



March 24, 2016

s.22

Ref: 189366

Dear s.22 :

I want to thank you for your facsimile of March 18, 2016, and apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you or your daughter may be experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

You mentioned that your daughter has a discounted bus pass. If she wants to continue using it, she has the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to her in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee she already pays.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing. I commend you on your advocacy on behalf of your daughter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Stilwell".

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

Ministry of Social Development and  
Social Innovation

Office of the Minister

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 9058 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Location:  
Room 247  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

M.E. Victoria Association  
PO Box 50032 RPO Fairfield Plaza  
Victoria, BC V8S 5L8

February 23, 2016

Honourable Michelle Stilwell  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
PO Box 9058 STN PROV GOVT  
VICTORIA BC V8W 9E1

RE: CHANGES TO BC DISABILITY BENEFITS

Dear Ms. Stilwell:

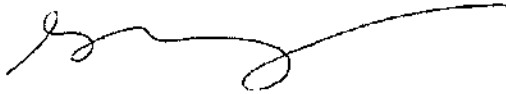
My organization represents people in the Victoria area with M.E. (myalgic encephalomyelitis or "chronic fatigue syndrome"), a number of whom rely on BC Disability Benefits. We are pleased with some of the recent changes to PWD benefits, including the increase in allowed assets, the removal of the cap on trust payments, and the elimination of clawbacks on cash gifts and child support payments. These are positive steps towards your government's pledge to make BC the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities by 2024.

The long-awaited increase in PWD benefits that was announced in this year's budget would be another positive move except for the fact that it is almost entirely negated by the elimination of the subsidized annual bus pass. The result is that many will opt to give up their bus pass, and the mobility that comes with it, in favour of paying for basic living expenses or medical costs not covered by Medicare. It is unfair to put the most vulnerable members of society in a position where they must choose between having enough to live on and being able to leave the house.

Given that the BC economy is growing and the government is projecting a budget surplus, there is no excuse for leaving disabled British Columbians in poverty. We would urge the government to focus on raising PWD assistance rates to match the actual cost of living of people with disabilities. As a first step, we propose that the province cease deducting the CPP Disability pension from BC Disability benefits. Though not all persons with a disability are eligible for CPP Disability, those who are would benefit greatly from the added income. BC Disability Assistance plus a full CPP Disability pension would just about equal the cost of living, and would enable more British Columbians with disabilities to participate fully in society and maximize their potential.

We would appreciate hearing your thoughts on how you intend to lift British Columbians with disabilities out of poverty and truly make BC accessible by restoring the subsidized annual bus pass. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gloria Gray', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Gloria Gray  
President  
M.E. Victoria Association

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 3:49 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Bus Pass Clarification

**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

Dear Minister and Premier, I have some questions regarding the changes to the bus pass supplement that I have not been able to find the answers to. Individuals who will be impacted by the changes have asked and I said I would find out. Here are the three scenarios.

s.22 lives in an assisted living facility and is in her (s.22 She is on PWD and receives her stipend of \$95 a month and every year applies for and receives the \$45 annual bus pass. She has s.22

s.22 disability and uses the bus pass when friends and family take her out. She does not use it a lot. Come September 1 she wants to know if she will qualify for the \$77 increase. If so will she be charged the \$52 a month. Please clarify.

s.22 : and on PWD. She is also on CPPD. She had understood that because she is over 60 she would be able to continue to receive the bus pass for the \$45 annual cost. She received a letter from the ministry outlining the changes but it did not identify any information regarding individuals on PWD over 60. Now she is concerned she will not receive the entire \$77 increase but will have the \$52 a month charge taken from her check. Please advise.

s.22 is a low income senior and qualifies for a \$45 bus pass. As an individual living with a disability she wonders how the changes of charging the \$52 a month fee will be implemented. While her income, thanks to the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan; is greater than PWD she remains uncertain how it will impact on her. While initially she assumed she would be exempt, she has heard nothing to clarify this. What is the answer.

All three individuals do not have access to a computer nor do they know how to operate one.

I appreciate your response in a timely manner.

s.22



**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 10:08 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189361 Pat SDSI Response

Ref: 189361

s.22

Dear s.2

Thank you for your email of March 17, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, regarding the recently announced Persons with Disabilities (PWD) rate increase. Minister Stilwell has asked that we respond on her behalf, and we are pleased to do so.

We would like to be of assistance, but there was not enough information in your email for us to identify you as a client, and for a ministry staff member to contact you to discuss your concerns.

If you are able to write back with your full name and contact information, we can try to reach you accordingly.

You may, however, find the following information useful.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. The provincial government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the PWD designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and they want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive the subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

For more immediate assistance, you may wish to contact an Employment and Assistance office, where staff are best able to assist you. A directory of offices across the province can be found at [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html).

You may also reach the ministry by calling 1-866-866-0800. This number is available from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and during the lunch period. Using this line, callers may now leave a call back number, keep their place in line and get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22

Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2016 3:49 PM

To: OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX

Subject: Bus Pass Clarification

Dear Minister and Premier, I have some questions regarding the changes to the bus pass supplement that I have not been able to find the answers to. Individuals who will be impacted by the changes have asked and I said I would find out. Here are the three scenarios.

s.22 lives in an assisted living facility and is in her s.22 . She is on PWD and receives her stipend of \$95 a month and every year applies for and receives the \$45 annual bus pass. She has s.22

s.22 disability and uses the bus pass when friends and family take her out. She does not use it a lot. Come September 1 she wants to know if she will qualify for the \$77 increase. If so will she be charged the \$52 a month. Please clarify.

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s.22 is a low income senior and qualifies for a \$45 bus pass. As an individual living with a disability she wonders how the changes of charging the \$52 a month fee will be implemented. While her income, thanks to the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan; is greater than PWD she remains uncertain how it will impact on her. While initially she assumed she would be exempt, she has heard nothing to clarify this. What is the answer.

All three individuals do not have access to a computer nor do they know how to operate one.

I appreciate your response in a timely manner.

s.22

2016-03-10

s.22

Minister of Social Development  
Moira Stilwell  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC

Dear Minister of Social Development Moira Stilwell:

I am writing regarding the bus pass subsidy the bogus financial increase of \$77 for the disabled that is in reality a vicious clawback and cashgrab by government abusers for those of us paralysed in poverty the methods of madness the system uses. The psychological warfare suggestive wording surrounding the lack of "choices". The truth We are actually being given disabilities mental illness brain damages. "MLA's" require mental health assessments to assess the damages Being caused.

I have been designated a "Person with Multiple Barriers to Employment" these disabilities were aquired because it was the former ndp government that inflicted s.22 being under their threat to cut off financial supports for my Family that would render us homeless here in BC. I've been given these afflictions through the former NDP Government of the day whom should be given the bums rush as traitors, while my s.22 was given no choices either and it is as a matter of fact because of the ndp that resulted in his painful demise.

Former Minister of Social Development (Regression) Harry Bloy went into private business importing slave nations labour using a punch line such as: there's no borders for businesses and since former Premier Campbell statement that government would be run as a business and the high price of breaching borders and boundaries for provincially elected officials to the detrimental expense of the disabled lowball funding such as I am through no choice of my own.

I assure you Minister Stilwell, the time to repay those such as myself through thoughtful considerations such as paying your own way while breaching the borders and boundaries of responsibilities designation limits to within the Province protection and loyalty to the people of Canada for the sake of ethical and moral obligation Social Development will compliment yourself and hopefully cure the culprits responsible some from the former governance of unqualified colleagues across the way since the ndp party should not have survived to this date in time neither too should any party plan that attacks Family in such heartless and cavalier manners that aid and abet sordid business interested in profiteering from governments deliberate disfunctioning system such as We have been subjected to through no choice other than domestic terrorists exemplified by Woodland and Riverview residents kicked out to beg on corners for funds to buy food and shelter expenses. The Woodland site today is called "Victoria Hill" a sordid acknowledgement of sorts and there is an abundance of profitable condo development blanketing the land that once was a publicly owned asset... where's the "social conscience nests" social housing?

Why is it that these publicly owned assets aren't paying the public dividends and how about the selling price the government collect the cash paid out while the public is deliberately underfunded and not represented by those that swore to represent the province "constituents" gambling away our Chartered Human Rights & Freedoms then galavanting off to the other side of the world taking care of foreign interests at the expense of our right to a quality of life has conspiratorially become a disposable expense. As proof there are plenty of victims disabled by aquired disabilities and how becoming eliminated competition as I and s.22 have been experienced by example!

Regard madness is the method as the Government under The Liberal's party favorites carries on along ignoring responsibility causing grief We are subjected continually for many decades it's this meazly moment in time the babbling brooks on with artifice of lip service about bogus concerns for disabled and vulnerable made crippled during ndp and Liberally hay-daze staged fright! Not a decent days wage to be found anywhere along this path to the psycho's economy.

Sincerely

s.22

\*Being denied our Canadian Chartered Human Rights & Freedoms assured my s.22 death and my suffering s.22  
Social Services refused requested emergency funds incarcerated in three NDP government sponsored training programs. I  
was enrolled in s.22

s.22 I told classmates and facilitators my situation one  
suggested hitching a ride, the employment counsellor advised go to Legal Aid. I did, they couldn't help due to government  
cutbacks.

*The Federal Government assures Murderers' rapists receive their chartered human rights they get multiple escorted family  
visitations. Next morning I was called into the administrator's office told if I return to s.22, my Family here in s.2 will  
be taken off financial assistance. I asked if she'd been called by the welfare office and instructed to tell me this she nodded  
saying yes. Life Skills facilitator s.22 said "we don't need help". A math test so odd the facilitator asked where  
I'd gone. s.22*

s.22

s.22

Page 010

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.22



Ms. Clark  
Premier  
Office of the  
Premier  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria  
BC  
V8W 9E1  
www.gov.bc.ca

March 11, 2016

s.22

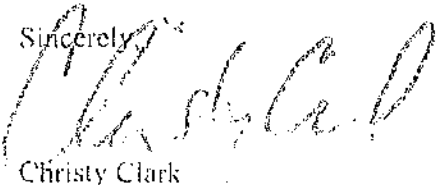
Dear s.22

Thank you for your letter regarding the recently announced increase to income assistance rates for persons with disabilities. It was good of you to take the time to let me know that this increase will be helpful to you.

I've shared your correspondence with the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, so that she, too, has an opportunity to review your comments about the increase and about the bus pass. I can assure you that the Ministry has been sending a letter to all those affected by the changes, but I want to thank you for your suggestion.

Again, thank you for writing. It was good to hear from you.

Sincerely,

  
Christy Clark  
Premier

pc: Honourable Michelle Stilwell

Office of the  
Premier

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Location:  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria

website  
[www.gov.bc.ca](http://www.gov.bc.ca)

Dear Premier,

I feel you are getting a bad rap about the Bus Pass issue. I am on disability myself & I just received a letter stating I can keep my 45 dollar a year bus pass & accept a 25 dollar a month raise, or ship the bus pass & accept a 77 dollar a month raise.

The media is twisting things. I believe your policy is fair and I would keep my bus pass & accept an additional 25 a month. Please remember some people call our newspaper the Times Communist which could be N.D.P. manipulated. I recommend you ensure everyone on the bus pass program gets a copy of the Ministry letter.



**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 2:53 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: can one cancel this years bus pass effective Sept 1, if one chooses to opt out of the program? (amended)

**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

Tamie Nohr

Constituency Assistant | **Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum**  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>



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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 17, 2016 2:50 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** can one cancel this years bus pass effective Sept 1, if one chooses to opt out of the program? (amended)

Dear Michelle:

Has anyone put in place a mechanism for opting out of the bus pass program if one currently holds a disability bus pass, and does not wish to continue using it after the new PWD payment schedule comes into effect on September 1, 2016? Can it be cancelled from that date so as to avoid paying the extra \$52.00 a month from Sept. 1-Dec.31? When current holders of the disability bus pass purchased that pass, they had no knowledge of the planned increase in fees. That information was not displayed anywhere on the application form for 2016's pass.

Part of taking responsibility for oneself includes figuring out what is cost effective, and what is not. Based on the information available at the time of purchase of my bus pass, paying \$45.00 for the pass was cost effective. The added fees means that it will not be cost effective for me to keep it past August 31, 2016. Can it be cancelled when the fee increase is comes into effect? Have you a plan in place, or will the ministry highjack that extra money from those that want to chose to receive the full \$77.00 PWD benefits increase? Or will they be stuck paying that extra \$52.00 for a full third of a year?

Sincerely

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, April 4, 2016 10:53 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189350 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189350

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 17, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, regarding your BC Bus Pass. Minister Stilwell has asked that we respond on her behalf, and we are pleased to do so.

Ministry staff attempted to contact you by phone but were unable to reach you and to leave a message as the voicemail associated with the number on your file did not identify a name or a phone number. If you are able to write back with your contact information, we can try to reach you accordingly.

You may, however, find the following information useful.

