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Statement

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Implementing Guaranteed Livable Income Delivers on Anti-Poverty Promises at Net Zero Cost

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY APRIL 7, 2021—The federal Liberal government has [committed](#) to reducing poverty by 50% by 2030. A guaranteed livable income would achieve this by next year at a net zero cost with minimal impact on the labour market.

A new report from the [Parliamentary Budget Office](#) (PBO) estimates that guaranteed basic income—a cash transfer sufficient to meet basic needs and available to anyone with income below a certain cut off—would cut poverty in half by 2022.

In the example provided by the PBO, a guaranteed basic income program would result in only a 1.3% reduction in hours worked and could deliver \$80 billion in supports for a net cost of only \$3 billion, by replacing tax measures like the GST credit and basic personal amount, as well as provincial and territorial social assistance.

This estimate does not include future cost savings associated with downstream social and economic benefits. As Canadian pilots have revealed, a guaranteed livable income would result in reduced reliance on emergency health care due to overall better health outcomes, as well as reduced reliance and consequent costs of police and criminal legal systems.

Nor did the PBO include the cost savings and value of allowing people to care for children, the elderly and those with disabilities, take time away from work to complete education or skills training or launch new and innovative enterprises.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us that leaving people in poverty is not only harmful but can also be fatal.

With the federal liberals set to consider endorsing guaranteed livable income at this week's [Liberal Policy Convention](#), with a [bill](#) and a [motion](#) on this topic on the agenda in the House of Commons, with [PEI](#) on board to pilot implementation of a guaranteed livable income program, Canadians are right to ask: What are we waiting for?

- 30 -

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