

**All Party Committee on Basic Income**  
Meeting #2 Minutes – December 12, 2022  
1:00pm – 3:00pm  
CSSD Boardroom

---

**In attendance:**

Hon. John Abbott - Minister, Children, Seniors and Social Development (Chair)  
Hon. Bernard Davis - Minister Responsible for Labour  
Sherry Gambin-Walsh - MHA, Placentia – St. Mary's  
Jim Dinn – MHA, St. John's Centre  
Craig Pardy – MHA, Bonavista  
Sheila Regehr – Chair, Basic Income Canada Network  
Aisling Gogan, ADM, Children, Seniors and Social Development  
Scott Fleming - Policy Analyst, Third Party Caucus  
Bradley George - Executive Assistant to Minister John Abbott  
Renee Ryan – Director of Social and Economic Well-Being, Children, Seniors and Social Development

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

- The Chair welcomed Sheila Regehr to the meeting and there was a roundtable of introductions. Sheila Regehr is a founding member of the Basic Income Canada Network, and its Chairperson since 2014. She is also a former Executive Director of the National Council of Welfare, an independent advisory body to the federal government. Sheila Regehr was invited to speak to the All Party Committee to share her expertise around the concept of Basic Income.

**2. Presentation – Current Developments Related to Basic Income – Sheila Regehr**

- Sheila Regehr thanked the Chair for the invite and stated that it was encouraging to see all-party work on Basic Income progressing, including the Newfoundland and Labrador All-Party Committee, the PEI All Party Special Committee on Poverty and the federal All-Party Anti-Poverty Caucus.
- The following topics were discussed:
  1. Policy Debates
    - The Basic Income Canada Network (BICN) was founded in 2008. Since that time, there have been differing opinions on the best approach to Basic Income, with a movement towards some consensus on the most important components, including:
      - unconditional benefits;
      - a focus on those 18-64 eligibility (as they are not covered by the more successful elements of the current income security framework i.e., Canada Child Benefit and Guaranteed Income Supplement);
      - adequacy of amount to move people out of poverty; and
      - need for cooperation across all levels of government.

- BICN has proposed a model that decreases poverty, increases income equality and improves income security.
2. Updates Across Canada - There have been some initiatives in Canada directly or indirectly related to Basic Income. This includes PEI advocacy work, NWT review of their Income Assistance program, the Ontario Basic Income pilot and the BC Expert Panel on Basic Income. There is also increasing advocacy at the municipal level across Canada.
  3. Anti-Poverty Work - There has been debate about connecting Basic Income to the anti-poverty movement. Some see Basic Income as the solution for eliminating poverty while others see it as a social safety net to protect against different sets of societal circumstances, including the changing nature of work. This latter view sees the potential for Basic Income to improve people's lives, beyond a reduction in poverty.
  4. Deserving / Undeserving - There are differing views of who does or does not 'deserve' financial social support and this tends to leave single adults very vulnerable to poverty.
    - "Deserving" populations include children, persons with disabilities and seniors. There are programs that target these specific populations: Canada Child Benefit, Guaranteed Income Supplement and the planned Canada Disability Benefit.
    - Single adults from 18-64 (that do not have a visible disability or are perceived to be able-bodied) are more often seen as 'undeserving' of help in that they are seen to be choosing not to work. This does not acknowledge the existence of 'invisible' illness/disability or the enduring impact of intergenerational and childhood trauma and poverty.
    - A Basic Income empowers people and is a long-term investment that can increase well-being for individuals, families and communities, without governments passing moral judgement on who 'deserves' it. Properly designed, a basic income approach would not create a disincentive to work
- Committee members discussed these concepts, including lessons learned from the benefits of the 'baby bonus' following Confederation, the new Canada Child Benefit, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and CERB benefits.

### **3. Future Meetings and Next Steps**

- The Committee discussed potential topics and guest presentations for future meetings, including Basic Income NL and the Health Accord as well as executive directors of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Community Centres.
- Staff were asked to arrange for Basic Income NL members to attend the next meeting. Committee members were asked to come back with other potential topics and guest speakers.
- The Committee emphasized the need to speak to people with lived experience (poverty, minimum wage, gig economy) to ensure that their voices inform any recommendations. It was agreed that as soon as they are concluded, CSSD staff will

share information on lived experience sessions taking place to inform the development of the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan, as well as any other similar sessions that have taken place recently. Once the committee has reviewed, the committee can decide what additional sessions may be necessary.

#### **4. Minutes**

- The Chair circulated minutes from the first meeting and asked committee members to review them for approval at the next meeting, date to be determined.

Renee Ryan, Recorder