



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Newfoundland and Labrador

James Dinn, M.H.A.
District of St. John's Centre

February 24, 2026

Dear Premier Wakeham,

As in past years, the minimum wage and minimum overtime wage rate are set to increase on April 1, 2026. **Will these increases still take place?** We have heard no announcement to that effect.

The increase in the minimum wage was tied to the Consumer Price Index. According to recent StatsCan report the CPI is 2.3% nationally and 2.4% for Newfoundland and Labrador. Will your government be announcing a 2.4% increase to the minimum wage in keeping with the CPI?

It is deeply concerning that increasing the minimum wage was not part of your election platform nor was it included in any of your promises. **Where does your party stand on a livable minimum wage?**

Increases to the minimum wage announced by your predecessors were contained in Labour Standards Regulations. In effect they were more akin to policy and could be changed at the whim of the government. Your administration has an opportunity to make some real changes in the lives of thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working at minimum wage jobs and struggling with affordability. A previous PC government was applauded and recognised for its poverty reduction plan. I have recognized that plan in the House of Assembly on several occasions. You have an opportunity to take the bold action necessary to assist those working for poverty wages.

In 2025, the minimum wage increased by .40¢ to \$16.00 an hour. Last year the Labour Minister said her government understood the importance of the minimum wage rate to employees and employers and was committed to ensuring it was relevant and comparable to other provinces and territories. However, the NL NDP has long argued that the current minimum wage is not a living wage and simply tying it to inflation does not go far enough.

According to a 2024 report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) the hourly wage needed to cover basic expenses across four regions of the province were much higher (Central Newfoundland: \$24.10; Eastern Newfoundland: \$24.70; Western Newfoundland: \$23.10; Northern Peninsula and Labrador: \$27.30). At that time, it was

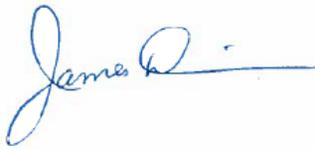
estimated that about 17,000 workers earn the minimum wage in Newfoundland and Labrador. In effect, the minimum wage is a poverty wage.

To quote the late Canadian Senator, Hugh Segal, the cause of poverty is a lack of money and “people with more money tend to be less poor.” Your government announced an increase in the basic personal exemption for income tax. We have called for Pharmacare, the removal of HST from all forms of home heating, and the removal of the HST from children’s items, but we still need to go further.

Will your government commit to announcing a plan in your upcoming budget to a) increase the minimum wage to a living wage, b) tie future increases of the minimum wage to the CPI, and c) enshrine these changes in legislation?

As always, we remain open to discussion and welcome an opportunity to meet with you about the minimum wage and effective poverty reduction strategies. In the meantime, I look forward to your response to our questions.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Dinn", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

James Dinn, MHA
St. John’s Centre
Leader, NL NDP