



Minister Linda Reid
Room 029
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Hon. Minister Monte Solberg
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

January 22, 2007

Dear Hon. Minister Solberg and Minister Reid,

Over the last week I have heard from many parents, child care providers, and advocates that child care in British Columbia is in trouble. Due to a lack of federal and provincial leadership, some child care operators across British Columbia are being forced to close their doors or raise their fees. As a result, parents across BC are getting squeezed and their children are losing early learning and child care opportunities.

To date, the federal Conservative government has failed to implement a realistic plan for the promised \$250 million targeted to create child care spaces starting on April 2007. That the British Columbia Liberal government would add insult to injury by further cutting funding for child care under your child care operating program shows a complete lack of fairness for ordinary families.

Under the child care agreement, in April 2005, British Columbia received \$92 million from the federal government. In addition, in the fiscal year 2006 BC received an additional \$85.6 million in federal funding, making the total federal investment over the last two years \$177.6 million. In the interest of disclosure and accountability, it is essential that the British Columbia government immediately explain how these funds were spent and to show that it truly went to the creating and support of child care. Before child care centres are forced to raise their rates and hard-working parents are asked to spend even more on child care it is only reasonable that the BC government shows how every penny of the \$177.6 million was spent.

Canadians have asked for legislation and parliament has voted widely in favour of national legislation, strong standards, and a serious investment in early learning and child care. The NDP's Early Learning and Child Care Act, proudly championed by BC NDP Member of Parliament Denise Savoie (Victoria) would ensure reliable multi-year funding which would ensure that parents have reliable, quality child care for their children.

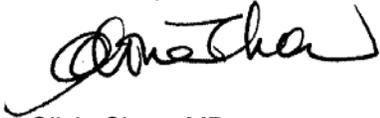
Canadians want a plan to make life more secure. Canadian working families need a minimum of \$1.2 billion annually in federal funding invested in quality early learning and child care. Many feel that your governments have turned your backs on the hard-working families by cutting the childcare funding as of April 2007.

To make matters worse, ordinary families will pay the federal government \$224 million in taxes in return for an ill conceived \$100 monthly child care allowance. They will also notice \$400 million in funding being taken annually from them by the cancellation of the Young

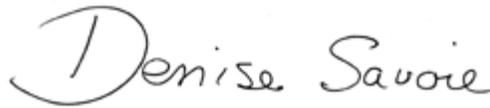
Child Supplement. That adds up to \$1.25 billion over two years – money that is being ripped away from Canada's hard working families.

Now is the time to release a realistic plan to create new child care spaces for children. Now is the time to implement the promise to spend \$250 million on children. Now is also the time to have a plan to reinvest the \$1.25 billion that is being cut from families back into early learning and child care. Working families in British Columbia deserve no less.

Yours truly,



Olivia Chow, MP
Trinity-Spadina
NDP Children and Youth Advocate



Denise Savoie, MP
Victoria



Alex Atamanenko, MP
British Columbia Southern Interior



Catherine Bell, MP
Vancouver Island North



Libby Davies, MP
Vancouver East



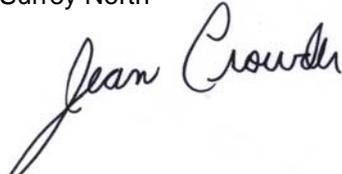
Peter Julian, MP
Burnaby-New Westminster



Penny Priddy, MP
Surrey North



Dawn Black, MP
New Westminster-Coquitlam



Jean Crowder, MP
Nanaimo-Cowichan



Bill Siksay, MP
Burnaby-New Westminster



Nathan Cullen, MP
Skeena-Bulkley Valley