



GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN POVERTY REDUCTION

MUST CONTINUE

YELLOWKNIFE (Feb. 10, 2015): The No Place for Poverty Coalition applauds the NWT government for its continued investment in poverty reduction in the 2015 budget. An even greater investment is needed by the next Legislative Assembly to ensure people with low income are able to move out of poverty for good.

“Despite concern with its overall financial health, government has chosen to increase funding for anti-poverty initiatives. Making a choice to help low income NWT residents live better is positive,” says Julie Green, the volunteer co-ordinator of the 31-member No Place for Poverty coalition. Government’s \$7.8 million investment in anti-poverty initiatives last year has been followed by an additional \$4.4 million in last week’s budget

“We especially welcome the long overdue increase in the food allowance for people who on income assistance,” she says. The \$1.75 million food allowance increase announced in the budget is the first since 2007.

The No Place for Poverty Coalition sees the need for significant future investments that only government can make – such as building more affordable housing and spending on child development programs for kids up to three years old.

“We understand that revenue is down, but government needs to continue to take the lead in investments and bringing new partners from other orders of government and business to the table,” Green says. “Government also has tough choices to make between spending on infrastructure versus ensuring NWT residents have the support they need to move out of poverty. It’s worth bearing in mind that investments in education multiply person years of employment well in excess of construction, using the GNWT’s own data.

“We have made significant progress raising awareness of poverty in the NWT since our coalition formed in 2010. The government invested time and resources to create an anti-poverty strategic framework (Building on the Strengths of Northerners – 2013) and its own Anti-Poverty Action Plan last year,” Green says. “We’re looking forward to the next Assembly supporting this vision and continuing this work.

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For more information contact Julie Green at (867) 446-1665. To learn more about the No Place for Poverty coalition, go to: <http://www.alternativesnorth.ca/> and click on the No Place for Poverty icon.