



MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget Offers No Real Plan to Support Workers, Grow Economy

St. John's – While yesterday's provincial budget demonstrated that the collective voice of labour, community and citizens does make a difference, the province is not out of the woods yet.

“Our vision for the Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) economy is based on a real jobs strategy, including green jobs, investment in our communities, and in local and small, medium business – not just attraction of big foreign-owned corporations,” said Newfoundland & Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL) President, Mary Shortall. “What we wanted to see was a plan for how we really diversify our economy, and reduce both gender and income inequality, which is impeding our ability to build an economy that works for all of us.”

Although there were some positive steps taken - no immediate mass layoffs in the public sector, the gas tax reduction, continued tuition freeze for undergraduate students, increased funding for women's centres, investments in child care, mental health, and services for the victims of sexual assault; there was little indication of a real plan that will put more money into the hands of workers, and grow the economy.

With negative economic growth and an unemployment rate that is currently double the national average, and set to reach 20% in a few years, government should have focused on reaching a balance between meeting its fiscal obligations with social and moral obligations to its citizens.

“People are hurting as a result of the last budget, and they are still going to hurt with this one,” added Shortall. “Government talks about a ‘fair and balanced’ budget, yet it is clear their focus is still on the deficit, and balancing the books at any cost.”

The NLFL remains committed to lobbying government and continuing the discussion on how we can address fiscal challenges while building a better society where no one gets left behind.

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