



COUNCIL OF CANADIANS WITH DISABILITIES
CONSEIL DES CANADIENS AVEC DEFICIENCES

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Harper announcement on disability falls short of National Action Plan on Disability

September 19, 2008—The Conservatives have missed the point that Canadians with disabilities have been making for the last thirty-five years. We don't want to be looked after; we want to be contributing members of society. Harper's recent announcement gives a tax break to families where one member stays home to care for a family member with a disability.

“We acknowledge the importance of supporting and caring families and we commend the Conservative Party for making a commitment to helping families care for members with disabilities,” states Marie White, Chairperson of CCD, a national human rights organization of persons with disabilities. “However, we are disappointed that the Tories' first statement on disability is based upon a model of caring for people with disabilities rather than enabling people with disabilities to help themselves.”

The Canadian community of persons with disabilities has presented the Conservative Party, indeed all the Parties, with the National Action Plan on Disability that outlines new initiatives geared to assist people with disabilities become contributing, participating members of Canadian society, enjoying their full citizenship.

The disability community has been calling for all parties to commit to new initiatives to address poverty, increase employment of persons with disabilities, develop accessible communities and increase the availability of disability-related supports. The disability community is looking for a commitment to social policy that will assist people with disabilities to live independently in the community, develop job skills, raise families and contribute to Canada.

“I am hoping that this is the first of many commitments to address the disadvantages and exclusion faced by persons with disabilities,” states White. “We need policies which assist families and we also need policies that assist individuals with disabilities enjoy their full citizenship rights.”

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