As you are aware, beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with Disabilities Designation will receive a monthly rate increase as follows:

- Clients who don't receive a discounted annual bus pass or Special Transportation Subsidy, will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.
- Clients who choose to receive a discounted annual bus pass will receive a rate increase of \$25 per month.
- Clients who currently receive the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) worth \$66 per month, will receive an STS payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, they will automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the STS and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

Shortly, you will receive a new compass card that will replace your current BC Bus Pass. With your new card, you will still have full access to public transit services. You will be able to use your Compass Card on Trans-Link and BC Transit systems across B.C.

This change ensures that everyone with an annual BC Bus Pass will have continued access to travel in Trans-Link and BC Transit areas. There is no charge for the Compass Card for 2016.

Until you receive your new Compass Card, please continue to use your current BC Bus Pass Card to access public transit.

Further information about the Compass Card will be included when the card is sent to you.

Please note there is no change to the renewal process for the annual bus pass. You will receive your renewal package in late summer 2016.

Should you still wish to cancel your BC Bus Pass, you may send an email to the Bus Pass program at [SDSIBUSPA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SDSIBUSPA@gov.bc.ca). In order for the ministry to process your request, you will need to provide your full name, date of birth, address and postal code, contact phone number, and your social insurance number.

Alternatively, you may reach the BC Bus Pass Program by phone, fax, or regular mail. To reach the program by phone, please call 1-866-866-0800. Please press option 4, and then option 3. Phone lines are open from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Please note that phone lines tend to experience heavy call volumes during the bus pass renewal season between October and February.

You may also fax your documents to 250-414-4888, or send them by mail to:

BC Bus Pass Program  
PO Box 9985 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9R6

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

---

**From:** s.22

**Sent:** March 17, 2016 2:50 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** can one cancel this years bus pass effective Sept 1, if one chooses to opt out of the program?  
(amended)

Dear Michelle:

Has anyone put in place a mechanism for opting out of the bus pass program if one currently holds a disability bus pass, and does not wish to continue using it after the new PWD payment schedule comes into effect on September 1, 2016? Can it be cancelled from that date so as to avoid paying the extra \$52.00 a month from Sept. 1-Dec.31? When current holders of the disability bus pass purchased that pass, they had no knowledge of the planned increase in fees. That information was not displayed anywhere on the application form for 2016's pass.

Part of taking responsibility for oneself includes figuring out what is cost effective, and what is not. Based on the information available at the time of purchase of my bus pass, paying \$45.00 for the pass was cost effective. The added fees means that it will not be cost effective for me to keep it past August 31, 2016. Can it be cancelled when the fee increase is comes into effect? Have you a plan in place, or will the ministry highjack that extra money from those that want to chose to receive the full \$77.00 PWD benefits increase? Or will they be stuck paying that extra \$52.00 for a full third of a year?

Sincerely

s.22

Monday March 7, 2016

Dear Premier Clark and Minister Stilwell,

My name is s.22 I've been on PWD for over s.2 years and I have not once seen a increase on my income. Please leave the bus pass alone. I need it to get to and from s.22 and my volunteer job. I also need it to see my friends and family in the community. I'm not able to get around town otherwise.

It's not fair -- it's wrong what your doing to us. It's shameful. I'm not impressed. I've heard from a lot of people that they can't afford to live and they would wish that the bus pass would just be left alone. One person told me that it's causing her anxiety to go down hill and she now can't sleep at night because she is that upset with what's happening.

Please reconsider what your doing to us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

s.22

RECEIVED  
MAR 10 2016  
EXECUTION  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 10:21 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint

**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

Tamie Nohr

Constituency Assistant | Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>



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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 15, 2016 11:15 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Cc:** Yap.MLA, John  
**Subject:** Complaint

March 15, 2016

Minister Stilwell and Mr Yap:

I am writing on behalf of s.22 who is a constituent in the Richmond – Steveston riding.

I would like to bring to your attention to a matter regarding s.22 difficulties and frustrations in obtaining a replacement BC supplemental bus card from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation. s.22 s.2 lost s. BC supplemental bus card at the beginning of the year. s.2 provided written consent to the ministry for me to act on s. behalf.

In early February we called SDSI to enquire about the process to obtain a replacement pass for s. After waiting over two hours on hold, I was prompted to leave my number for a call back. Someone from the ministry called back the following day. I advised that the website option to download the replacement form application was not working, which was acknowledged. We were told that they would send an application by mail, as well as a consent form for me to represent s.2

I called the ministry again on February 18th 2016, as s. had only received a consent form, not a replacement application form. We were told that s.22 could go to any bank and pay the \$10.00 replacement fee. The service representative provided an account number in which to make the payment. It was also mentioned; after s.22 paid s. should disregard the paper replacement form being mailed. We were told s. would receive a replacement pass approximately three weeks after the payment.

s.22 paid on February 18<sup>th</sup>. s. has waited almost 4 weeks now; however the replacement has not arrived. I called the ministry again on March 14th 2016 to inquire about the status of s. replacement application. The gentleman on the phone indicated that the ten dollar payment had been received and processed on February 18th 2016. He advised that the replacement application had not been processed! He could not offer an explanation why it had not been actioned. We were told it would be processed now, but it would take a further three weeks to arrive.

As you can imagine, s.22 is very frustrated and we asked to speak with the supervisor. I was told that such a request needs to be submitted to a supervisor whom would call back the following day. The gentleman was typing a message to the supervisor for quite some time (approximately 5 minutes) and I had asked him exactly what he was typing. He refused my request to tell me verbatim what had written but offered to 'paraphrase'. It is now the end of the business day on March 19<sup>th</sup>, and we have not received any follow up calls from a supervisor or anyone at SDSI.

s.22 has been paying frequent bus fares s.22 ever since submitting the replacement fee. Learning that it will be a further 3 weeks is unacceptable, as s. met the initial requirements for replacement. This adds an unnecessary financial burden to s. as s.22

We are requesting that you look into this matter immediately and provide clarification as follows:

1. Why was the replacement not processed after the payment was submitted?
2. It is unfair s.22 must pay full bus fares unnecessarily for an additional three weeks - why can a replacement not be issued immediately?
3. Why did the service representative deny my request to read back verbatim, what he wrote regarding my request to speak with a supervisor on March 14th?
4. Why did the ministry supervisor not call me back the following day, as promised, even though my contact phone number was confirmed with the service representative?
5. We would like to have confirmation that s.22 replacement bus pass has indeed been processed and that it will be done immediately.

We were not provided with an explanation or apology for the delay.

As noted on the SDSI website "To receive courteous, respectful, efficient and fair service. To have service quality complaints addressed in an appropriate and timely manner. " We are very frustrated at how this matter has been handled and are respectfully requesting your assistance resolving this issue in a timely manner.

I look forward to your response.

Regards,

s.22

On behalf of s.22



Page 021

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bond.MLA, Shirley LASS:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, March 14, 2016 3:05 PM  
**To:** Minister, JTST JTST:EX  
**Subject:** 112414 incoming - FW: Location of New Employment Centre: Tillicum Rd., behind Fairway, by Shoppers; old Starbucks location

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Categories:** Alison

For your review and or response.

Thanks Katrina

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 14, 2016 12:55 PM  
**To:** Bond.MLA, Shirley  
**Subject:** Location of New Employment Centre: Tillicum Rd., behind Fairway, by Shoppers; old Starbucks location

Hi, I was wondering if it would be possible to put one of these (below)  
GT Hiring Solutions

[ Head Office 400, 1207 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC V8W 2E7

P: 250.382.3303  
F: 250.383.4142  
E: [info@gethiringsolutions.ca](mailto:info@gethiringsolutions.ca) ]

closer to the Tillicum area, as with the changes coming to Transit and some people's viability, like myself, (due to the standards set by the employment agency's requirements for/regarding client services in transportation, et al), if it wouldn't be good to have a fourth location up this way, because one is not allowed to access the Borden/Saanich location, as an alternative to the Gorge location and 'downtown is too far' for my viability by bus and tickets and consistent ridership therein? The location suggested in the heading has ample parking and lease rates would be lower than even Tillicum Mall area, etc.

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Di Castri, Adriana SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 11:23 AM  
**To:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: bullets

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Please log and send to Writer for draft response.  
Adriana Di Castri | A/Manager | 250.387.7660

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 11:03 AM  
**To:** Di Castri, Adriana SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: bullets

Hello Adriana,

Can we have a response drafted for this gentleman to clarify the changes being made to the bus pass? And please cc. MLA John Yaps CO.

Thanks,

Kristen

Contact:

s.22

**From:** Robertson, Paige [<mailto:Paige.Robertson@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 9:09 AM  
**To:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Ng, PoWah LASS:EX; Ma, Guang Cheng LASS:EX  
**Subject:** RE: bullets

Kristen

We sent out the response to the email you provided bullets for last week. Here is the response from the constituent:

Dear Minister,

I understand this well.

The problem I see is that I have entered into a contract with the Government of BC for a bus pass that is good until 31-Dec-2016, & I have paid for it in full. If you make me pay \$52X4(Sep-Dec, inclusive) to finish 2016, that, sir, is theft &/or fraud.

It is my understanding that Common Law does not allow legislation to be made that nullifies existing contracts.

I understand that starting 01-Jan-2017 you will charge me \$669.00/year for this same Ministry pass, exactly \$45 more than it would cost me to buy my own. That is your prerogative. My concern is that you will arbitrarily cancel our existing contract.

Please clarify the government's position regarding this promised nullification of my contract, entered into in good faith.

Sincerely,

Could you please have the ministry clarify what he is stating?

Thanks,

Paige

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX [<mailto:Kristen.Blake@gov.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** February 29, 2016 10:44 AM  
**To:** Robertson, Paige <[Paige.Robertson@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Paige.Robertson@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: bullets

We sent them out Wednesday so I would think they would have received them already but you could always send it in case they haven't received it yet- probably wouldn't hurt.

**From:** Robertson, Paige [<mailto:Paige.Robertson@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 29, 2016 10:40 AM

**To:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX

**Cc:** Ng, PoWah LASS:EX

**Subject:** RE: bullets

Have clients already received this letter? I don't want to repeat it.

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX [mailto:Kristen.Blake@gov.bc.ca]

**Sent:** February 26, 2016 2:20 PM

**To:** Robertson, Paige <Paige.Robertson@leg.bc.ca>

**Subject:** RE: bullets

Sorry here you go.

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX

**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2016 2:19 PM

**To:** Robertson, Paige LASS:EX

**Subject:** RE: bullets

Hello Paige,

Below is the most updated wording and information we are using for questions regarding the bus pass. I have attached a letter that you can send forward to the client which will hopefully clarify the changes taking place in our Ministry.

Have a nice weekend.

Thanks.

Kristen

Good afternoon,

Below and attached is a letter from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation explaining the monthly rate increase for the Person with the Disabilities Designation. The same letter will be sent to people who receive Persons with Disabilities benefits.

Underneath the letter's content is BC NDP's income assistance rates proposal from their 2013 election platform.

Thank you.

Ben



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

Dear Client,

This letter is to inform you of the rate increase announced in the Budget on February 16, 2016.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities Designation will receive a monthly rate increase to use as you choose. Your options are as follows:

- 1) If you don't receive a subsidized annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase to spend as you choose.
- 2) If you already have a subsidized annual bus pass you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. If you choose this option, you will receive a 2017 BC Bus Pass renewal notification in late summer, 2016. There has been no change to the application process.
- 3) If you are a PWD client receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) worth \$66 per month, you will receive an STS payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the STS and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

If you have any questions, please contact the ministry at 1-866-866-0800.

# Disability Assistance Rate Increases

CURRENT UNEVEN RATES		NEW EVEN RATES**	
	<b>TOTAL</b> (Monthly Benefits with Transportation Supports)		
		<b>Rate Increase</b> (Monthly)	<b>NEW TOTAL</b> (Monthly Benefits)
<b>Clients with no Transportation Subsidy</b> (45,000 people on disability assistance do not receive any form of transportation subsidy)	<b>\$906</b>	<b>\$77</b>	<b>\$983</b>
<b>BC Bus Pass Holder*</b> (35,000 people currently receive a subsidized annual bus pass)	<b>\$958</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$983</b> (\$931 plus \$52 for annual subsidized bus pass, paid by the Ministry)
<b>Special Transportation Subsidy Client</b> (20,000 people receive this subsidy)	<b>\$972</b>	<b>\$11</b>	<b>\$983</b> (Includes the \$75 amount)

\*BC Bus Pass Holders currently pay an annual \$45 administration fee. They will continue to pay the \$45 administration fee.

\*\*Effective September 1, 2016

## SUMMARY OF THE RATE INCREASE EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 2016 FOR EACH DIFFERENT GROUP:

- The 45,000 people who do not receive transportation supports will realize the full \$77 increase to their monthly cheque
- People on disability assistance who access a subsidized annual bus pass will see an increase of \$25 per month
- Those who get the Special Transportation Subsidy will still receive that financial support on a monthly basis rather than as an annual payment, plus an additional \$11 per month, totalling \$77 per month.

