

## **2019 - 8 Reversing Child Apprehension through Addressing Poverty, and promoting Meaningful Employment through Social Enterprise**

**Mover: BUILD Inc.**

**Whereas:** Forty per cent of all children in care were zero to two years of age when they first came into care. Almost 60 percent of children in care are permanent wards, meaning they are under the permanent guardianship of a Child and Family Services (CFS) agency and the guardianship rights of their parents have been terminated. Fifty-four per cent of all permanent wards are under the age of 10.

**Whereas:** Half the participants in the Street Census who are experiencing homelessness had spent time in Child and Family Services Care. Close to two-thirds of participants in the census who had been in CFS care became homeless within a year of leaving care.

**Whereas:** It costs approximately \$47,000 a year to offer supports to each child in care. Funding for Child and Family Services has increased exponentially over the last few decades, but the number of children in care has only increased.

**Whereas:** Living in poverty is a major risk factor contributing to child apprehension. 43% of Indigenous people living in Winnipeg - compared to 16% of non-Indigenous people - have recently been estimated to be living under the low-income cut-off. Almost 90 per cent of all children in care are Indigenous. This overrepresentation in the CFS system is caused by a legacy of social exclusion, colonization, economic marginalization, and systemic poverty.

**Whereas:** Social enterprises in Manitoba providing employment with wrap-around supports for people have successfully provided meaningful employment for individuals formerly involved with CFS. Social enterprises, with a social, economic, and environmental triple bottom line offers a tested alternative to ongoing homelessness, poverty, and social exclusion for individuals involved in CFS, as well as their families.

**Whereas:** Manitoba Housing has been supporting social enterprise through its procurement for the past ten years, has committed in the Manitoba Social Enterprise Strategy to double the amount of money it spends on social enterprise by 2018, and has more purchasing opportunities for social enterprise. In 2016, Manitoba Housing, in partnership with four social enterprises they contract and Simpact Strategy Group, conducted a Social Return on Investment analysis for Manitoba Housing's social procurement. The analysis found that "through a total investment of \$2.56 M by Manitoba Housing and other government and non-profit agencies, the four social enterprises created a social and economic return on investment with a total present value of \$5.995 M. This means that for every dollar invested \$2.23 of social and economic value was created." Four areas within the Provincial government experienced a total value of \$1.1 M as a result of the work of these social enterprises (Treasury, Justice, Social Services and Public Insurance). This \$2.56 M investment and the economic multiplier represents the extra costs of supporting WISE and their employees, and does not include the cost and economic multiplier of the goods and services received. This supports approximately 220 jobs."

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**Whereas:** Social enterprises see a great return on investment. From the 2014 Manitoba Social Enterprise Sector Survey, over 125 social enterprises in Manitoba covering a wide range of social missions, paid over \$30 million in wages in 2013. Between 2015-2018, 2,433 people gained training or employment opportunities from the Manitoban workforce-integration social enterprises. At any given time, there may be several hundred people in training-focused positions, and several hundred more in employment-focused positions. For an investment that will be made through government procurement regardless, social enterprises offer savings in other government areas, including justice, health, and social services, and are a proven sound investment to achieve social, economic, and environmental goals.

**Whereas:** The Province of Manitoba and Manitoba municipalities have many opportunities to increase purchasing from social enterprises within their various departments and institutions.

**Whereas:** Reducing the number of children and youth in care through transformational reforms to our child welfare system, guided by the recommendations of the Legislative Review Committee and in partnership with families, communities, Indigenous leaders and the Government of Canada, is a priority of the government of Manitoba; as well as reducing the number of people on social assistance through access to meaningful employment for those who are able to work.

**Whereas:** Bill 223 passed in the Manitoba Legislature in November 2018, amending the Child and Family Services Act so that no child can be apprehended solely because of poverty.

**Whereas:** Interventions that address the root causes of crime, focusing on poverty, employment and mental health - as opposed to increasing the number of child apprehensions and increased involvement with the CFS system - have proven to be successful in our province, and lead to better social and economic outcomes.

**Be It Resolved That:** CCEDNet - Manitoba urge the Province of Manitoba to immediately reverse its trend toward increasing child apprehension and the number of children and youth in care, and instead focus on addressing the root causes of poverty, including meaningful employment, through:

- A. Directing the Department of Families to lead cross-departmental engagement with social enterprises as a component of poverty reduction, reducing number of children and youth in care, and support Manitobans who wish to work to access education, training, and meaningful work. The Province should adopt a comprehensive government-wide approach to social procurement and purchasing, with a focus on social benefit and community employment clauses.
  - B. Ensuring social enterprises can access the necessary wrap-around supports for their employees, including housing, addictions treatment, and cultural healing.
  - C. Reinvesting the savings accrued by social enterprise through reductions in child apprehension into community-led, poverty reduction priorities.
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