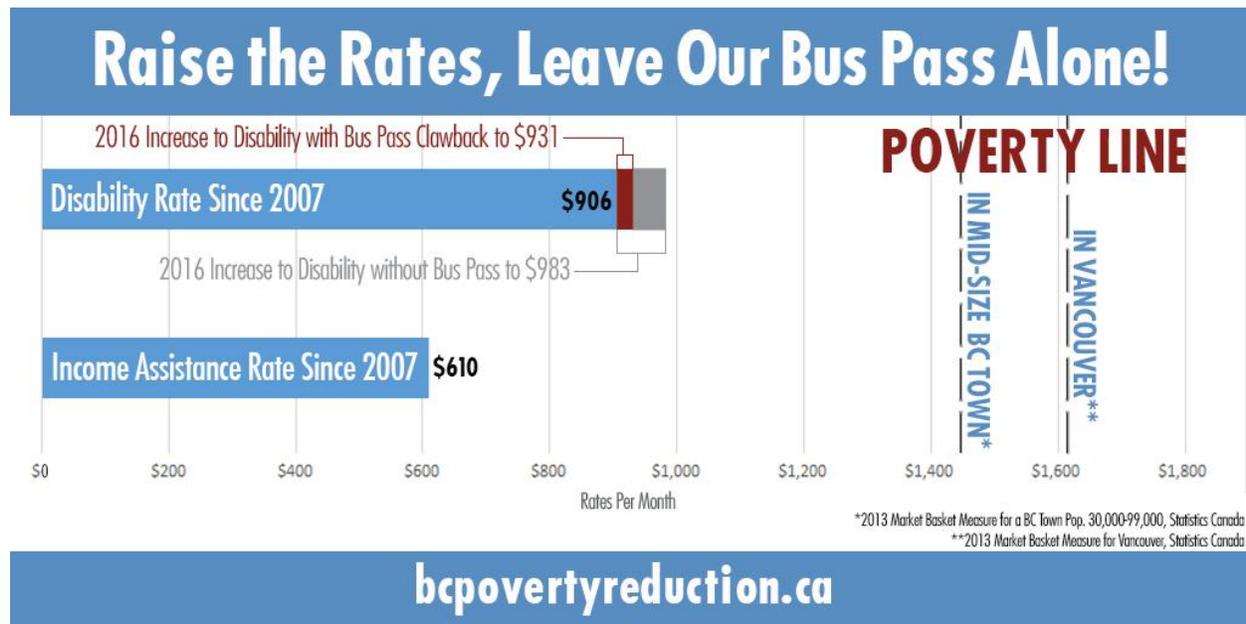
Congratulations to Cynnimon who was published in the Province! You can see the Cynnimon's column here: <http://blogs.theprovince.com/2016/02/23/cynnimon-rain-poor-b-c-singles-need-more-support-from-victoria/>

- **PRC Coalition**

We didn't have any reps in place to go to the last PRC meeting, but both Omar and Sharnelle were there in their other capacities. Last month, Cynnimon volunteered to be one of the reps at the meeting. Tara would like to be the other Rep. Omar will make sure that Trish adds Tara to the coalition mailing list, and is brought up to date. The next PRC Coalition meeting will be on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:30 AM (the day after the next Poverty Free Action Team meeting)

- **The budget**

There was a small increase to disability rates for the first time since 2007. Income assistance rates are still frozen. Both are still far beneath the poverty line. In addition, the bus pass program was cancelled, which means for people who used the bus pass, much of the increase will go towards paying for the bus pass. The PRC posted this graphic on social media yesterday demonstrating the extent of the changes:



You can see it on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BCPovertyReductionCoalition/photos/a.182830125127563.44387.108826069194636/941537372590164> and Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/PovReductionBC/status/702307957653037056>

ACORN BC hosted a rally, and there is a petition you can sign with Inclusion BC:  
<http://www.inclusionbc.org/whats-new/sign-petition-raise-rates-leave-our-bus-pass-alone>

There will likely be many more actions because people are very angry about this.

### Poverty Flags

*Last year, the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition set out on a road-trip around the province hosting community workshops where community members made “poverty flags” that show what poverty looks like in local communities and our shared hopes for a better BC. The VPL has kindly given us space to display these flags from February 29<sup>th</sup> to March 13<sup>th</sup>. We’ve partnered with Raise the Rates, who will be hosting an event on Saturday at 1pm at Carnegie Community Centre to make more flags. Raise the Rates has named the exhibit: Making Poverty Visible.*

*The exhibit launches at the Vancouver Public Library on Monday, February 29 at 12 noon with local storytellers with experience of poverty. Then we have scheduled outreach shifts, where we will have our usual outreach materials as well as a table where the public can make their own flag.*

The latest schedule for outreach shifts that I have is:

Sunday March 6	Bettina and Darin, 11-12, Mehak and Saguna 12 -4
Saturday March 12	Omar and Monika from 12 - 4 with Cynnimon helping 2-4 if possible
Sunday March 13	Jennifer from 12- 3 and Tanyss 12 – 4, Cynnimon helping from 2-4, Alanna helping from 12-2 pm

An email will go out next week to confirm shifts. If you would like to help out, please let us know. The more, the merrier!