### End of Letter

### From the B.C. NDP 2013 Election Platform – Page 15

#### 2. Take practical steps to improve income assistance

- Immediately tie all income assistance rates to inflation, double earning exemptions for employable recipients, and allow a child maintenance exemption.
- Increase income assistance rates for all singles and couples by \$20 per month within two years.

Ben James

Director of Communications

BC Liberal Government Caucus

250-356-9131 (office)

250-208-7052 (mobile)

**From:** Robertson, Paige (<mailto:Paige.Robertson@leg.bc.ca>)

**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2016 2:04 PM

**To:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX

**Cc:** Ng, PoWah LASS:EX; Chen, Laura LASS:EX; Ma, Guang Cheng LASS:EX

**Subject:** bullets

Would you please send response bullets so that John can reply to this constituent.

Thanks.

I am writing to you, as you are my local representative for our provincial government, to ask you to exercise your position as a sitting MLA to remedy what I see as a serious problem in the budget just released.

I am a recipient of PWD benefits, as a permanently disabled citizen & resident of Richmond, British Columbia.

I was most perturbed at hearing the initial, often conflicting, rumours regarding the \$77 increase in income assistance for those receiving PWD, & a new fee schedule for bus travel for those of us in Metro Vancouver, amounting to a higher cost of \$624.00/year as well as the same \$45 we paid for an annual pass (on the red Compass cards issued by the Ministry of Social Development("MSD."))

I've researched from as many sources as I could, including MSD and conclude that we will be charged a once-yearly fee of \$45 when we can already get the same \$52 monthly Concession card loaded onto a non-MSD Compass card without paying \$45 a year.

The latest I see, from provincial government sources, is that, as of 01-September, if I do not turn in my current MSD Compass card, I will be charged \$52 per month effective 01-September.

Have your government checked with Legal on this? As far as I'm concerned, I & MSD contracted, before the current budget was passed, for me to have a pass that is good for unlimited Metro Vancouver transit use(not including Wes Coast Express) until 31 December 2016.

I signed an agreement and paid \$45.00 in 2015.

MSD accepted this money & renewed my annual bus pass until 31 December 2016 (Which is confirmed every time I use my MSD [red] Compass card.

Please look into this matter and clarify to me, for my friends and I, that we will NOT be charged unless we use the MSD-provided pass in 2017.

Also, please, confirm that those currently with the 2016 pass will receive a plainly worded letter in plenty of time for us to either confirm we will pay the \$45.00 per year plus \$52.00 per month beginning in 2017, & to include a self addressed stamped envelope with which we can surrender our pass after it expires on 31 December, so we have time to organise other means of accessing transit, which is critically important for employment, medical, shopping, & social reasons.

Please also consider offering additional assistance/transit discounts &/or offsets to those who have multiple medical appointments &/or who require transit to obtain or maintain a job.

If you are willing and able to correct what is an extraordinary difficulty for so many of your constituents, I am certain it would go a long way to helping you obtain a fourth consecutive term.

Yours sincerely,

Paige Robertson

Constituency Assistant to

John Yap, MLA

Richmond-Steveston

Phone: 604-241-8452

Fax: 604-241-8493

Twitter: @john\_yap

Facebook: johnyapsteveston

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Monday, March 14, 2016 7:31 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Please keep the yearly bus pass

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

My name is s.22 I live on my disability cheque plus my small job.

I ride the city bus to go to my job, college classes, activities and programs and I have to take a taxi when the bus does not go where I need to go.

Transportation is necessary because I need to go to my programs to be outgoing and social, and go to college to keep learning, and go to my sports programs to stay active and healthy. I don't have any other way to get around except to ride a bus or taxi. It is not a choice to me. I will have s.22 for my whole life and am still trying so hard to get better, but I still need help.

If I have to buy a \$52 monthly bus pass, then if I need to take a taxi when the bus does not go where I need to go, only one taxi ride will take all of the increase to my PWD, because taxi's cost a lot of money. Some months my programs do not run so I won't need a bus pass all 12 months so I won't be able to sign up for the new way of the monthly \$52 bus pass for all year. Then it is not very inconvenient for me to go somewhere to buy the bus pass each month. It is hard enough to get around already.

Please give us all the same increase to our disability cheque and please keep the old way of the yearly bus pass program. We use the bus to get out and learn and be healthy so don't take the bus pass program away from us who use it. I am feeling very stressed about the bus pass program ending. Please don't take it away from us.

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 2:37 PM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189307 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189307

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 14, 2016, and apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive your subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22

Sent: Monday, March 14, 2016 7:31 PM

To: Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX

Subject: Please keep the yearly bus pass

My name is s.22

I live on my disability cheque plus my small job.

I ride the city bus to go to my job, college classes, activities and programs and I have to take a taxi when the bus does not go where I need to go.

Transportation is necessary because I need to go to my programs to be outgoing and social, and go to college to keep learning, and go to my sports programs to stay active and healthy. I don't have any other way to get around except to ride a bus or taxi. It is not a choice to me. I will have s.22 for my whole life and am still trying so hard to get better, but I still need help.

If I have to buy a \$52 monthly bus pass, then if I need to take a taxi when the bus does not go where I need to go, only one taxi ride will take all of the increase to my PWD, because taxi's cost a lot of money. Some months my programs do not run so I won't need a bus pass all 12 months so I won't be able to sign up for the new way of the monthly \$52 bus pass for all year. Then it is not very inconvenient for me to go somewhere to buy the bus pass each month. It is hard enough to get around already.

Please give us all the same increase to our disability cheque and please keep the old way of the yearly bus pass program. We use the bus to get out and learn and be healthy so don't take the bus pass program away from us who use it. I am feeling very stressed about the bus pass program ending. Please don't take it away from us.

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 13, 2016 10:59 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Your letter.

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Honourable Michelle Stilwell

Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation.

I saw your letter to the editor in my local newspaper (Langley Times) a couple of days ago which set out to clear up, "some of the confusion around the rate increases for people on disability assistance".

I am interested in this because s.22 receives disability assistance and I help with s.22

Your letter cleared up something I had meant to contact your department about, namely, that s.22 presently pays \$45- a year for a Compass card which gives s. unlimited use of transit. When the \$45- was paid it was for the year ending Dec 31, 2016, it was unclear to me whether that would still be the case or if it would end Sept 1, 2016. I see that it still ends December 31, 2016.

I am not clear on some things though and would appreciate it if you could answer three questions that I have (I have numbered them for ease of reply):

1. s.22 presently pays \$45- a year for transit - is this a bus pass or a transportation subsidy?
2. How much will s. pay for next year, \$45- or?
3. If s. is to pay more than \$45- a year we would like to keep s. present Compass card and put money on it as needed because it is cheaper than paying cash when using transit. Can s. keep her present card or does s. have to get a new one?

I would like to comment on the new changes:

The last increase in disability assistance payments was in 2007. I looked online and saw that in order to have just kept the purchasing power of \$906- in 2007 that it would require an increase of \$123- per month not \$77-.

The way the new transit rules work is that according to your letter people receiving monthly bus passes will in effect pay \$52- a month to continue to receive them which is SUBTRACTED from the \$77- increase. Staying with idea that it should be the goal to keep purchasing power at least at 2007 levels, then the \$52- per month should be ADDED not subtracted so that the increase would need to be an increase of \$175- per month. Then, in order to achieve fairness, those wishing to choose to use some of their disability allowance to use transit could do so.

Your letter says that, "I know people were hoping for a greater increase in rates, but this is what we can afford to do right now."

If you had indexed disability allowances in 2007 so that they had increased each year (as the minimum wage does) to the rate of inflation it would have been much easier to budget than letting things slide for nine years and then making a lump sum payment. Also, leaving creative accounting out, the province has a balanced budget.

I read an article in Saturdays edition of the Vancouver Sun newspaper (March 12) which included a comment from the Chief Economist at BMO Capital markets that said, "lost a little bit amid the headlines about the weakness in Alberta is the fact that B.C. has been on fire." - I believe that is the way your government has tried to portray the economic situation in BC.

It seems that you can afford to make a greater increase in the rates.

I have voted for the Liberal party of BC for a long time as I don't see the NDP as being fiscally responsible and believed the Liberals would be "compassionately conservative".

The way the disability has been handled has not been, in my opinion, that way but rather has been mean spirited. I think that you should increase disability allowance payments so that the net amount of the allowance equals the purchasing power of 2007 money and that going forward, increases should be annual and indexed to the rate of inflation - what makes that even better is that it's the right thing to do.

Yours truly,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2016 8:03 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** s.22  
**Subject:** Persons With Developmental Disabilities Transportation Clawback

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Your credentials as an MLA suggest you are a compassionate, people oriented person. I expect you have encountered many persons with developmental disabilities through the years. How could you, in good conscience, propose such a miserly adjustment to the monthly payments to this disadvantaged and impoverished group. The sleight of hand approach to granting the \$72 per month and then taking away the transportation subsidy is mean spirited, insulting, and grossly insensitive to their needs.

We are constantly reminded what a great province we live in and I believe that is true. However, it is the people in it that make it great. When you enter that next cabinet meeting, start speaking up on behalf of PWDDs and **demanding** what you know is right for this disadvantaged group. When you do this, you will become one of those people that make our province great.

s.22

Vancouver

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 2:28 PM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189302 s.2 SDSI Response

Ref: 189302

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 11, 2016, and apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** s.22

**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2016 8:03 PM

**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX

**Cc:** s.22

**Subject:** Persons With Developmental Disabilities Transportation Clawback

Your credentials as an MLA suggest you are a compassionate, people oriented person. I expect you have encountered many persons with developmental disabilities through the years. How could you, in good conscience, propose such a miserly adjustment to the monthly payments to this disadvantaged and impoverished group. The sleight of hand approach to granting the \$72 per month and then taking away the transportation subsidy is mean spirited, insulting, and grossly insensitive to their needs.

We are constantly reminded what a great province we live in and I believe that is true. However, it is the people in it that make it great. When you enter that next cabinet meeting, start speaking up on behalf of PWDDs and **demanding** what you know is right for this disadvantaged group. When you do this, you will become one of those people that make our province great.

s.22

Vancouver

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2016 3:15 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: B.C. Liberals play down controversy over disability allowance

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 11, 2016 11:42 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Cc:** Mungall.MLA, Michelle ; James.MLA, Carole ; [vpalmer@vancouver.sun.com](mailto:vpalmer@vancouver.sun.com)  
**Subject:** B.C. Liberals play down controversy over disability allowance

Michelle Stilwell,

Regarding the Liberals about this subject noted above. One issue that also irks me as a parent of a PWD who is s.22 but independent enough to use the bus all over the Lower Mainland. My issue (other than the lack of increase in dollars to their benefits), my other issue is this:

In the Fall of 2015 we paid for his Bus Pass for 2016. PAID in Full.

So why is your Government taking \$52 a month off of my child's PWD Benefit Cheque starting September 1, 2016? He has already paid for his Transit till December 31, 2016.

This decision by the provincial Liberals is in poor taste, mean and vindictive in my opinion.

I am doing my very best to stay on top of these news articles. I do not look forward to the day when I can no longer do this for my s.22. I'm still young (ish), but we never know how long we have. I really feel sorry for those PWD's out there that don't have the support I give to my child.

You (or your government) believe that for the PWD to continue to use their bus pass, that a raise of \$25 a month with no previous raises for the past 9 years is acceptable. I don't, and I know you would not tolerate that from your employer either. These are young adults up to and including seniors that depend on their bus pass for volunteer work, socialization, exercises, day programs, doctors visits, etc. They don't have the luxury of having a car or a person to drive them in most cases. They will now have to choose between continuing to be out in the community and eating. Do you really think that's fair? Why was the Liberal Government so dishonest. You could have left the bus pass as it was and given everyone a \$25 a month increase and gotten a few complaints, but giving people a choice between making ends meet with a \$77 a month increase and keeping their bus pass, it's in poor taste, it's mean, and deceitful.

Also, I get back to my original point:

- How can your government in good conscience bill the PWD twice for the same service? In the fall of 2015 I paid \$45 for my child's 2016 Bus Pass. He has already paid for the year of 2016. So why is your government going to charge (deduct) his cheque starting September 1, 2016 for his Monthly Pass? Explain this please!!

The Liberal Government has done so many wrongs with my child over the last 15 (approx) years, Provincial

Liberals are doing a disservice to PWD's. A BIG disservice.

Regards  
s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2016 3:14 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 11, 2016 12:56 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### City

Surrey

### Address

NA  
s.22  
Canada  
[Map It](#)

### Comments & Feedback

TO: Michelle Stilwell

How dare you say That I stood on the Lawn at rally at the legislature as part NDP-organized political photo op. I stood there because all I see is the BS that start with the NDP about 20 years ago when they started fooling around with disability benefits . They Cut it back to \$725 and \$810. It wasn't the NDP that review all disable people benefits about 13 years ago. You spending 10 million to kick off about 100 people. That number sadly doesn't include one man I knew committed suicide due to his review . He had being talking about the stress etc for days till he decided the best way to handle it all was to end it all. A no BS true story that never made the news.

