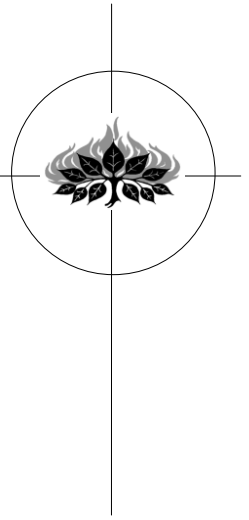


The Presbyterian Church in Canada L'Église presbytérienne au Canada



MODERATOR OF THE 140TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Farris, B.A., D.Min., Th.M., Ph.D.

Friday, January 23, 2015

The Hon. Jason Kenney
Minister of Employment and Social Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Kenney,

I bring greetings from the 140th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada which met May 30-June 2, 2014 in Waterloo, Ontario.

The General Assembly considered a report on the state of affordable, adequate housing in Canada and the impact and importance of housing for people's health and well-being. We believe a national social housing plan must be the corner stone of a multifaceted plan to assist Canadians living in poverty.

Too many Canadians live in precarious housing situations including the growing number of homeless people, low and middle income families who spend a disproportionate share of their income on housing. The housing situation in many First Nations communities is dire. No single policy response and no single government entity can tackle these issues in isolation.

Our General Assembly commends the Government of Canada for supporting important initiatives such as "Housing First" which can make an important difference in the lives of men and women struggling to transition from the streets to safe housing conditions, and the continuation of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for 2014-2019. Our General Assembly commends the Government's commitments to housing in the Economic Action Plan and to the extension of the Investment in Affordable Housing agreement. These are necessary agreements that enable different governments and civil society to work together to address the housing needs in their communities.

Our General Assembly is concerned that the lack of an overarching policy framework to address housing needs across Canada will reduce the impact of housing programs. A long term federal social housing plan that outlines core investments in housing across Canada can assist other governments and civil society organizations partner effectively with the federal government to meet the housing needs of Canadians.

Presbyterians across Canada are partnering with municipal and provincial governments, and community and volunteer organizations, to develop and operate affordable housing communities to provide emergency shelter and transitional housing units for people

Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Stephen Kendall, The Rev. Donald Muir, The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp

lacking housing options and to create affordable housing with support services for people with particular needs such as seniors and those with disabilities. The Presbyterians involved in these initiatives are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to their communities.

A long term housing plan can assist groups that support housing ministries build capacity to do their work more effectively and with greater impact.

May I inquire on behalf of the church what plans, in partnership with provincial, territorial and municipal governments, does the Government of Canada have to develop a long term housing plan that stabilizes and increases the current investment in housing?

I look forward to hearing from you. Rest assured of my prayers for your work and wellbeing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Farris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Farris" clearly legible.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Farris,
Moderator,
140th General Assembly,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

CC: Jinny Sims, NDP critic on Employment and Social Development, Rodger Cuzner, Liberal Party critic on Employment and Social Development, M. Mario Beaulieu, Chef du Bloc Québécois, Ms. Elizabeth May, Green Party leader.