



*The Honourable Kim Pate, C.M. | L'honorable Kim Pate, C.M.  
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## **News Release: Canadians Have a Ravenous Appetite for Action on Inequality – Will the Government Feed It?**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020—Senators Lankin, McCallum and Pate hosted a meeting with Indigenous women leaders and MP Leah Gazan to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous women in Manitoba and the place of guaranteed livable basic income in redressing systemic racism and inequality.

“We heard so many examples of the ways in which the pandemic has amplified food and income insecurity, the tragedy of horrendous mortality rates, child removal, homelessness and massive incarceration in Winnipeg that are so clearly tied to income level. We also heard the hopefulness of Indigenous women who foresee the links between the development and co-management of social services and guaranteed livable income so that they can afford food, clothing, housing, sending children to recreation programs or on field trips. The women were very clear,” identified Senator Frances Lankin. “For healthy communities, we need healthy families, including sufficient resources, especially money and time, to spend time with children, volunteer in their classes and the community.”

“We listened carefully to the experiences. Poor people are subject to such harmful stereotypes that characterize them as having ‘budgeting problems’ and GLI as a handout. We also heard the links between economic insecurity, sexual exploitation and other human rights violations. For those on social assistance, most were not able to get CERB. If they were, they are now ending up being cut off from social assistance and so they’ve lost the minimal support they had previously. It was awful to hear about women being or feeling pressured to take both because they wanted to provide for their kids,” continued Senator Mary Jane McCallum.

“I was especially struck by the discussion about the costs of being poor. The women reminded us of the research on how many hours it takes to be poor; the reality is that it takes all day to be poor – at least 12 to 14 hours per day to access services and systems that are supposed to be supporting people,” added Senator Kim Pate. “We heard ample evidence of the ways a guaranteed livable income could relieve economic, health, social and psychological stress and

provide people, especially women, the chance to look forward and plan ahead. We heard the urgent calls for action and committed to work with our Senate and Commons colleagues to advance guaranteed livable income and achieve the changes so desperately needed by and for so many.”

- 30 -

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