

For immediate release

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“People First” budget welcomed by employability advocates

Finance Minister Carole James released BC’s Budget 2018 today, contending that budgets are not only about the bottom line, but that they should be about people. And according to 3rd Voice, a platform for community service organizations that works together with government, this one is.

John Kay, President of 3rd Voice, was at today’s budget announcement and endorsed the plan, saying “We are pleased to see with this budget the government laying the groundwork to support some of our most vulnerable BC citizens towards a path out of poverty”.

Employability advocate organization ASPECT-BC’s CEO, Janet Morris-Reade, was also positive about the impact of today’s budget announcement. Morris-Reade, who recently addressed the Standing Committee on the subject, identified strategies reflected in the budget that serve to reduce some of the key barriers to employment, saying “Employment-ready British Columbians who stay home out of necessity will have more options to re-enter the workforce; the provincial economy will be better for it.”

A focus on housing, employment is all but unattainable when you don’t have an address, a shower, and clean clothes.

Rick FitzZaland of The Federation of Community Social Services of BC echoes these sentiments “Today I am pleased with the investments in a childcare and housing plan for this province, and for the investment in BC’s Friendship Centres. These are important steps in building a strong and caring province, and I hope that future action will include an increased focus on children in care.”

Importantly, the historic investment in making child care both more accessible and more affordable, reduces a significant and broad barrier to employment, serving the government’s goal of linking social programs to a strong economy.

Minister James contends this government believes all British Columbians should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. This is a belief shared by Morris-Reade and Kay. And today’s budget is a step in the right direction.

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