Your government continued it by playing a numbers game. Bus Pass or take the \$77 bucks . Guess I put that towards rent ? You give \$375 rent and gets you a place even Rats and bed bugs refuse to live in . My 275 Foot in law suite cost 500 bucks the max I can pay . A phone cost me 35 bucks . Food 265 . That leave 100 bucks for washing clothing etc . I thought about telling you in person what I think about the system and bad it is from the bottom up . But whatis the point no one really gives a rats bottom about anything but the bottom line . Personally you re just robbing from peter to pay Paul with the Buss pass cran. It would take about \$1100 bucks iust to live in most cities in BC. A basic no frills . no relationships



life style . You can t live a healthy life style on 906 bucks .

Thats a rant from someone whom no longer can write very well due to my disability. A bus pass is need .

More rent cash is needed . The system fails most disable persons. We are a number standing line at the door not a human being all to often the moment we walk into an office.

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 11:26 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189300 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189300

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 11, 2016, and apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive your subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

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**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [mailto:[Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)]  
**Sent:** March 11, 2016 12:56 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Name**

s.22

**Email**

s.22

**City**

Surrey

**Address**

NA  
s.22  
Canada  
[Map It](#)

**Comments & Feedback**

TO: Michelle Stilwell

How dare you say That I stood on the Lawn at rally at the legislature as part NDP-organized political photo op. I stood there because all I see is the BS that start with the NDP about 20 years ago when they started fooling around with disability benefits . They Cut it back to \$725 and \$810. It wasn't the NDP that review all disable people benefits about 13 years ago. You spending 10 million to kick off about 100 people. That number sadly doesn't include one man I knew committed suicide due to his review . He had being talking about the stress etc for days till he decided the best way to handle it all was to end it all. A no BS true story that never made the news.

Your government continued it by playing a numbers game. Bus Pass or take the \$77 bucks . Guess I put that towards rent ? You give \$375 rent and gets you a place even Rats and bed bugs refuse to live in . My 275 Foot in law suite cost 500 bucks the max I can pay . A phone cost me 35 bucks . Food 265 . That leave 100 bucks for washing clothing etc . I thought about telling you in person what I think about the system and bad it is from the bottom up . But whatis the point no one really gives a rats bottom about anything but the bottom line . Personally you re just robbing from peter to pay Paul with the Buss pass crap. It would take about \$1100 bucks just to live in most cities in BC. A basic no frills , no relationships life style . You can t live a healthy life style on 906 bucks .

Thats a rant from someone whom no longer can write very well due to my disability. A bus pass is need . More rent cash is needed . The system fails most disable persons. We are a number standing line at the door not a human being all to often the moment we walk into an office.

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 1:20 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: New submission from Contact Your Constituency  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 10, 2016 1:17 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### City

Burnaby

### Address

s.22

Burnaby, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

### Comments & Feedback

Hi Michelle, remember me the s.22 we Met going to s.22 Hope you are doing well and congratulation on the Minister Appointment..

I am just writing to you regarding some concerns many Blind and visually impaired players brought to my attention regarding BC transit passes and a change in policies that might change there availabilities to use there CNIB (Canadian national institute for the Blind) Cards as transit pass and therefor being charge for transit..

Can you confirm this would be just rumors and they will be OK to travel using there CNIB card as Before..

Thanks and keep the good work  
s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2016 12:28 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Bus Pass Program

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Dear Ms. Stillwell:

As I will no longer be able to afford the bus pass program that I have been privileged to receive for most of my adult life, and want to ensure I get my full increase on my disability cheque, as living in the lower mainland is a very expensive exercise, and although I would love to move to a smaller community where there is no transportation service and much cheaper housing expenses, I am still very much dependant on my family members who live and work in the lower mainland. Could you please ensure that I am taken off the bus pass program so that I receive the full disability pension.

I am sorry I have to contact you directly, but I also do not have the patients to wait on line for ministry services on the phone for over an hour. As I am totally dependent on news coverage for information, and there has been no mention of how or when they will remove the compass card and I don't want to accidentally be deducted the some of 52.00 a month from my cheque.

Sincerely,  
s.22



THE VOICE OF THE CEREBRAL PALSID  
OF GREATER VANCOUVER  
2251 KINGSWAY  
VANCOUVER BC V5N 2T6  
604-874-1741

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER'S OFFICE	
Referral #	
Letter to:	
MAR 13 2016	
MSR Response <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Apply Direct <input type="checkbox"/> Info File <input type="checkbox"/> DWP <input type="checkbox"/>
Unassigned <input type="checkbox"/>	Reading <input type="checkbox"/>
Clerk	

March 4, 2016

Hon. Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Innovation  
PO Box 9058 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Ms. Stilwell,

I am writing on behalf the Voice of the Cerebral Palsied of Greater Vancouver (VCP). Many of our members receive PWD benefits and of those people a significant number use the yearly bus pass. People use the yearly bus pass either because they cannot drive or they cannot afford the expenses of owning and operating their own car. We also live in one of the most expensive places in Canada and have not received an increase in the PWD benefits in over 9 years. Therefore, people receiving PWD benefits have been struggling more and more each year to pay for the basic necessities of life.

The VCP was pleased to hear the provincial government was finally going to raise the PWD benefit rate by \$77 per month starting in September. However, our pleasure quickly turned to anger when we learned about the \$52 clawback plus a \$45 annual administration fee to cover the expense of the bus pass. The fact that people on PWD waited 9 years for an increase to their rate only to be told that they now have to pay for their bus pass is an insult. People who do continue to receive the bus pass after September will only be \$22 ahead per month while those who decide not to receive the bus pass will probably go out less over time.

The transit options for people with disabilities can be challenging to access. HandyDART can only deliver a set number of rides per day. People often cannot use HandyDART for a number of reasons including it is fully booked for the days and times required or it does not operate at the times required. In addition, people do not book rides on HandyDART because not everyone knows when and where they want to go ahead of time. Disabled people can use taxis but this can be an expensive option. People can receive subsidized taxi rides by using Taxi Saver coupons. However, people are limited to 2 books of Taxi Savers per month which can be quickly used up if people travel often. Therefore, the public transit system is an important transportation option that offers people with disabilities the flexibility that they need to travel.

The ministry's claim that it will equalize the payments that everyone on PWD benefits collects is spurious. The people on PWD benefits who receive neither the subsidized buss pass nor the special transportation subsidy cannot benefit from either of these programs because they are not able to use public transit nor do they qualify for the special transportation subsidy. Why base benefits on people who cannot use other programs that are offered? It appears that the government is basing PWD benefits on the lowest common denominator. Such logic is insulting.

The VCP wants the provincial government to do the right thing and reinstate both the \$45 yearly bus pass and the special transportation subsidy plus raise the PWD rate by the full \$77 per month. People receiving PWD benefits have waited far too long for a rate increase.

Sincerely,

Yoshinori Tanabe  
Executive Director

CC Jane Dyson, Executive Director, Disability Alliance of BC  
Faith Bodnar, Executive Director, Inclusion BC  
Feri Dehdar , Executive Director, Cerebral Palsy Association of BC  
Hon. Christy Clark, Premier of BC  
Hon. John Horgan, Leader of the Official Opposition  
Hon. David Eby, MLA – Vancouver Point Grey

The Voice of The Cerebral Palsied of Greater Vancouver  
2251 Kingsway  
Vancouver, BC V5N 2T6

1603091138



3717 W7B

Hon. Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Innovation  
PO Box 9058 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1





I ask you to imagine your own son, if you cannot imagine the many, many persons with disability in this province. Imagine your fear and worry and your love. Translate this into generosity of spirit and action. Increase the rates far more than \$77. Restore the bus pass. Start talking about guaranteeing our most vulnerable fellow citizens the life that all those in a modern democracy deserve.

Sincerely yours,  
s.22



March 15, 2016

Ref: 189260

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your letter dated February 29, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, regarding the recently announced Persons with Disabilities (PWD) rate increase. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, and as Minister I am pleased to respond on behalf of Premier Clark.

I apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

.../2

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Stilwell', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier



March 15, 2016

Ref: 189260

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Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Stilwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of the last name being a large, stylized 'S'.

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier



MAR 01 2016

123 Franklyn Road, Kelowna, BC V1X 6A9 • Phone: 250-763-4837 • [www.PathwaysKelowna.com](http://www.PathwaysKelowna.com)

February 23, 2016

Honorable Premier Christy Clark  
MLA Westside-Kelowna  
Unit 3 – 2429 Dobbin Rd  
West Kelowna, BC  
V4T 2L4

Dear Honourable Premier,

I am contacting you on behalf of Pathways Abilities Society and as a concerned citizen of our province to please encourage you to reconsider your recent decision regarding increasing the monthly bus pass fee for people with disabilities. Please consider bringing back the \$45.00 per year bus pass and allow everyone receiving person with disabilities (PWD) benefits to keep the \$77.00 a month increase.

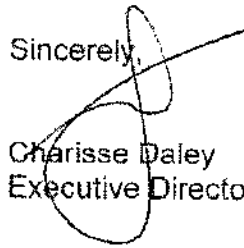
Pathways is a not-for-profit organization that has been providing services to people with disabilities in Kelowna, West Kelowna and Lake Country for over 62 years. We currently support over 200 people and their families.

People with disabilities are some of our most vulnerable citizens. For many PWD benefits are not a choice but a necessity. As you are aware, BC disability benefit rates are among the lowest in the country; yet we live in one of the most expensive provinces. Since 2001 they have only received a \$120.00 increase. It was heartening to finally hear our government announce the \$77.00 a month increase and then so very disheartening to see it clawed it back in another budget line.

We encourage you to please do the right thing and reinstate the \$45.00 a year bus pass without penalty.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

  
Charisse Daley  
Executive Director

1/2

*Serving people with diverse-abilities since 1953.*

Cc. Honorable Norm Letnick, Minister of Agriculture  
Kelowna-Lake Country  
101 - 330 Hwy 33 West  
Kelowna, BC  
V1X 1X9

Honorable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource  
Operations  
Kelowna-Mission  
102 - 2121 Ethel St.  
Kelowna, BC  
V1Y 2Z6

Honorable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Unit 2B-1209 Island Highway East  
Parksville, BC  
V9P 1R5





*Pathways office*

RECEIVED

MAR 11 2016

COPY

123 Franklyn Road, Kelowna, BC V1X 6A9 • Phone: 250-763-4837 • [www.PathwaysKelowna.com](http://www.PathwaysKelowna.com)

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V1Y 2Z6

Honorable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Unit 2B-1209 Island Highway East  
Parksville, BC  
V9P 1R5

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 1:19 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Please Have A Heart - Leave The Bus Passes Alone

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 10, 2016 12:49 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Please Have A Heart - Leave The Bus Passes Alone

Dear Honourable MLA Stilwell,

Back in February I wrote to the Premier and Mike DeJong over the announcement to take away bus passes for the disabled. I am still outraged by this mean spirited move. I am further aghast at your comments made in recent interviews.

First of all to even suggest that our disapproval of this move is all stirred up by the NDP is inaccurate and unfounded. I saw nothing from the NDP when I decided to write my letter. I was responding to the current liberal government's announcement. I am insulted by your insinuation.

Secondly, I do not think you know what it's like. As I, you are fortunate and should feel privileged to be able to contribute to society in spite of your disability. You do not live in poverty and were able to recover, obtain an education and make good money. Don't paint this unfortunate group with the same brush. They can't work and live every day stressed about finances. Now you are going to further isolate them. This is not fair. It is downright insulting and you, of all people, should be ashamed of yourself to spin it otherwise.

I urge you to do the right thing and back up on this decision. Each day on this planet is a blessing. This group needs a hand and deserve better than to live each day in poverty. They too deserve some joy in their lives. British Columbia can afford this. This piece of legislation is NOT WHAT CANADA IS ALL ABOUT!  
A copy of my February letter is below.

Sincerely,  
s.22

**From:** s.22  
**Date:** February 22, 2016 at 12:32:54 PM PST  
**To:** [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca), [mike.dejong.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mike.dejong.mla@leg.bc.ca)  
**Cc:** [selina.robinson.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:selina.robinson.mla@leg.bc.ca)  
**Subject:** BC Budget Thaws Nine-year Freeze on Disability Assistance Payments | The Tyee

Dear Premier and Honourable MLA Michael DeJong,  
So you have put up a smoke screen and say you have given the disabled a raise saying they can choose what they want to spend it on. Taking away transit passes for this unfortunate group will actually cost them more money. You have taken away from them, not given back. I urge you to reconsider this decision. I know a number of disabled people who feel they must make a choice whether to eat or be able to get out for medical appointments, visit a friend, etc. Isn't part of remaining healthy about proper medical care and getting out in one's community? Where is your family's first agenda. I do not see the need in this thriving province to take away from those who need it the most. We can afford to keep these people as healthy and socialized as possible. We can afford to give them their \$77.00 per month raise AND pay for their bus passes.

