



**BC Association  
for Community Living**

*Supporting people with developmental disabilities and their families*

January 8, 2008

Hon. Carole Taylor  
Minister of Finance  
Room 153, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Taylor:

On behalf of the members of the BC Association for Community Living, I would like to request an opportunity for representatives of our organization to meet with you as soon as possible. The BC Association for Community Living (BCACL) is a provincial federation that advocates for children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their families to ensure justice, rights and opportunities in all areas of their lives.

As you enter the final phase of deliberations about the 2008-2009 provincial budget, we hope that you will think deeply about the lives of children and youth with special needs, adults with developmental disabilities and their families. The decisions you make for the forthcoming budget year will have a huge impact on their lives and we urge you to leave a positive legacy by making a significant financial investment in community living services.

In 2005, you joined Premier Gordon Campbell in declaring the province to be on the verge of a "golden decade," and included in the Throne Speech a promise to "build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities" and those with special needs. You can help make this happen by ensuring Community Living BC (CLBC) has the resources it needs to fulfill its vision.

We continue to support the vision of CLBC but it is clear that budget allocations for community living services are not adequate to address the urgent needs of individuals with disabilities and their families in BC. Long waitlists for community living supports are simply unacceptable and push individuals, families and the social service system into crisis. CLBC cannot fulfill its vision without government providing the necessary funding.

CLBC is a groundbreaking initiative that is being watched by jurisdictions around the world. It is critical to position it for success by ensuring it has sufficient funds to achieve its goals. To continue to under-fund CLBC only sets the stage for failure and leaves children, youth and adults with disabilities and their families without needed supports. Your promise of a golden decade for people with disabilities will ring hollow.

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The members and leadership of BCACL have conveyed our concerns to MLAs, and to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for a number of years, and yet they are not given the weight they deserve.

Media reports in recent weeks are now beginning to describe how the system is failing some of our most vulnerable members of society. With an anticipated surplus of \$2.1 Billion, and great goals of BC being the best place of earth, how can government fail our citizens most in need?

The decisions you make in the coming weeks will have an enormous impact on both children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families in the future. We would like to meet with you to discuss this critical issue and urge you to take this opportunity to make a difference.

Please contact Semanthi Wannu at our office (604-777-9100) to let us know a time when you could meet with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rory Summers', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Rory Summers  
President

cc.: Hon. Tom Christensen  
Minister of Children and Family Development