



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

April 7, 2010

Honourable Rich Coleman
Minister of Housing and Social Development
PO Box 9058
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Coleman

Re Funding for homeless shelters in Vancouver

I am writing to you on a matter of urgency for some 100 people in Vancouver who will be out on the street if their shelter closes at the end of April due to funding cuts.

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.

The B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) represents 28 workers at 201 Central St. These workers are deeply concerned about the safety and well-being of their clients if the shelter closes on April 30, 2010.

You recently stated that funding could be found for the three year-round shelters slated to close in Vancouver, including the one at 201 Central St., but that it may be dependent on the City of Vancouver increasing its share of the funding. I urge your government to take immediate steps to ensure these shelters remain open for the hundreds of clients who use them, regardless of what the city can do. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Brenton Walters in our Research and Campaigns Department. He can be reached through at 604.291.9611 and brenton.walters@bcgeu.ca.

Yours truly

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

Darryl Walker
President

cc: Jenny Kwan, MLA for Vancouver – Mt. Pleasant
Shane Simpson, MLA for Vancouver - Hastings

DW/slg
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