

# NDP Caucus News

For Immediate Release

March 17, 2026

## **NDP Challenges Government on Commitment to Affordable Childcare, ECE Benefits**

Today in the House of Assembly, NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre) and MHA Sheilagh O'Leary (St. John's East-Quidi Vidi) questioned the PC government on their already broken promises around affordable childcare and benefits for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs).

Dinn began by calling out the Minister for saying just last week that the PC platform was a four year plan – highlighting that pensions and paid sick leave for ECEs may not be seen until the 2028/2029. Dinn says that ECEs cannot continue to wait not knowing when this promise will be fulfilled – they are struggling and need help now.

“Speaker, last week, the Minister of Education said pensions, sick leave, and other benefits for ECEs are part of his party’s four-year plan. Many ECEs are already struggling and cannot wait 4 years,” Dinn said. “I ask the Minister, will there be anything in this budget for ECEs, and if not, when in the next four years can we expect to see the plan?”

He continued by questioning why the PCs refuse to put up public funds to ensure \$10-a-day childcare spaces yet will soon dish out an undisclosed amount for the Bay du Nord project.

“Speaker, meanwhile, this government is already planning to dole out millions of dollars of public money in this budget to subsidize Equinor. I ask the Premier, why is his government refusing to invest provincial funds in our childcare workers while extending corporate welfare to highly profitable multi-billion dollar oil companies.”

O'Leary continued with a question on childcare operators, highlighting that even though the PC platform says it will “reduce the burden of paperwork” ECEs face, it is new paperwork that is currently adding more stress and strain on the workers.

“Speaker, early childhood educators have told MHAs that many are struggling to use the portal and have limited time to learn. I ask the Minister: Will you commit to not cut off operators who do not get this done by April 1st that would harm our already precarious childcare system?”

-30-

For further information, contact Stephanie Curran, Media and Communications Officer, NDP Caucus at 330-0328 (o), or [stephaniecurran@assembly.nl.ca](mailto:stephaniecurran@assembly.nl.ca)