



**BC Association
for Community Living**

Supporting people with developmental disabilities and their families

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Surplus Comes at the Cost of Families in Crisis

New Westminster, B.C., September 15, 2008 - Waitlists for needed community living supports and services are forcing children and youth with special needs, adults with developmental disabilities and their families into crisis. On Friday, the Campbell government announced a forecasted budget surplus of \$1 billion – \$970 million more than what was forecast and one that is predicted to double by the end of this fiscal year. Apparently, "increased surpluses provide choices for British Columbia" (Ministry Press Release).

We have seen budget surpluses before. In fact, we see them year after year. There have been surpluses of over \$10.3 billion since 2006. But despite these surpluses, waitlists for community living services continue to grow – indeed, we have yet to see a significant financial investment to eliminate or reduce waitlists. Families across the province, who are desperate for services now, are asking what this government is waiting for.

The government's unwillingness to fund the necessary supports and services that people need to participate in communities is unacceptable.

"Surpluses are supposed to provide choices for British Columbians?" asks Rory Summers, BCACL President. "But we wonder what choices families have. We know that families don't choose to quit their jobs when there are no supports for their children, families don't choose to watch their young children languish on early intervention waitlists. Families most certainly do not choose to watch the lives of their young adult come to a screeching halt at 19 when no supports are available."

BCACL urges government to allocate the necessary funding required to meet the urgent needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families who are on waitlists for needed community living supports and services.

The BC Association for Community Living (BCACL) is presenting to the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services on Monday, September 15, 2008, at the SFU Harbour Centre.

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BCACL is a federation working with partners to build community and to enhance the lives of children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their families by supporting abilities, promoting action and advancing rights, responsibilities and social justice.

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