Here's an idea for you if you are unwilling or unable to find the money to cover this in your budget. Developers are making millions developing along the Translink corridor. Take more taxes from them to subsidize the passes for the disabled community. In fact, I know a number of business owners that feel the developers should be paying for the entire skytrain system expansion.

I am fortunate to be s.22 who spent my career working in B.C.

I care about the health and well being of those less fortunate than I.

PLEASE, show some compassion here. Reverse this mean spirited piece of the budget.

Sincerely,

s.22

Sent from my iPad

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 11:07 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PWD BUS PASS CLAWBACK  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 8, 2016 11:59 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** PWD BUS PASS CLAWBACK

I am a person with disabilities and am on assistance. I am VERY upset about the announced changes to the bus pass program. My disability is s.22 disability. I have s.22 conditions including s.22. The \$45 a year bus pass has been a great blessing in my life. It has helped me to access community services and to get out of my apartment for recreation.

Because I sometimes am unable to leave my apartment for extended periods of time due to my s.22 disability, the \$52 a month bus pass is not a good option for me. I can buy 20 regular priced bus tickets for that amount, and they would not expire. If I bought the \$52 bus pass, and I was sick for most of the month and only used it a few times, then I would be wasting my precious money. This issue has already caused me great amounts of anxiety, and I have cried several times! I am losing my freedom of mobility next year, as I will have to buy bus tickets and only use them for emergencies. Each time I will have to go somewhere on the bus I will have to pay \$2.50, or \$5 if it is a round trip. Currently, my bus pass only cost an average of \$4 a month. Going from \$45 a year to \$669 a year is a 1487.67% increase in the cost of an essential service! Let me repeat that, you are increasing the cost of an essential service for disabled people by 1487.67%!!!!

Pretending that the \$77 a month increase compensates for this 1487.67% increase in the cost of transportation is insulting! You say you are giving us a choice, but you are just taking away our transportation benefits! What is the choice? Is the choice to not get the bus pass? How is that fair?

I need a bus pass to get to food banks and soup kitchens, which I need to use because I cannot afford to feed myself properly on the amount of disability I get. I cannot work, even part-time, because of my s.22 s.22. Sure I can get a job, but I cannot keep it because employers do not want an employee who has to call in sick at the last moment due to s.22 or who shows up to work only to end up crying hysterically and needing to leave. \$77 is a lot of money when you live in poverty and can't afford to feed yourself properly, if you were just raising the rates by \$77 I would be very grateful. Raising the rates, but clawing back 67.53% of it is cruel!

I was VERY INSULTED that you called the rally at the legislative here in Victoria "a photo op" for the NDP. I went there to protest something I feel strongly about, not because of the NDP. Also, I am not confused about what is happening, don't insult my intelligence!

s.22

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s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 9:09 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189257 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189257

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 8, 2016, and apologize for any anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive your subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

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## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 10:48 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 9, 2016 8:28 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### City

surrey

### Address

s.22

surrey, British Columbia 's.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

### Comments & Feedback

Adding my voice to all the others who are disappointed in the claw back for the disabled with their bus passes. you all who make a extremely high wage and comfortable life can so callously cut off the only meager amount that allows them a bit of freedom in their already challenged life. If this is you or your boss that won't even acknowledge what you have done shame on this government.

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 8:59 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189249 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189249

s.22

Dear s.22 :

I want to thank you for your email of March 9, 2016, and apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

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**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca]

**Sent:** March 9, 2016 8:28 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Name**

s.22

**Email**

s.22

**City**

surrey

**Address**

s.22

surrey, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

**Comments & Feedback**

Adding my voice to all the others who are disappointed in the claw back for the disabled with their bus passes. you all who make a extremely high wage and comfortable life can so callously cut off the only meager amount that allows them a bit of freedom in their already challenged life. If this is you or your boss that won't even acknowledge what you have done shame on this government.

## Holland, Jodie CSCD:EX

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**From:** Fassbender.MLA, Peter <Peter.Fassbender.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2016 2:48 PM  
**To:** Minister, CSCD CSCD:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Thank You and A Deep Concern

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Categories:** FW to Other Ministry

FWD to SDSL for response re: Bus Pass topic – RW (Mar. 7/16)

**From:** Doug Tennant (<mailto:D.Tennant@shsbc.ca>)  
**Sent:** March 4, 2016 2:39 PM  
**To:** Fassbender.MLA, Peter <Peter.Fassbender.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** [richgorman@hotmail.com](mailto:richgorman@hotmail.com)  
**Subject:** Thank You and A Deep Concern

Hi Peter,

First off, I'd like to thank you for your decision to direct TransLink staff to keep one gate open for people who have disabilities until a Compass solution that works for them is found. You demonstrated respect for vulnerable people when they brought this issue to your attention.

I'm also writing this email to express my deep concern for the \$52 a month increase to the cost of a bus pass for people who have disabilities in the wake of a small increase of \$77 dollars to their monthly disability benefits.

The people who have developmental disabilities we support at Semiahmoo House Society will be deeply affected by having to pay \$52 a month to take transit:

- People who have disabilities will choose to purchase food or other necessities instead of transit passes and this will result in less mobility and further isolation for them.
- Mobility for vulnerable people is critically important to living a full life that includes employment and social & recreational activities.
- Restricting mobility will increase health and social costs—most likely more than the savings resulting from clawing back the transit passes.

BC disability benefit rates are among the lowest in the country, so the \$25 increase for people who now need to now purchase a bus pass is simply not enough. I have never seen the people we support as frustrated and angry as they are about the way the increase was communicated by government and the way their annual bus passes are being eliminated without their consultation. I believe that they will continue to rally until a change is made.

The government could resolve this situation by acknowledging their mistake and eliminated the new \$52/month bus pass fee. This would demonstrate they are a government that listens to the voice of their most vulnerable citizens and respects them enough to do the right thing.

Thanks very much for anything you can do to help resolve this situation.

I've cc'd Rich Gorman, our Board Chair, on this email so he is in the loop.

Sincerely,

Doug

**An Inclusive Community Values All People!**

Doug Tennant  
Executive Director  
Office: 604-536-1242 ext. 229  
Fax: 604-536-9507  
Mobile: 778-994-6757

SENDER:  
NAME  
DATE: 03/08/2016



CORRESPONDENCE SERVICES	
Received	MAR - 8 2016
Sent:	
ASSIGN TO:	
<input type="checkbox"/> MINISTER'S RESPONSE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DM RESPONSE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DIRECT REPLY	
<input type="checkbox"/> NECESSARY ACTION	
<input type="checkbox"/> COMMENTS/ADVICE	
<input type="checkbox"/> PREMIER'S RESPONSE	
<input type="checkbox"/> INFO/FILE	

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 8, 2016 2:00 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 8, 2016 9:46 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### City

Duncan

### Address

s.22

Duncan, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

### Comments & Feedback

An \$11 increase for PWD is an insult to our intelligence. You tell me how this improves our struggle to survive.

Thank You,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 11:52 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189226 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189226

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 8, 2016, and apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

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**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [mailto:[Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)]

**Sent:** March 8, 2016 9:46 AM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Name**

s.22

**Email**

s.22

**City**

Duncan

**Address**

s.22

Duncan, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

**Comments & Feedback**

An \$11 increase for PWD is an insult to our intelligence. You tell me how this improves our struggle to survive.

Thank You,

s.22



## **D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 8, 2016 10:24 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Assistance rates

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 5, 2016 4:46 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Assistance rates

Dear Minister: Michelle Stilwell:

The recent calculations for disability assistance seem to be somewhat misguided. For example, the "up to \$77 per month rate increase" to people on disability assistance is an inadequate sum to add to a rate that hasn't been increased in nine years. The cost of food alone has more than doubled in that time.

Until this new plan for the money for those with disabilities, they got the \$45 red compass card. Now, according to the ministry of social development, (and the new provincial budget) they are losing use of that card in September, and will be supplied with the \$52 monthly transit pass – which new sum will be clawed back out of their already meager disability cheques. If it costs only \$45 per annum administration fee for the once a year issued compass card – how much does it cost to pay someone to do claw-backs from those cheques every month?

According to many who worked out the numbers, these changes will give the disabled a net increase of a mere \$25 a month for those receiving bus passes, and only \$11 per month for those needing special transportation subsidies. In the past, an average person could only justify paying \$52 if they used transit 2 times a day, at least five days a week. Faresavers made more sense – when they were still accepted for Skytrain travel. So it isn't really appropriate to ask those on disability (or seniors for that matter) to pay so much for a pass they probably don't need every day.

What I don't get is why the Minister of Social Development doesn't separate the transportation issue from the disability assistance by giving the option to those who apply for the subsidized red compass card (like seniors do) and add the \$45 to the cheques of those who can't use them because the bus/skytrain etc. can't accommodate their needs, or they live outside of the area served by Compass and Translink. That way the question of fairness is answered.

The point of "fairer for everyone" isn't really about money. It's about fair access. The ministry could do a lot better for all those on disability assistance by offering other subsidies to those who aren't able to use public transit. And the assistance rates should be increased so they have fair access to basics like food and accommodation – from a rate that reflects the current cost of living.

I hope you will consider the points I have made, and have your ministers and civil servants spend a little time researching what kind of assistance would be most appropriate for the disabled in 2016.

Sincerely,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 7, 2016 11:27 AM  
**To:** s.22 -  
**Subject:** 189224 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189224

s.22

Dear Is.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 8, 2016 about the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016 and assure you that the discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass (including a red compass card) and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer 2016. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes are intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance throughout the province, and build on our commitment to assisting persons with disabilities gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being, and participation in the community.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell

Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** s.22 ]

**Sent:** March 5, 2016 4:46 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** Assistance rates

Dear Minister: Michelle Stilwell:

The recent calculations for disability assistance seem to be somewhat misguided. For example, the "up to \$77 per month rate increase" to people on disability assistance is an inadequate sum to add to a rate that hasn't been increased in nine years. The cost of food alone has more than doubled in that time.

Until this new plan for the money for those with disabilities, they got the \$45 red compass card. Now, according to the ministry of social development, (and the new provincial budget) they are losing use of that card in September, and will be supplied with the \$52 monthly transit pass – which new sum will be clawed back out of their already meager disability cheques. If it costs only \$45 per annum administration fee for the once a year issued compass card – how much does it cost to pay someone to do claw-backs from those cheques every month?

According to many who worked out the numbers, these changes will give the disabled a net increase of a mere \$25 a month for those receiving bus passes, and only \$11 per month for those needing special transportation subsidies. In the past, an average person could only justify paying \$52 if they used transit 2 times a day, at least five days a week. Faresavers made more sense – when they were still accepted for Skytrain travel. So it isn't really appropriate to ask those on disability (or seniors for that matter) to pay so much for a pass they probably don't need every day.

What I don't get is why the Minister of Social Development doesn't separate the transportation issue from the disability assistance by giving the option to those who apply for the subsidized red compass card (like seniors do) and add the \$45 to the cheques of those who can't use them because the bus/skytrain etc. can't accommodate their needs, or they live outside of the area served by Compass and Translink. That way the question of fairness is answered.

The point of "fairer for everyone" isn't really about money. It's about fair access. The ministry could do a lot better for all those on disability assistance by offering other subsidies to those who aren't able to use public transit. And the assistance rates should be increased so they have fair access to basics like food and accommodation – from a rate that reflects the current cost of living.

I hope you will consider the points I have made, and have your ministers and civil servants spend a little time researching what kind of assistance would be most appropriate for the disabled in 2016.

Sincerely,

s.22

February 19, 2016

Premier Christy Clark  
PO Box 9041,  
Stn Prov Govt,  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E1

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER'S OFFICE	
Referral #	
Referral to	
MAR 08 2016	
Can Response <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reply Direct <input type="checkbox"/> Info File <input type="checkbox"/> PNA <input type="checkbox"/>
Can Response <input type="checkbox"/>	Reading <input type="checkbox"/>
Other	

**RE: PROVINCIAL BUDGET AND DISABILITY RATES**

Dear Premier Clark,

I write on behalf and at the behest of the Board of Directors of the Positive Living Society of British Columbia, a member-controlled charitable society run by and for its more than 5,700 members of record, each of whom (including all directors) is a person living with HIV. Of our 5,700 members, substantial percentages (especially those who have advanced HIV disease or are long-term survivors of HIV) rely on the current Disability Benefits as their main source of income.

The purpose of this letter is to register our *strong* disappointment with the recent Provincial Budget with respect to the announced increase in Disability Rates by \$77 per month per person effective September 2016. The current monthly Disability Rate in BC (\$906) is woefully inadequate in meeting the basic needs of those with Disabilities and the \$77 monthly increase, while a step in the right direction (1% increase over 9 years), is insufficient and quite frankly disrespectful. Positive Living BC believes that the Disability Rate in BC should match that of the Alberta Government's Disability (AISH) Rate of \$1588 per month.

