



Community Living Society

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August 28, 2006

The Honourable Carole Taylor
Minister of Finance
P.O. Box 9048 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Taylor:

Re: Non-union Support Workers in Community Living – Wage Increases and Bonuses

I write as a follow up to our letters in June and July to Minister Hagen and yourself because we have become increasingly concerned about the wage disparity between union and non-union agencies in the Community Living sector and the impact on our organization. We have also brought this matter to the attention of Minister Christensen.

This oversight must be remedied immediately. Our agency is losing valuable well-trained employees and recruitment is a significant challenge. Our families are very concerned that this may mean the end of a model of support that provides flexibility and quality of life to their loved ones. Our employees are worried about the prospect of unionization and feel they are being discriminated against for their choice.

Community Living Society employees chose to remain non-union throughout the 1990s when successive NDP governments, in collaboration with the unions, made a commitment to unionize the public sector. Various unions have made at least five attempts and, right now, we are very vulnerable indeed. It would be a costly embarrassment if we were to fall to the unions during the tenure of a Liberal government because wage disparities were not addressed in a timely manner.

Your strategy for the negotiation of public sector contracts was very successful and we congratulate you. In a press conference you stated: “We are asking everyone in the public sector to help us achieve our financial targets. If we do so, they should all share in the benefits they helped create”. I believe that you are committed to complete this process for all public sector workers; however, time is of the essence. I urge you to resolve this issue immediately.

Yours truly,

Community Living Society

Todd Stewart
Board Chairperson