

NDP Caucus News

For Immediate Release

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NDP MHA Sheilagh O'Leary Responds to Startling New Study on Pay Equity

NDP MHA Sheilagh O'Leary (St. John's East-Quidi Vidi) issued the following statement on the release of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives new report Closing the gaps: Gender pay inequity in Atlantic Canada:

It is incredibly disappointing that the women in our province have the second largest provincial pay gap in Canada. When looking at average weekly wages woman in Newfoundland and Labrador make 76 cents for each dollar a man made in 2025

In Newfoundland and Labrador women had to work an additional 116 days to earn what a man made in 2025 - making June 12, 2026 their Equal Pay Day.

Also shocking is the pay gap for racialized women, Indigenous women, immigrant women, and women with disabilities.

Women still perform most of the unpaid family care, either childcare or home care. Which often means they can only work part-time. In fact, women make up 66 per cent of part-time workers in our province. Part-time work impacts their ability to earn higher salaries, receive benefits and build a pension.

Government must stop undervaluing our care systems and properly, and publicly, fund essential work as childcare, healthcare, and home care. Their attitude towards the care economy must change and pay transparency legislation must be put in place as well.

I suggest all ministers around the cabinet table take the time to read Closing the Gaps. There are several recommendations that they can implement: strengthen pay equity laws, create pay transparency legislation, raise minimum wage, invest in long term care, home care and childcare among others.

Pay equity legislation arose from an unanimously approved private member's motion from former NDP MHA Gerry Rogers in 2017, where all parties agreed. However, when the legislation was announced in 2022, it did not receive proper consultation from key groups and was applied only to the public sector.

While Newfoundland and Labrador has introduced pay equity legislation, the regulations have not been implemented. We are now eight months into a PC government who promised in their platform to fix the Liberals botched job. We have not heard anything from government besides another promise on March 5, 2026 in response to my questions in the House of Assembly to review the legislation and implementation.

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-30-

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