Furthermore, we *strongly* condemn the elimination of the current Special Transportation Subsidy (a lump sum paid to recipients of approximately \$800 annually) and the BC Bus Pass Program

803 East Hastings Street  
Vancouver  
BC V6A 1R8

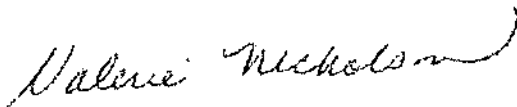
**WWW.POSITIVELIVINGBC.ORG**  
REGISTERED NON-PROFIT SOCIETY REG # 11928-2085

t 604.893.2200  
e info@positivelivingbc.org  
f 604.893.2251

(\$45 annual cost to applicants) and the replacement of it with the user-pay model (\$45 annually plus a monthly charge of between \$52 -\$66 monthly). This has the net effect of negating much of the announced Disability Rate increase. This in fact, amounts to a 1,300-per-cent increase in the price of transit to people with disabilities in BC.

Positive Living BC calls on the BC Government to utilize its newly established \$100 million Prosperity Fund to maintain the current Special Transportation Subsidy and BC Bus Pass Program and to increase the Disability rate in BC to \$1588 monthly.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie Nicholson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Valerie Nicholson  
Chairperson

CC: Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, Michelle Stilwell  
Leader of the Opposition, John Horgan  
Social Development and Social Innovation Critic, Michelle Mungell



April 7, 2016

Ref: 189211

Valerie Nicholson  
Chairperson  
Positive Living Society of British Columbia  
803 East Hastings Street  
Vancouver BC V6A 1R8

Dear Ms. Nicholson:

I want to thank you for your letter dated February 19, 2016, addressed to Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, expressing concerns about the recently announced Persons with Disabilities (PWD) rate increase. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation and, as Minister, I am pleased to respond.

I appreciate receiving your comments and commend the Positive Living Society of British Columbia for its advocacy on behalf of all persons with disabilities.

I want to assure you that the BC Bus Pass program remains in place. People on disability assistance can still access the program and the application process will remain unchanged.

Our government is committed to assisting persons with disabilities gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being and increased participation in the community.

To note, beginning September 1, 2016, all clients with the PWD designation will receive a monthly rate increase as follows:

- Clients who don't receive a discounted annual bus pass or Special Transportation Subsidy, will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.
- Clients who choose to receive a discounted annual bus pass will receive a rate increase of \$25 per month.
- Clients who currently receive the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) worth \$66 per month, will receive an STS payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, they will automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the STS and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

.../2

The monthly rate increase builds on changes our government has already made to help people with disabilities lead fuller and more secure lives, including an increase in earnings exemptions, annual earnings exemptions, and the Accessibility 2024 plan to make B.C. the most progressive place in Canada for people with disabilities.

With respect to the financial supports offered to clients with disabilities, I would like to distinguish that while Alberta Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) has higher disability payments, British Columbia supports more clients per capita. This is in part because AISH disability programs require permanent or enduring disability, whereas B.C. stipulates a severe mental or physical impairment with duration of at least two years. Alberta also requires that the condition substantially limits a person's ability to earn a livelihood; B.C.'s disability assistance program does not refer to employability, only that the condition directly impacts a person's ability to perform daily living activities.

B.C. is still the only province to have annual earnings exemptions for people with disabilities, meaning an individual can earn \$9,600 per year without impacting their income assistance rate. This allows people whose ability to work may fluctuate throughout the year to earn money when they can.

B.C. has also joined Alberta in providing the highest asset limits in Canada for people with disabilities at \$100,000 per individual, and in allowing unlimited cash gifts without affecting disability assistance.

I hope this assists you in clarifying the recently announced rate increases and the differences in rates between the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Stilwell'.

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier



## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 11:03 AM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Re: 189361 s. SDSI Response

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Thanks for your response. I do not receive PWD but do s.22 My name is s.22 and I live in Victoria and s.22 I do a lot of volunteer work. The scenarios I identified are from individuals who asked me to make inquiries. I think they are pretty straight forward - living in a sited living, top up to Canadian Pension Plan Disability and low income senior with a Disability. How will the changes impact them.  
Cheers, s.2

Sent from Pat's iPhone

On Mar 30, 2016, at 10:07 AM, SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
<[SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Ref: 189361  
s.22

Thank you for your email of March 17, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, regarding the recently announced Persons with Disabilities (PWD) rate increase. Minister Stilwell has asked that we respond on her behalf, and we are pleased to do so.

We would like to be of assistance, but there was not enough information in your email for us to identify you as a client, and for a ministry staff member to contact you to discuss your concerns.

If you are able to write back with your full name and contact information, we can try to reach you accordingly.

You may, however, find the following information useful.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. The provincial government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the PWD designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and they want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive the subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

For more immediate assistance, you may wish to contact an Employment and Assistance office, where staff are best able to assist you. A directory of offices across the province can be found at [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html).

You may also reach the ministry by calling 1-866-866-0800. This number is available from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and during the lunch period. Using this line, callers may now leave a call back number, keep their place in line and get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22

Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2016 3:49 PM

To: OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX

Subject: Bus Pass Clarification

Dear Minister and Premier, I have some questions regarding the changes to the bus pass supplement that I have not been able to find the answers to. Individuals who will be impacted by the changes have asked and I said I would find out. Here are the three scenarios.

s.22 lives in an assisted living facility and is in her s.22. She is on PWD and receives her stipend of \$95 a month and every year applies for and receives the \$45 annual bus pass. She has s.22 and uses the bus pass when friends and family take her out. She does not use it a lot. Come September 1 she wants to know if she will qualify for the \$77 increase. If so will she be charged the \$52 a month. Please clarify.

s.22 and on PWD. She is also on CPPD. She had understood that because she is over 60 she would be able to continue to receive the bus pass for the \$45 annual cost. She received a letter from the ministry outlining the changes but it did not identify any information regarding individuals on PWD over 60. Now she is concerned she will not receive the entire \$77 increase but will have the \$52 a month charge taken from her check. Please advise.

s.22 is a low income senior and qualifies for a \$45 bus pass. As an individual living with a disability she wonders how the changes of charging the \$52 a month fee will be implemented. While her income, thanks to the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Old Age Security and Canada Pension Plan; is greater than PWD she remains uncertain how it will impact on her. While initially she assumed she would be exempt, she has heard nothing to clarify this. What is the answer.

All three individuals do not have access to a computer nor do they know how to operate one. I appreciate your response in a timely manner.

s.22

s.22

Telephone: s.22

Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
PO BOX 9058 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1X4

ORIGINAL BY MAIL  
FAX: 250-356-7292

March 18, 2016

Dear Honourable Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, Michelle Stiwell,

I am a mother of a s.22 special needs s.22. I am s.22 and I am now working part time in an office so that I can continue to support my s.22 quality of life. I am active in Community Living Victoria and have been a part of the s.22 with Paula Grant for the Ministry. I have never written to a Minister before regarding my concerns as we are a very private family. However recent events have made me feel a need to do so.

I am writing for two reasons. The first is to thank you for the changes you have made for people with disabilities - raising the amount of earnings they can make and still receive their income assistance, increasing their asset limit to \$100,000.00 and allowing parents to assist their children with rent and utility and cash gifts without any impact on income assistance. Thank you.

The second reason I am writing to you is about the changes to the bus pass program. My s.22 is permanently s.22 disabled. S. lives in Victoria at SAL (supported apartment living) which is run by Community Living Victoria. (I think SAL is a wonderful program that you should come and visit as it is a wonderful very feasible option for housing for special needs individuals.) My s.22 also attends Garth Homer fulltime - volunteering. The only monies S. receives is from your government as S. is not capable of obtaining paid employment. As a result I continue to work in my s.22 to help support s.22. The yearly bus pass is a "god send" to S. as S. takes 4 buses a day to get to and from S. "work" and once it comes S. has no worries about bussing for the whole year! With your changes S. would have to buy a bus pass each month. That means planning for the date each month, getting to the store that sells

MAR/18/2016/FRI 11:07 AM s.22

FAX No s.22

P. 002/002

them, handling money (this isn't a skill S. is able to do) and asking for the right bus pass, and to do this every single month, it is insurmountable. So now instead of the application coming in the mail and me filling it out and sending in one cheque, I will need to remember and to take S. every month to arrange for the pass. This put more onus on families or caregivers and more pressure on my s.22 as S. will have to worry that the bus driver will tell S. this pass is no longer working and/or will someone take S. to get the pass each month on time.

I know it is hard to make a decision that will work for everyone on disability and there are many who can plan to get a pass every month and are able to go and pay for it, but many are not able. I know that you are trying to be fair for every community in BC as some don't benefit from this program but I ask you to please rethink this policy in mind of my s.22 and many more like S. and their families. The amount of disabled people who make use of the \$45.00 yearly bus pass is not going to make a significant difference to the government's dollar income (in my view). I feel strongly that the pass should be reinstated for all individuals who have developmental delays but if that isn't feasible then reinstate for adults who are unable to earn money over the basic government benefit.

Thank you Michelle and I look forward to hearing from you..

Sincerely,

s.22



**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** FIN OFFICE FIN:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 31, 2016 3:41 PM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Redirect from FIN: The Provincial Budget

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**AC:** Minister Draft. To Writer for Draft Response using approved wording.

Hello,

Can we leave this with you for handling?

Thank you,

Céline Anderson  
Correspondence Coordinator  
Ministerial Correspondence Section  
Ministry of Finance  
phone 604-660-3548

Correspondence intranet page |

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately. Any unauthorized copying, disclosure or distribution of the e-mail or the information it contains is strictly forbidden.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 9, 2016 1:50 PM  
**To:** Minister, FIN FIN:EX  
**Cc:** Clark.MLA, Christy LASS:EX; Letnick.MLA, Norm LASS:EX; Thomson.MLA, Steve LASS:EX  
**Subject:** The Provincial Budget

Dear Finance Minister de Jong:

I found your recent budget very disappointing as it did nothing to assist the needy and vulnerable in our society. It hurt them. It did not help them.

Given the rising costs for such necessities as food, rent (for those who have such accommodation) educational supplies, electricity and transportation our poor and disadvantaged citizens have not been assisted by this budget.

Overall the budget does little or nothing to "put families first" in a province where the level of child poverty is among the highest in Canada.

Locally there appears to be an increased number of persons with mental and/or physical challenges "hanging out" or wandering our streets. Some are at risk to themselves and to other persons. Again, many seek help from such organizations as the Salvation Army, The Metro Community Church, Hands in Service, the Gospel Mission, Victory Life, food banks etc.

Many of the persons assisted also need professional help and a place to live!

I know first-hand of the wonderful work being done by various community groups and organizations.

It is unfortunate that in this wealthy province the marginalized are so "left out" while millions of dollars are put into a questionable Prosperity Fund.

And let us not forget that our debt is growing.

In the light of the above we need fewer MLA photo-ops and private jet flights (while the disabled have their bus passes taken away) and more time spent by MLAs 'in the trenches' getting to know first-hand what is needed in our society.

Thank you.

s.22



FW: Redirect from  
FIN: The Pro...

Ministry of Employment and Social Development  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6  
Telephone: 613-992-2235  
Facsimile: 613-992-1920  
Email: [pierre.poilievre@parl.gc.ca](mailto:pierre.poilievre@parl.gc.ca)

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

Nancy E. Brown  
Acting Assistant Deputy Attorney General

cc: The Honourable Michelle Stilwell

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 6:42 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Cc:** justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca; contact@peterjulian.ca; local@peterjulian.ca  
**Subject:** Persons With Disabilities - Bus Pass Program

Dear Premier Clark, please read this email.

I am a person living with various disabilities, and unfortunately I'm not able to get by with the increased cost of living here in the lower mainland (Burnaby/Vancouver).

I would appreciate it if you could explain why PWD in Alberta are funded at approximately \$400 per month more than PWD in your own province. Do you believe that's fair, comparing the cost of living in both provinces, Alberta and British Columbia? Do you even realize, or do you even care that it has been many years since PWD rates in BC have increased? I would sincerely love to hear an explanation.

**Another point is the Bus Pass Program.**

This year is the first year that I was working towards to be comfortable enough to get on the bus and Skytrain. It's been a real challenge for me. I have the application, and filled it out, but then the price went from about **\$49.00 per year** and you and your government sky rocketed the cost to about **\$52.00 per month, not per year**. If you have any compassion in your heart at all, can you really believe that is fair?

Please stop the bus pass changes, and please increase the PWD rates to, at least be in line with Alberta.

Premier Clark, I honestly don't understand.

Most days I feel that the system (both you and the federal government) are against me, and others like me; it seems very personal and very wrong.

I **am** grateful for what help I do receive, but there are days, and they are becoming more and more frequent that I feel there's no point in going on. There doesn't seem to be a way out, and the stress is overwhelming.