**AN IMPORTANT NOTE FOR PEOPLE DOING OUTREACH SHIFTS FROM THE VPL:** “For all information tables, we ask the onsite organizers to stay at the table, instead of walking around the Promenade and approaching people, so that everyone has unrestricted access to and from the library.”

Bettina suggested asking librarians to put up a display of books about poverty in the library.

*We discussed how unlike the other flags, when there was a whole workshop beforehand, people might need a prompt before they made the flags. Here were suggestions for prompts from the group:*

- “Let’s make poverty visible”
- “Draw a picture to make poverty visible”
- “What does poverty make you feel?”
- Have them play the [“Price is Wrong” game](#) first
- Why are the wealthy and powerful make decisions for the poor?

### Facilitation Training

*We’re looking to create new ways for people to engage with the Action Team without necessarily having to go to Action Team meetings, as well as new ways that we can help Action Team members develop skills that they’re looking to practice. One idea was to offer Train-the-Trainers facilitation training so that Action Team members can lead workshops in schools and the community as well as lead trainings for future volunteers. Tanyss has developed two workshops: one that familiarises PFAT members with BCPRC’s presentations, and one that is focused on youth engagement techniques. Below are notes from*

*the discussion about whether the Action Team would like to receive these workshops and what they would like to get out of it.*

- It's important as a facilitator to create a safe space where people don't feel judged. The training should include things you can do to help create a safe space. For example, learning when you come in to ask if people have accessibility needs, and ask people what they expect from a group.
- It would be great to be able to practice; getting to know the presentations and the workshops; Roleplay: be the class, and then practice being on the other side.
- There was a question about workshops themselves; how do they fit within the PRC's philosophy;
- How do the social and economic positions of the facilitators affect the nature of the workshop?
- It would be interesting to learn from Trish about her process designing workshops and creating spaces that work
- We'd love to sit in on Trish doing those workshops as well
- General preference for Saturday afternoons, and space between the two workshops

*Omar, Trish and Tanyss will discuss this feedback, and hopefully start trying to schedule workshops for April (hopefully sending out a doodle poll soon)*

### **Poverty Mythbusters Video**

*We've been showing the latest draft of the Poverty Mythbusters video*

*([https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-cW7EoK\\_JSVX1N0TS1oeTBvN2s](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-cW7EoK_JSVX1N0TS1oeTBvN2s)) to other organisations for feedback. We're likely one or two drafts away from a Final Cut. We watched it together and made some comments.*

- The room noise needs to be bumped up
- It seems like he's applying for PWD not CPP Pension, so change pension to benefit in the opening sequence
- Start things off a little slower (it starts too abruptly)
- There was debate about whether there should be facts at the end; I think the general consensus at the end of the debate was to leave the facts off the end, and put it on the website, in the video description etc.
- There was debate about whether there should be more context about who the narrator is personally (for example, through a couple title cards providing context) or if it's stronger without those details (to make it clear that it's not about pointing the finger at this one person, but the system in general is the problem). I don't think there was consensus either way.
- The pause before "it hangs up" might be a little long

### **#ReThink**

*Over the next seven months in the leadup to the Provincial Election, we're taking Adam's suggestion to expand #Rethink to other things. After talking with PRC members, we've decided to assign each month to each of the pillars of the poverty reduction plan (March #RethinkHousing, April #RethinkWelfare, May #RethinkChildcare, June #RethinkEquity or #RethinkEquality or #Rethink Inclusion [focus on marginalised people], July #RethinkHealth, August #RethinkEducation, September #RethinkWork).*

One idea that sparked interest was a podcast where a member of the Action Team has a conversation with an advocate or activist in a particular field:

- Cynnimon could look for recording equipment from SFU; we could use the VPL Inspiration lab etc.
- Doug could help with prepping someone; he used to write radio scripts
- We'd need Action Team members comfortable with starting and carrying conversations

Beyond the electronic world, it was re-iterated that it's important to stay involved with Community Events

**Miscellaneous Ideas That Were Brainstormed throughout the meeting that don't fit under any headline**

It would be an interesting art installation to reconstruct an SRO to have people walk through (what are the implications of a 10x10 existence, with bedbugs etc)

The Senior Advocate is hiring 1500 volunteers to go out to evaluate housing establishments; it would be interesting to get that data that they're collecting

We could make a Street Play

Food Insecurity and Transportation are two important elements to poverty that aren't in the current pillars of the poverty reduction plan.