



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02619**

BY: **Ms. MATHYSSEN (LONDON-FANSHAWE)**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 20, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **ADAM VAUGHAN**

Response by the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Adam Vaughan'.

Signature

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Health Care Services

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

Homelessness has an economic and social impact on every community in Canada. The Government of Canada is committed to helping those who are in need and believes that one homeless Canadian is one too many.

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is a community-based program that provides direct financial support to communities across Canada to help them address their local homelessness needs. First launched on April 1, 2007, the HPS builds on the former National Homelessness Initiative, which was introduced in 1999.

The HPS provides direct funding to 61 Designated Communities (urban centres), as well as Indigenous and rural and remote communities across Canada to support their efforts in addressing homelessness. Following a comprehensive community planning process, communities determine their own needs/priorities, and develop appropriate projects.

Each HPS Designated Community outside of Quebec has a Community Advisory Board (CAB), which sets the direction for addressing local homelessness issues and recommends projects for funding. The CAB is composed of a wide range of stakeholders, including the municipality, provincial or territorial government, not-for-profit organizations, and for-profit enterprises.

A Community Entity (CE), normally an incorporated organization such as the community's municipal government, is responsible for the implementation of the community plan. Under the CE model, all requests for funding must go through the CE, which is responsible for administering funding.

Homelessness remains a persistent issue that requires a well-focused and innovative strategy. It affects a diverse cross-section of the population, including individuals and families, and the communities in which they reside.

To further support communities in their efforts to help homeless Canadians, Budget 2016 announced an additional \$111.8 million in funding for the HPS over two years. This represented the first increase in funding for federal homelessness programming since its inception in 1999. This builds on the program's existing five-year investment of nearly \$600 million over five years (2014–2019).

Communities are given the flexibility to address their own local homelessness needs. They are also encouraged to partner with relevant sectors to ensure that homeless clients using shelters or living on the street access basic needs, such as food and clothing.

HPS funding can also be used to purchase other basic needs, such as personal hygiene products. In the Directives for the program, personal hygiene products are included as an eligible expense as part of both Housing First and Non-Housing First projects.

To strengthen the work of communities in their efforts to help homeless Canadians find stable housing, Budget 2017 proposes historic investments in federal homelessness programming, announcing \$2.2 billion over the next 10 years to expand and extend funding for the HPS. By 2021–2022, this will nearly double the investments made in 2015–2016.

Reaching Home is part of Canada's first-ever National Housing Strategy—a 10-year \$40-billion plan to lift hundreds and thousands of Canadians out of housing need, resulting in up to 100,000 new housing units and 300,000 repaired or renewed housing units. This will create a new generation of housing in Canada. The Government of Canada's plan will promote diverse communities. It will build housing that is sustainable, accessible, mixed-income, and mixed-use. We will build housing that is fully integrated into the community—close to transit, close to work, and close to public services. The National Housing Strategy is part of the Government of Canada's plan to build a more equal Canada

for all, including the most vulnerable—one where women and men are empowered to make positive changes that benefit their own lives, and our economy as a whole.

To inform the development of the redesigned program, the Government consulted with stakeholders, provinces, territories, and Indigenous partners on how Canada's federal homelessness program could be redesigned to better reduce and prevent homelessness across Canada. These consultations were guided by the work of an Advisory Committee of experts and stakeholders in the field of homelessness and were chaired by Parliamentary Secretary Adam Vaughan.

Reaching Home is designed to support the goals of the National Housing Strategy, in particular, to support the most vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable and affordable housing and to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50 percent by 2027–2028. Reaching Home puts communities at the forefront of tackling homelessness by giving them flexibility in how they use their funding to meet local needs, including the needs of vulnerable populations such as young people, LGBTQ2 communities, women fleeing violence, racialized communities, veterans and persons with disabilities.