Regards,

s.22

c.c.  
PM Justin Trudeau  
Peter Julian MP

s.22



**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 26, 2016 12:05 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Several attempts at resolution

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** RUSH (5-DAY TURNAROUND), MINISTER SIGNATURE

I have tried several times to get through to you to get an answer to a problem.

In 1976 Canada signed onto the International Covenant of Human Rights. This is a promise to uphold the rights outlined within it.

The rights of many Canadians are being ignored.

Article 11

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.

At present, anyone who is receiving social assistance is not getting enough support to have an adequate standard of living, with food, clothing and shelter.

These conditions have to change.

I am bringing this knowlege to you and I hope that you are going to act within your duty to honor these rights.

Your position as Minister of Social Devolpment & Social Innovation, places you as the person to uphold these rights.

I will wait for 10 business days for a personal response from you. If none is received you will be in dishonor and I will have to come visit your office in person, with reporters with alternative media.

## **D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Friday, April 8, 2016 11:20 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Several attempts at resolution

No response,... You will have to answer some questions. You can expect a visit soon. There are many of the people that YOU WORK FOR want to know why you are not filling your obligations, to the people. We are coming to see you, cameras rolling.

-----Original Message-----

From: "s.22"  
Sent: March 26, 2016 12:05 PM  
To: [sdsi.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:sdsi.minister@gov.bc.ca)  
Subject: Several attempts at resolution

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**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, April 11, 2016 2:05 PM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189465 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189465

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 26, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, regarding income assistance rates in British Columbia. Minister Stilwell has asked that we respond on her behalf, and we are pleased to do.

The provincial government is committed to ensuring that income assistance is provided only to those who are truly eligible and that it is delivered in accordance with the law. For this reason an applicant or client must provide all required information and documentation in a timely manner so staff can make an informed decision regarding eligibility and assistance levels. Assistance is provided only after this requirement is met and eligibility has been established.

Applicants who have been refused income assistance are entitled to request reconsideration, and if the decision is not in their favour, they may further appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

As previously explained, the ministry can provide hardship assistance to meet essential needs to those who are eligible. Hardship assistance is not an entitlement, but may be provided at the discretion of the Minister according to legislative and regulatory criteria. For more information please visit [www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online\\_resource/hardship/](http://www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource/hardship/).

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22  
Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2016 12:05 PM

To: Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
Subject: Several attempts at resolution

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**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Monday, April 11, 2016 2:20 PM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: 189465 s.22 SDSI Response

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**AC:** Media threat forwarded to KMac and Ad. Apr 11/16.  
Add to 189465

Just as expected. Dodging the issue completely.

The people are as a right, to have a adequate standard of living. This is a right and has no conditions attached to it. Is not negociable and must be recognised by government. I will be visiting your office soon with cameras rolling and you will answer our questions, you are public's servants not the other way around. You will be made accountable for your actions.

See you soon...

--- Original Message ---

**From:** "SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX" <[SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** April 11, 2016 2:05 PM  
**To:** "s.22"  
**Subject:** 189465 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189465

s.22

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discretion of the Minister according to legislative and regulatory criteria. For more information please visit [www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online\\_resource/hardship/](http://www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource/hardship/).

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22

Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2016 12:05 PM

To: Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX

Subject: Several attempts at resolution

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At present, anyone who is receiving social assistance is not getting enough support to have an adequate standard of living, with food, clothing and shelter.

These conditions have to change.

I am bringing this knowledge to you and I hope that you are going to act within your duty to honor these rights.

Your position as Minister of Social Development & Social Innovation, places you as the person to uphold these rights.

I will wait for 10 business days for a personal response from you. If none is received you will be in dishonor and I will have to come visit your office in person, with reporters with alternative media.

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 5:12 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** Raise the PWD rate Please

We can not live on 906 a month, prices for everything have gone thru the roof, we are not eating, we can barely afford toilet paper we can not pay some bills if we want to eat, this is putting us at very high risk for homelessness, please help us raise the rate to 1200 a month so we can live with some decency.

We are at high risk for homelessness, we need more money to be able to live and eat. In 2004 you said you would raise the rate to 1200 but it didn't happen, meanwhile every other price has raised substantially, rent, hydro, food, phones ... etc, Please think of us too

Regards, s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** McGaw, Danna R PREM:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 3:09 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** PO log 664598  
**Attachments:** Rent

**Sensitivity:** Confidential

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

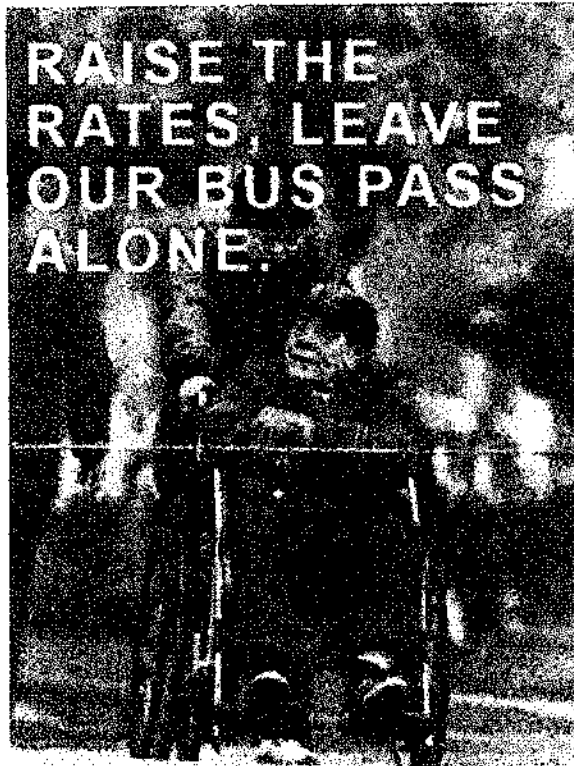
Could we please leave the attached email with your ministry for handling?  
Thanks a lot,

*Danna McGaw  
Correspondence Officer  
Office of the Premier*



<changes.org>

Bus Pass  
Raise the Rates



<changes.org>

Inclusion BC

13,857

Supporters

We want Premier Christy Clark and Minister Michelle Stilwell to raise the rates and leave our bus pass alone!



- Bring back the \$45 per year bus pass for people with disabilities.
- Eliminate the new \$52/month bus pass fee.
- Let everyone receiving PWD benefits keep the \$77/month increase.
- Raise the PWD benefit rate to \$1200 per month by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living.

\* (Bring Back)  
\$45 Dollars/year

**Background:**

On February 16, 2016, the Province of BC tabled its budget.

\* Eliminate  
\$52/month bus  
pass fee.  
\* PWD keep the  
77\$ month  
increase.

Raise the rate  
to \$1200/month

Reflect  
Cost of  
Living

People with disabilities received a small increase to their disability benefits but there was a catch. The \$77 per month increase was tied to the cost of a person's transportation. These are the changes, effective September 1st, 2016:

- People with disabilities will receive a \$77 per month increase to their benefits.
- People receiving PWD benefits will no longer be able to purchase an annual bus pass for a \$45 annual fee.
- The cost of the bus pass will go up from \$0 to \$52 per month, plus an annual \$45 administration fee.
- For people with a bus pass, the new change means a \$25/month PWD benefit rate increase. After a nine-year rate freeze, this is an insult.

#### Why we need a rate increase:

Having increased by only \$120 since 2001, BC disability benefit rates of \$906/month are among the lowest in the country; yet we live in one of the most expensive provinces. People with disabilities struggle with impossible pressures, including whether to get a bit of extra money to buy food or take the bus. We are falling behind and desperately need a rate increase that reflects the cost of living in BC.

As our provincial government tabled its budget, it touted BC as having the best financial outlook in the country. The government was finally in a position to announce an increase in benefits to catch up to the rapidly rising cost of living.

To finally give people an increase only to claw it back for something as essential as transportation is mean-spirited and out-of-touch.

Read our report, Overdue: the case for increasing the persons with disabilities benefit in BC

s.22

Name	Postal Code	Address	Email	Phone#
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s.22

27

Name	Postal Code	Address	Email	Phone #	Agree
------	-------------	---------	-------	---------	-------

s.22

✓


Honourable Michelle Stilwell  
POBox 9058 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

16031818~

3714 WTB /

March 24/2016

Dear, Ms. Stillwell

I find that it is impossible to live on 906 42 and a \$77 increase is insufficient, plus taking away the annual bus pass is highly insulting. I rely on a bus pass to get around, and without it I am stuck at home staring at the walls like an invalid.

Please keep the bus pass at 45/ year. It is at least affordable. People cannot afford 52 / a month.

People should not have to choose between food and transportation.

And a \$25 increase is not enough please raise it to reflect the cost of living to at least \$1150.00 / month.

Thank you and please reply to

s.22



Michelle Stillwell.  
Minister of Social Development  
and Social Innovation.  
Parliament Buildings.  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8V 1X4

March 24, 16

Dear Ms. Stillwell

Our Finance Minister talks about the health of our province's finances. Yet though we live in one of the countries most expensive provinces our citizens on PWD assistance live below poverty level.

Please re-instate the \$45. per year Bus Pass and increase the \$906.42 to a realistic monthly amount to allow PWD to live with dignity and safety. \$1200.00<sup>monthly</sup> would bring such a relief to so many.

Please Ms. Stillwell do a humanitarian and honorable thing to help our most vulnerable citizens.

Please respond to my letter.

Sincerely,

s.22

on B.C. PWD

It is very stressful to ponder how things will be after I am gone.

s.22

1603260732

3716 V7B



Ms. Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development  
and Social Innovation  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8V 1X4



## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Laurel Lenormand <laurel.pafga@shawbiz.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 3:53 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Disability Assistance Rates and Transportation programs  
**Attachments:** Disability Assistance Rates and Transportation Programs.pdf  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Hi, Please see attached a letter re Disability Assistance Rates and Transportation Programs. Thank you

Laurel Lenormand MEd, BSW, RCC  
Port Alberni Family Guidance Association  
3039 4<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 2B8  
Phone: 250-724-0125  
Fax: 250-724-0135



March 22, 2016

Honourable Christy Clark, MLA  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark:

**RE: BC Budget 2016 – Disability Assistance Rates and Transportation Programs**

We are writing in response to your government's budget, tabled on February 16, 2016, which announced a modest increase of \$77 to persons with disabilities benefits while also drastically changing important programs that improve access to transportation for many people with disabilities. For the reasons set out in this letter, our organizations strongly oppose the changes to the BC Bus Pass Program and the Special Transportation Subsidy. We call on the government to leave these programs in place, and to provide a meaningful rate increase for all income assistance and disability assistance recipients.

The BC Bus Pass Program currently offers an annual bus pass at a reduced cost of \$45 per year for disability assistance recipients in areas where BC Transit and Translink operate. The Special Transportation Subsidy provides a lump sum subsidy to people who reside in an area where the Bus Pass Program operates, but are unable to use public transit because of a disability, to help offset the cost of alternative transportation. Approximately 55,000 of the 100,000 provincial disability assistance recipients rely on one of these two transportation programs. Our organizations all work directly with people with disabilities, and are acutely aware of the importance of these programs to ensure people are able to move about their communities, whether that be to shop for basic necessities, attend medical appointments, or take part in social gatherings.

As you know, those who rely on these programs will now be charged \$52/month for a bus pass, or \$66/month for the Special Transportation Subsidy. This means that for those recipients, the rate increase is actually only \$25 or \$11, respectively. Further, the government has said that it will still charge the \$45 per year "administrative fee" on top of that. Promoting the change as a \$77 increase to disability rates is misleading and unfair.

While the government maintains that its aim is to make the system fairer for people with disabilities who do not currently receive support for transportation, the proposed changes are not the right approach. It has been almost a decade since the government has increased income assistance and disability rates—and at \$906 per month, disability assistance rates in BC are among the lowest in the country. In Alberta, for example, the government increased the comparable disability benefit (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)) to \$1588 in 2012. The recently announced \$77 increase to BC's disability assistance rates would be a welcome (if inadequate) change, if it were truly providing that increase to all. It would only cost an additional \$14-20 million to provide the \$77 increase to all disability assistance recipients and also maintain the current transportation programs.

When the change was announced, the Honourable Minister of Finance Michael de Jong spoke about how it would allow those on disability assistance "the freedom to make their own choice about how to meet their own unique transportation needs". For many living in poverty in BC, this is not a real choice. While the \$77 increase will undeniably help those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate, it creates an impossible choice for those that do rely on these transportation programs. With disability



assistance frozen at a paltry \$906 per month—an amount clearly inadequate to meet basic needs—it will be difficult not to opt to put the \$77 each month toward previously unmet needs like food or rent. The Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy allowed vulnerable members of our communities to make a \$46 purchase once per year, and then have a reliable method of transportation year-round. The proposed changes to these programs will result in social isolation for those who “choose” not to renew, particularly for those with disabilities that restrict their mobility.

