



Community Living Society

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June 7, 2006

The Honourable Stan Hagen
Minister of Children & Family Development
P.O. Box 9048 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Hagen:

Re: Non Union Support Workers in Community Living—Wage Increases and Bonuses

Congratulations to the Liberal government in its recent successful negotiations with public sector unions, including those in Community Living, and the generous agreements for wage increases as well as early signing bonuses. This is a very positive move for people with disabilities whose lives will not be disrupted by interruptions in services and whose workers can continue to provide services to them in a climate of improved morale.

We understand that the Minister of Finance, Carole Taylor has expressed a desire to ensure that workers in Community Living who have chosen not to belong to a union and yet who all suffered the effects of the same wage freeze as unionized workers will receive fair and equitable treatment. Non-union workers in the unionized agencies have received wage increases and bonuses. We are very happy for them and write to draw your attention to employees such as ours who work for Community Living Society and who also provide excellent services to people with disabilities.

I understand that discussions are underway to provide agencies such as ours with funding increases so that we can improve our wages and give our employees bonuses. I am very happy to hear this because, since the unionized workers have already received theirs, we are now under pressure on two fronts. All agencies in Community Living compete for the same pool of recruits. If some agencies' compensation is much higher than ours it becomes increasingly difficult for us to recruit and retain employees. As well, our employees will feel the pressure to unionize in order to improve their wages. A change such as that would cost the government significantly more than funding increases for fair and equitable compensation. We have provided CLBC with information about our wage and overnight rates and it is evident that we provide our services very cost-effectively.

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I write to encourage you to bring closure to this process on behalf of non-union workers as soon as you can. I believe that, in all fairness, our workers deserve fair and equitable compensation and a share in the bonus scheme provided to their counterparts in the unionized agencies. CLS has many employees who have dedicated their lives to working with people with disabilities and who truly deserve to be fairly compensated for this important work.

I look forward to hearing positive news very soon.

Yours truly,

Community Living Society

Todd Stewart
Board Chairperson

cc: Mr. Rick Mowles, Executive Director, Community Living British Columbia
The Honourable Carole Taylor, Minister of Finance