



The Fraser Institute

United Call to End Legislation that Causes Poverty

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VANCOUVER, BC>>> The Fraser Institute today expressed solidarity with the group End Legislated Poverty which came to join The Fraser Institute in demonstrating against government actions which cause poverty levels to be higher than they would otherwise be. A considerable amount of the Fraser Institute's work has been targeted at governmental actions which have raised the amount of poverty experienced in B.C. and across Canada.

According to Fraser Institute executive director Dr. Michael Walker, B.C. has enacted legislation that has further impoverished those most in need of assistance. "The current government's list of 'accomplishments' reads more like an Orwellian prescription to push out those already down," said Dr. Walker. "The list begins with minimum wage laws and their close cousin, fair wage laws; legislation inhibiting the right to work; tax rates on entrepreneurs which are the highest in North America; high welfare rates which induce people into self-destructive behaviour patterns; and a failure to provide adequate income to those least capable of helping themselves...."

Dr. Walker also pointed out that under the current provincial administration, welfare rolls have risen by 37 percent, despite the fact that British Columbia has experienced the strongest economic growth in the country and some of the most sustained economic growth in its history.

"It's time to recognize," said Walker, "that government is generally no friend of the poor. Governments feather the nests of the politically influential, and legislation usually ends up taking money and resources from the majority to give to the legislatively-benefited minority."

The Fraser Institute called upon End Legislated Poverty to add its voice to the growing chorus of people asking for a restructuring and reinvention of government to benefit all British Columbians, especially those who are in most need of help.

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Established in 1974, The Fraser Institute is an independent public policy organization based in Vancouver.

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