



Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

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October 12, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister of Canada
Ottawa, ON
<Prime Minister/Premier minister> pm@pm.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister:

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), I am writing to share with you the support of our church for a basic income guarantee.

On July 6-8, 2017, the ELCIC gathered in Winnipeg, Manitoba for our biennial National Convention. One action of the convention was to adopt a resolution declaring *That the ELCIC support the Basic Income Guarantee initiative*. The 150 delegates from across Canada asked me to share this resolution with you.

Our support for a basic income guarantee can best be understood as an expression of the ELCIC's ongoing commitment to challenge the causes and respond to the consequences of injustice and poverty. The call to address issues of poverty has deep roots in the Christian faith. For over 25 years, the ELCIC has officially supported putting a priority on policies and programs that provide for the basic needs of people, such as health care, education, and income security programs. In 2013, in partnership with the Anglican Church of Canada, the ELCIC issued a Joint Assembly Declaration to address issues of homeless and affordable housing, and responsible resource extraction, including a call for *renewed Federal funding, an integrated national collaborative strategy, and greater accountability on the part of provinces and municipalities in addressing underlying causes of homelessness and in providing opportunities for affordable housing*.

As stated in the Government of Canada's *Towards a Poverty Reduction Strategy – Discussion Paper*:

Income is an essential component of well-being. Adequate income allows individuals to satisfy basic needs like shelter and food. It can also protect them from unexpected life situations (e.g. job loss, illness) that could lead to poverty. Income is also associated with non-economic benefits, such as better health status, educational outcomes and life satisfaction.¹

¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/discussion-paper.html#h2.4>

Providing a minimum level of income is one way of helping to ensure that people have access to their basic human rights, including housing, water, health, life, liberty and security of person.

I encourage you to use a basic income guarantee to ensure that everyone has an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live with dignity. I encourage you to continue to develop a national poverty reduction strategy and address the causes of poverty by working in partnership with all levels of government, business, civil society and private citizens.

Please know that the ELCIC prays for you and for all leaders, as you carry out your responsibilities to provide a society of justice, peace and dignity for all. We also pray for all who are affected by poverty, for guaranteed access to fair income for all.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan C. Johnson", preceded by a small cross symbol.

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

cc: Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, MP, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
Hon. Andrew Scheer, MP, Leader of the Official Opposition, and Leader, Conservative
Party of Canada
Mr. Jagmeet Singh, Leader, New Democratic Party of Canada
Ms. Martine Ouellet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois
Hon. Elizabeth May, MP, Leader, Green Party of Canada
ELCIC National Church Council
Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate, Anglican Church of Canada