

DISABILITY RIGHTS COALITION NOVA SCOTIA

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March 2016,

The Honorable Stephen McNeil
Premier of Nova Scotia
One Government Place, 7th Floor
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Premier McNeil,

It has come to our attention that a recent report from the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regarding Canada has been released. Of particular interest to the Disability Rights Coalition (DRC) are the committee's comments and recommendations with respect to community based housing for persons with disabilities:

Housing for persons with disabilities:

45. The Committee is concerned that persons with psycho-social and intellectual disabilities continue to be placed in care institutions due to lack of adequate housing for them. It is also concerned by the increased rate of incarceration of these persons and the excessive use of solitary confinement (arts. 11 and 12).

46. The Committee recommends that a disability perspective is integrated in all housing plans and policies at all levels. To this end, the Committee recommends that the State party increase the availability of affordable and social housing units for persons with psycho-social and intellectual disabilities as well as community-based services. The Committee also recommends that the State party ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

All Provinces in Canada agreed to implement the rights in the Convention prior to the federal government having ratified the Convention in the first place.

At this point and time, we find shameful that NS has fallen substantially behind national and international standards and that with the "Roadmap" to guide us towards a new approach & service delivery, it still has not been implemented.

More and more, this is becoming a human rights and justice issue. Many individuals and their parents continue to grow older and receive inadequate supports. Crises are waiting to happen!

Your government is in a position to respond positively and ensure that those who are vulnerable and at risk, are valued and respected by ensuring they live a life with good support of choice, individualized funding, person centered planning, access to service; and with dignity and grace.

Sincerely,

Marty Wexler

Chair, Disability Rights Coalition

Cc: Honorable, Joanne Bernard, Minister of Community Services