



CITIZENS *for* PUBLIC JUSTICE

November 30, 2010

The Honourable Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

I write to you today on behalf of Citizens for Public Justice, to commend the recent report of a Parliamentary Committee, and to request your considered response.

CPJ is a national organization that promotes public justice in Canada by shaping key policy debates through research and analysis, publishing and public dialogue. CPJ encourages citizens, leaders in society and governments to support policies and practices that reflect God's call for love, justice and stewardship.

Our organization provided testimony to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA), and our work has been quoted in several places in their report. Federal Poverty Reduction Plan: Working in Partnership Towards Reducing Poverty in Canada, is the result of an extensive three-year study on the federal role in addressing poverty. This document, agreed to by all parties in the House and released last week, supports the key goals of the *Dignity for All* campaign by recommending that the federal government immediately commit to a federal action plan to reduce poverty in Canada.

Specifically, dear Minister, we believe that since a unanimous motion calling for this has already passed the House, in addition to this topic becoming the very first recommendation and title of this Report, you should immediately announce your agreement to establish a poverty reduction plan. This would reflect a widely-supported desire of a large majority of Canadians.

We understand that the government has 120 days in which to publicly release

The CJL Foundation
operating as CPJ.

Charitable registration
89438 3512 RR0001

309 Cooper Street
Suite 501
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0G5

T 613-232-0275
F 613-232-1275
cpj@cpj.ca
www.cpj.ca

a response to Parliament concerning this Report. Our hope is that you will instruct your officials to undertake a substantive review of the document, especially of its many useful recommendations. We would ask you to ensure that the government provides much more content than was evident in the disappointing response released in regard to the Senate Report, *In From the Margins*. Unfortunately, that response document did not move any discussion forward, since it was content to merely compile current policy. We believe that public dialogue on what a poverty reduction plan should contain is possible and desirable, and that a substantive response from government on each of the Standing Committee's 59 recommendations would be a welcome contribution to this necessary effort.

Citizens for Public Justice shares your interest in government actions being effective and efficient. We know that poverty levels in Canada are far too high, and that action to address this situation is necessary. Both the Senate and now the Parliament of Canada have made concrete recommendations for action. We encourage you to join your efforts to this growing momentum for change that will benefit all Canadians and guarantee a brighter future for so many.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Huyser-Wierenga". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Huyser-Wierenga
Chair of the Board

Cc Mr. Michael Ignatieff
Mr. Jack Layton
M. Gilles Duceppe
Mme. Elizabeth May