

Newfoundland & Labrador Association of

Social Workers

September 8, 2017

Honorable Al Hawkins
Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour
P. O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Hawkins:

The Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers (NLASW) is the regulatory body and professional association for social workers in this province. In the pursuit of excellence in social work, the NLASW is actively engaged in social policy analysis, with a key priority area being poverty reduction.

The NLASW followed with interest the news story out of Manitoba on August 28, 2017 regarding the claw back of child support payments from social assistance income rates, and the advocacy that is happening in that province to remove this claw back in the best interests of children. British Columbia was the first province to make this policy change in 2015 implementing a 100% exemption of child support from assistance income. Ontario and the Northwest Territories announced similar exemptions in 2016. The NLASW is recommending that the Department of Advanced, Skills and Labour also implement this policy change.

The NLASW believes that a health in all policies approach is necessary if we are to enhance wellness and health outcomes in this province. Changing the policy to eliminate the claw back of child support payments from income support benefits will provide lone parents on income support with greater opportunity to invest in the health and wellness of their children. This is also important in terms of advancing the provincial poverty reduction strategy and supporting the rights of children and youth; a recommendation that is supported by Campaign 2000.

The NLASW looks forward to continuing to work with government and the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour to inform policies and programs to meet the needs of children and youth in this province.

Sincerely,



Glenda Webber MSW, RSW

President
NLASW