



**B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union**  
A component of NUPGE (CLC)

April 7, 2010

*Sent Via Email*

Dear Community Group

**Re Funding for homeless shelter in Vancouver**

As the union that represents the employees at the homeless shelter run by the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society at 201 Central Street, the BC Government and Service Employees' Union is very concerned about the funding for this shelter and others in Vancouver. If the province doesn't provide funding, hundreds more people will be forced to find shelter on our streets, and the cycle of street homelessness will continue.

The shelter is an integral part of the homelessness solution in Vancouver, and our members provide vital and invaluable frontline services to British Columbians that cannot find stable housing and rely on the shelter for a roof and a bed.

For these vulnerable citizens, the shelter at 201 Central Street run by the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society (VAFCS) is more than just a place to sleep. In addition to hot meals and a warm, safe place out of the rain, the shelter provides a wake-up service and bagged lunches to the 20 percent of clients who have jobs but nowhere to live. It is a vital interim solution to the lack of affordable, stable housing. The shelter also provides services to the disproportionate number of homeless people in Vancouver who are aboriginal.

Housing Minister Rich Coleman recently stated that his ministry can provide funding for the three core year-round shelters, but that it is dependent on funding from the City of Vancouver. We believe that if funding is available, it should be provided to the shelters regardless of the actions of other governments. This issue is too important.

On behalf of our members, I strongly urge your organization to contact Minister Coleman and demand that the provincial government fund these important shelters. Attached is a draft letter and contact information.

Please contact Brenton Walters in our Research and Campaigns Department if you have any questions about this issue. He can be reached at 604.291.9611 and [brenton.walters@bcgeu.ca](mailto:brenton.walters@bcgeu.ca).

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darryl Walker".

Darryl Walker  
President  
Encl.  
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