

## **Brief to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration**

### **Excessive Demand Policy Changes**

#### **Government of Newfoundland and Labrador**

Newfoundland and Labrador is experiencing significant health-related expenditures, as a result of numerous social and demographic factors. Given Newfoundland and Labrador's current financial outlook, it is not possible for the province to support assuming additional expenses from the Federal Government, without considerations of solutions that take into account the financial impacts of changes to the policy.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes that the current Excessive Demand policy reinforces the medical model of disability, which runs counter to the social model of disability, as reflected in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

Immigrants have been contributors to Newfoundland and Labrador's economy and society throughout its history. As the province experiences demographic and workforce challenges, immigration complements existing efforts to support demographic and economic sustainability and growth.

Using excessive demand provisions as a filter to exclude prospective applicants, with no further consideration for their potential contribution to Canada, represents a short-sighted approach. Fair and just assessment of all immigrant applicants that takes into account long-term contributions is an important consideration for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador considers the Federal Government's collaborative engagement with Provinces and Territories key to the development of a constructive solution that supports the interests of all current and future Canadians. As previously stated in engagement with the Government of Canada, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has indicated support for removing the excessive demand policy if the Government of Canada could take financial impacts into account, and collaborate with Provinces and Territories to address them. This includes collaboration on mitigation measures, including transfers to provinces and territories to address potential financial impacts, and ongoing monitoring of changes, including the number of applicants and dependents with chronic or serious health conditions and/or disabilities, to develop responsive and supportive measures for both permanent residents and Canadians, and new immigrants to Canada.

While Newfoundland and Labrador supports changes to the excessive demand policy to establish a more inclusive approach to considerations of impacts on provincial health and social care systems, it is imperative that any changes mitigate the financial impacts on services to Canadian permanent residents and citizens. This includes impacts on the education system (special education), the health care system (wait lists and associated impacts on Canadians), and the impacts of a potential change that could expand current eligible exempted groups.