

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Monday, April 8, 2024

**NEW STUDY FINDS NINE IN TEN CANADIANS SUPPORT A FULLY FUNDED CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT.  
58% DON'T TRUST THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER.**

**Toronto, ON** –In a survey conducted by the Angus Reid Institute (ARI), in partnership with Daily Bread Food Bank and Disability Without Poverty, Canadians were asked about their views on the Canada Disability Benefit. Although results found overwhelming support for the benefit, Canadians are critical of the pace of implementation and do not trust that government will follow through.

**The survey conducted by ARI found the following:**

- Overall, nine-in-ten (91%) say they support the proposed Canada Disability Benefit, including at least four-in-five of past Conservative voters (83%), and nearly all past Liberal (98%), NDP (99%) and Bloc Québécois (98%) voters – an incredible level of support from Canadians.
- Most Canadians (61%) believe current financial support available to Canadians living with disabilities is inadequate (38%) or far too little (23%).
- Three-in-five (60%) Canadians living with a health issue that severely limits their day-to-day activities say they are often (35%) or all the time (25%) stressed about money.
- Only one-in-20 (5%) say they are confident the federal government will follow through, while 45 per cent doubt it will and 13 per cent say they are certain the benefit will never be distributed.

Food bank visits in Canada have increased at an unprecedented 32 per cent year-over-year. In Toronto, [one in ten people](#) are now having to rely on food banks to make ends meet – this is double the rate of last year.

**Individuals living with a disability are disproportionately impacted by food insecurity, facing additional expenses such as medical costs, special transportation, and dietary needs. One in seven people who access food banks nationally rely on provincial disability income supports – in many provinces, this means living more than \$800 below the poverty line each month.**

Income supports like the Canada Disability Benefit can greatly reduce the severity of food insecurity, going a long way in ensuring people can live a life of dignity and meet their most basic needs.

**“Our country is in a pivotal moment,” says Neil Hetherington, CEO, Daily Bread Food Bank. “They can choose to let this bleak reality continue, or they can pivot towards a better future. Canadians have clearly articulated the answer to that question. The Canada Disability Benefit has the potential to be one of Canada’s most important programs and could lift nearly one million Canadians out of poverty if fully funded.”**

Over 60 Liberal Members of Parliament (MPs) recently [co-signed a letter](#) calling on Prime Minister Trudeau and Deputy Minister Freeland to fully fund Bill C-22, *The Canada Disability Benefit Act* in the upcoming federal budget. This call to action is significant and solidifies that this benefit is a core tenant of social policy.

**“The results of this poll are a testament of Canadian values,” says Rabia Khedr, National Director of Disability Without Poverty. “[We are the 27%](#), and we matter to all Canadians regardless of political affiliations. People with disabilities have so much to offer and an adequate Canada Disability Benefit will**

**go a long way toward unleashing disability with possibility as we learned in our [Shape the CDB consultations](#) from over 5,000 people with disabilities and carers.”**

Disability Without Poverty and Daily Bread Food Bank, in partnership with a coalition of over 40 organizations, are calling for a fully funded Canada Disability Benefit that addresses three essential elements:

1. Bringing eligible recipients to a minimum of the Market Basket Measure (MBM), Canada’s Official Poverty Line. As there are increased costs of living with a disability, such as special transportation, dietary needs, and uninsured medical expenses, the benefit should ideally bring recipients to up to 30 per cent above the poverty line. Payments should be monthly, indexed to inflation, and portable throughout Canada.
2. The benefit must be efficient and seamless for those living with a disability. Canadians with disabilities who receive provincial disability supports should automatically qualify for the benefit, and their existing benefits should not be clawed back.
3. The benefit must be equitable and barrier-free. It should operate from a broad and inclusive definition of disability – one that encompasses all disabilities, including those that are invisible and episodic. If the benefit limits eligibility through a restrictive definition of disability, this program will fail to achieve its core objective.

In a time of austerity, many will question whether Canada can afford this benefit, but it costs more money for our government to ignore this issue. The cost of poverty in Ontario alone is estimated to be between [27-33 billion dollars](#) annually. For Canadians concerned about government debt, a fully funded benefit will reduce these downstream costs, all while helping Canadians with disabilities live a life of dignity.

**Learn more:**

- To read the full report by the Angus Reid Institute [click here](#).
- Over 200,000 letters have been sent to MPs across the country expressing support for a fully funded Canada Disability Benefit. Visit [fundthebenefit.ca](http://fundthebenefit.ca) to learn more.

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