

Housing, Green Jobs – A Pathway out of Poverty

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Whereas: Canada's social housing inventory includes over 600,000 homes meeting the needs of low-income people. However, much of the social housing requires substantial condition and energy efficiency upgrades. There is also a great need to build more social housing units across Canada to meet the needs of 1.5 million Canadians in core housing need. Building and energy efficiency retrofits provide the most immediately available, attainable and cost effective green job investment opportunities.

Whereas: Many people who require social housing have shared characteristics. First, they often live in areas where poverty and high unemployment are prevalent. Second, many face multiple barriers to employment and require training and supports in order to successfully move into the work force. Thus, those in need of social housing are also those in need of jobs.

Whereas: When we address the demand for affordable housing and increased energy efficiency it should be developed in conjunction with income-generating poverty reduction strategies for Canadians who face barriers to the labour market to reduce the growing need for housing assistance and income support. This can be achieved through targeted labour market development that links those who most need work with the jobs that most need doing. A particular focus should also be placed on addressing the employment and training deficits experienced by aboriginal communities, which have an especially young population.

Whereas: It is within the priorities of both provincial and federal governments to create employment opportunities and the creation and rehabilitation of public housing can be an engine for employment development.

Whereas: In 2009 the federal and provincial/territorial governments demonstrated that they understood the green job creation potential of upgrading this housing by committing to invest more than \$1 billion over two years. This initial investment should now be followed by a more comprehensive social housing upgrade program that brings the homes to a specific and high standard of both condition and energy efficiency.

Whereas: As energy prices increase, the financial burden to social housing providers, and to other low-income households paying their own utilities, grows and adds to the affordability gap between what low-income Canadians can afford to pay for housing, and the cost of that housing. This in turn is putting pressure on governments' housing and income support programs that often have to bridge the affordability gap.

Whereas: Job creation, particularly when focused on creating opportunities for marginalized populations, helps to stabilize communities and raise people out of poverty. Furthermore, generating

local employment can keep money circulating in the local economy, thus improving social and economic conditions for all.

Be It Resolved That: CCEDNet Manitoba urge all levels of government to ensure the creation of affordable housing and renovation, maintenance and retrofitting of existing affordable housing is done in tandem with comprehensive employment development strategies that target low-income people and reduce the growing need for housing assistance and income support.