



Media Release
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**NL Federation of Labour Report Calls on Government to Put People First In
Budget 2018: Prioritize Jobs, Fairness, and Sustainability**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL), representing union members and their families in every community in the province, in every sector of the economy; is calling on the Provincial Government to listen to the priorities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, as it prepares its 2018 budget.

The NLFL submitted its most recent Report, *“Newfoundland and Labrador Budget 2018: Measuring What Matters,”* to Finance Minister Tom Osborne, as part of government’s Budget 2018 consultation. The report follows a meeting with the Finance Minister in December; to discuss provincial spending, revenues, jobs, fairness, and sustainability.

“The government needs to continue to ignore the ‘sky is falling’ rhetoric, and focus on the real numbers,” says NLFL President, Mary Shortall. “We actually have the second lowest number of public employees per capita, in all of Atlantic Canada, our deficit is shrinking and is forecast to be gone in a few years; and, as a proportion of our economy, provincial debt is much smaller than it was in the 1990s peak. GDP is expected to rise this year.” The NLFL believes that what people from Newfoundland & Labrador (NL) really need is hope, not doom and gloom, and emphasizes that there are options.

Shortall contends that the real crisis in NL is the unemployment rate - over 14% and rising. When you include those waiting for work, involuntary part-timers, and people who have simply given up looking for work, the rate is actually 20%. Which, in her view, is a catastrophe for working people and for the economy; as well as an issue that government needs to address.

“The province also needs to fix its revenue problems,” adds Shortall. “For example, the top income bracket in this province has the lowest tax rate in all of Atlantic Canada, but we certainly don’t have the lowest tax rate for those with average incomes.”

The report notes that Provincial revenues will get a major boost from the federal carbon price, over \$400 million per year by 2023, and that some of the other provinces are choosing to make that higher.

“Our province has the highest level of income inequality in all of Atlantic Canada, quickly rising poverty, and a persistent gender wage gap,” Shortall adds. “We encourage



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the government to look to this report, and use the suggested options to lay out a clear path forward for building a jobs rich, fair, and sustainable economy for all the citizens of NL.”

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