Finally, we are concerned about implementation of the proposed changes, which will inevitably be fraught with practical problems for both disability assistance recipients and Ministry staff. Over the last several years, there has been a radical shift from in-person services at local Ministry offices to services that are primarily delivered through a centralized phone line and over the internet. Wait times on the phone line are long, and many users of Ministry services lack the reliable phone or computer access required to access the services—and may also lack the capacity to navigate the new systems. It is difficult to reach Ministry staff at all, let alone the appropriate staff for a particular matter. Many that rely on the current transportation programs fear they will be unable to access Ministry staff in a timely way to resolve the issues that arise, and that staff will be ill-equipped to address the problems.

As our provincial government tabled its budget, it celebrated BC's strong financial outlook. Minister de Jong emphasized that BC is in a position to “offer greater support to the most vulnerable among us.” It is long past due for the government to make real commitments to do just that – and to share some of this province's wealth with the members of our communities that need it most.

Our organizations collectively urge you to:

- Bring back the \$45 per year bus pass for people with disabilities;
- Eliminate the new \$52/month bus pass fee;
- Allow everyone receiving PWD benefits to keep the \$77/month increase;
- Introduce a rural transportation subsidy for those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate; and
- Raise income and disability assistance significantly by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living, and index to inflation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Laurel", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Laurel Lenormand  
Port Alberni Family Guidance Association

- c. Hon. Mike de Jong, MLA, Minister of Finance  
Hon. Michelle Stilwell, MLA, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
John Horgan, MLA, Leader of the Opposition  
Scott Fraser, MLA



March 22, 2016

Honourable Christy Clark, MLA  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark:

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While the government maintains that its aim is to make the system fairer for people with disabilities who do not currently receive support for transportation, the proposed changes are not the right approach. It has been almost a decade since the government has increased income assistance and disability rates—and at \$906 per month, disability assistance rates in BC are among the lowest in the country. In Alberta, for example, the government increased the comparable disability benefit (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)) to \$1588 in 2012. The recently announced \$77 increase to BC's disability assistance rates would be a welcome (if inadequate) change, if it were truly providing that increase to all. It would only cost an additional \$14-20 million to provide the \$77 increase to all disability assistance recipients and also maintain the current transportation programs.

When the change was announced, the Honourable Minister of Finance Michael de Jong spoke about how it would allow those on disability assistance "the freedom to make their own choice about how to meet their own unique transportation needs". For many living in poverty in BC, this is not a real choice. While the \$77 increase will undeniably help those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate, it creates an impossible choice for those that do rely on these transportation programs. With disability



assistance frozen at a paltry \$906 per month—an amount clearly inadequate to meet basic needs—it will be difficult not to opt to put the \$77 each month toward previously unmet needs like food or rent. The Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy allowed vulnerable members of our communities to make a \$45 purchase once per year, and then have a reliable method of transportation year-round. The proposed changes to these programs will result in social isolation for those who "choose" not to renew, particularly for those with disabilities that restrict their mobility.

Finally, we are concerned about implementation of the proposed changes, which will inevitably be fraught with practical problems for both disability assistance recipients and Ministry staff. Over the last several years, there has been a radical shift from in-person services at local Ministry offices to services that are primarily delivered through a centralized phone line and over the internet. Wait times on the phone line are long, and many users of Ministry services lack the reliable phone or computer access required to access the services—and may also lack the capacity to navigate the new systems. It is difficult to reach Ministry staff at all, let alone the appropriate staff for a particular matter. Many that rely on the current transportation programs fear they will be unable to access Ministry staff in a timely way to resolve the issues that arise, and that staff will be ill-equipped to address the problems.

As our provincial government tabled its budget, it celebrated BC's strong financial outlook. Minister de Jong emphasized that BC is in a position to "offer greater support to the most vulnerable among us." It is long past due for the government to make real commitments to do just that – and to share some of this province's wealth with the members of our communities that need it most.

Our organizations collectively urge you to:

- Bring back the \$45 per year bus pass for people with disabilities;
- Eliminate the new \$52/month bus pass fee;
- Allow everyone receiving PWD benefits to keep the \$77/month increase;
- Introduce a rural transportation subsidy for those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate; and
- Raise income and disability assistance significantly by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living, and index to inflation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Laurel Lenormand", written over a horizontal line.

Laurel Lenormand  
Port Alberni Family Guidance Association

- c. Hon. Mike de Jong, MLA, Minister of Finance  
Hon. Michelle Stilwell, MLA, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
John Horgan, MLA, Leader of the Opposition  
Scott Fraser, MLA



302 – 895 Fort Street, Lekwungen Territories, Victoria, BC, Canada V8W 1H7  
Tel: (250) 361-3521 Fax: (250) 361-3541 Web: [www.tapsbc.ca](http://www.tapsbc.ca)

March 11, 2016

Dear Minister Stilwell,

Thank you for your recent correspondence. All of the information provided was useful and confirmed the facts as we have been communicating them to our clients.

I am writing today specifically regarding your comment in the legislature that the BCNDP was responsible for the gathering outside the legislature on Wednesday, March 02, 2016 and 'organizing a photo-op for their political gains'. Since the budget was brought down on Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> Together Against Poverty (TAPS), Inclusion BC, the Action Committee of Persons with Disabilities and many other groups have been inundated with questions and concerns from our clients - people living with disabilities who also live in poverty. We organized the rally in response to those concerns. The people we represent have political autonomy and for you to suggest that they are being misled and used by the opposition is condescending in the extreme. They were expressing their dismay at your decision to change the Annual Bus Pass Program, with the hope that they would be heard by you and your government. These are people living in poverty; they know where every dime of their income goes and they clearly understand the impact of the changes.

You speak of fairness. How is it fair that a person who does not rely on public transportation receives a \$77 increase, but a person who needs a bus pass only gets a \$25 increase, or someone with a special transportation subsidy (STS) will only receive an extra \$11/month? One of TAPS' volunteers found out the STS was included in the changes and she broke down in tears. For a few special days she thought she was going to have more money to live on, for the first time in nine years, only to find out that the increase did not apply to her because of her transportation requirements. Is that fair?

Please, Minister Stilwell, reverse this decision, reinstate the \$45/year annual bus pass and truly make the system fairer for all.

*Supported by:  
The Law Foundation of British Columbia, United Way of Greater Victoria,  
Province of British Columbia,  
The Provincial Employees Community Services Fund,  
and other generous donors.*

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

*Brenda McBain*

Brenda McBain  
President, Together Against Poverty Society

*[Faint, illegible handwritten text, possibly a signature or stamp]*

March 19, 2016

Minister Stilwell,

**Re Your editorial "Transportation and the disability assistance rate" March 9, 2016 Saanich News**

How smug can you be? In your editorial piece you stated "*as a person with a disability – I fully understand and appreciate that the level of increase, whatever it may result in for an individual recipient, is modest.*" The increase in the disability pension in more than 9 years is less than modest. It's miniscule and made even more miniscule by taking away the \$45 annual bus pass, and giving the "choice" of buying a \$52 a month pass out of the \$77 increase, or choosing to use it for food and rent.

If this bus pass change is about fairness in the system then let's really address fairness in the system for disabled persons, in particular those suffering with brain disorders. And let's talk about fairness, not in terms of which parts of BC have access to transit, but about which have the highest rents and costs of living.

You, Minister, are not truly disabled when your brain is healthy, and when you do not live with schizophrenia. You, Minister Stilwell, are very blessed to have a fully functioning brain. You have enjoyed a wonderful sports career, you are fortunate to have a husband, a child and family life, as well as a career in politics. You are very fortunate – and yet completely out of touch with the realities of people living with s.22

You have earned more of our taxpayers dollars in this past year, than what s.22 has had to subsist on for the past s.22 For s.2 that's \$10,000 a year, and of that, more than half went to a local property management for the rent of a rundown, moldy, bug infested apartment that s. has to share with another individual living with s.22 At any moment that person could up and leave and my s. would be in danger of losing s. housing. Not only are people with brain disorders marginalized and stigmatized, but their own government turns a blind eye to them. Having s.22 s.22 is a significant financial burden for families. After 20 years of helping out where I could with clothing, household goods and essentials, s.22 and cannot afford to continue.

The entire BC mental health system is flawed. The psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers, case managers, and community support workers earn good salaries and benefits, paid vacations, and most contribute to gov't pensions. The clients they serve live in deplorable conditions without adequate food and essentials, and many others live on the street, undiagnosed, without any access to a disability pension. I support mental health professionals being paid for the good work they do, but really what's the point of it all if the very people they serve live in abject poverty? And now you've made it so that they can't even get out on a bus, and will instead isolate in their homes. How is any of that good for their brain health? What's the point of the ministry's whole emphasis and focus on "psycho-social rehabilitation" if the person with the brain disorder doesn't have enough money for a bus pass to get out in the community? Isolating is the worst thing for these folks.

Even some of your ministry staff are out of touch with their clients' dire financial situations. A case manager recently told s.22 should buy a cell phone with a special app that would remind him when to bathe, eat and take his meds. s.2 can barely pay for a land line! What s. and others with brain disorders need, is supported housing and at the very least, subsidized housing.



If you're going to talk about fairness in the system, let's talk about real fairness between disabled people who can and do work and those that simply cannot.

The government allows people with disabilities to earn an additional \$9600 a year without it affecting their assistance. This is a tacit recognition by the government that disabled people need that additional amount of money to live on. That's fair. But what about the disabled person that cannot work, hasn't worked in 20 years and likely will never work? Too bad, so sad? Or, do you do the right thing, and recognize that those particular people need an alternate disability pension that is closer to a living wage and more in line with the allowable earnings exemption?

Minister, you do not have to respond to this letter. I know that you will never get a chance to read it. Your staff will glance at the letter and place it with other "bus pass protest letters," send it over to a bureaucrat who will craft a tepid and non-committal response outlining all the good your ministry is doing for people with brain disorders, send it out in 3-4 months, and that will be the end of it.

What I do want from you is to see real change. I am imploring you, Minister, to rethink the bus pass changes. Either increase the disability pension further to cover the cost of the new bus pass rules and fees, or reinstate the former \$45 annual bus pass.

Finally, I would like to encourage you, the ministry and the government to follow the lead of the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation in their current TV campaign, by replacing the word "mental" with "brain" in your communications and dialogue. We are talking about brain health and addictions, and brain disorders. Using the word mental only perpetuates the stigma – that he/she is "mental". It also leaves an impression that one can simply change their "mental attitude" to get well, as was once thought of with depression.

Count your blessings, Minister, and really open your eyes to the plight of people living with profound disabilities in BC.

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 9:50 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Letter re: Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes  
**Attachments:** Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes letter-March \_2016.pdf  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** Cecilia Velasco [<mailto:staff@phabc.org>]  
**Sent:** March 22, 2016 9:34 AM  
**To:** [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca); Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Cc:** Paola Andrea Ardiles  
**Subject:** Letter re: Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes

Honourable Premier Clark and Honourable,

On behalf of PHABC Board of Directors, please find attached a letter regarding the need to raise disability benefits provided to people with disabilities (PWD) and to reinstate the annual bus pass fee of \$45 per year as well.

The attached letter outlines PHABC position on this issue and requests that you take it into consideration moving forward.

Thank you very much for your attention and if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.

Respectfully,

**Cecilia Velasco**  
Office Coordinator  
PHABC  
210-1027 Pandora Ave  
Victoria, BC V8V 3P5  
(250) 595-8422  
[staff@phabc.org](mailto:staff@phabc.org)  
[www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org)



Public Health Association of British Columbia  
#210 – 1027 Pandora Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8V 3P6  
Phone: (250) 595-8422 / Fax: (250) 595-8622  
[www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org)

March 14, 2016

Honourable Premier Christy Clark  
Honourable Minister Michelle Stilwell

**Re: Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes**

Dear Premier Christy Clark and Minister Michelle Stilwell,

The Public Health Association of British Columbia is urging you to raise the disability benefits provided to people with disabilities (PWD) and to reinstate the annual bus pass fee of \$45 per year for people with disabilities. Specifically, we are asking you to:

- Bring back the \$45 per year bus pass for people with disabilities.
- Eliminate the new \$52/month bus pass fee.
- Let everyone receiving PWD benefits keep the \$77/month increase.
- Raise the PWD benefit rate to \$1200 per month by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living.

In the provincial budget of February 16, 2016, people with disabilities received a small increase to their disability benefits. Unfortunately, the \$77 per month increase was offset by an increase in the cost of transportation, from \$45 a year to \$669 a year (\$52/month plus an annual \$45 administration fee). The effective increase in benefits for a PWD – the first in nine years – is a paltry \$21.25 per month.

**PWD need a rate increase**

BC disability benefit rates, at \$906/month are among the lowest in the country, in one of our most expensive provinces. Since 2001, rates have increased by only \$120. People with disabilities struggle with impossible financial pressure, in addition to dealing with health issues. They are falling behind and desperately need a rate increase that reflects the cost of living in BC.

As your government tabled its budget, you touted BC as having the best financial outlook in the country. We urge you to consider an increase in benefits for PWD's, to offset the rapidly rising cost of living. To claw back the minor increase, only makes things more challenging for people with disabilities.

Significant health issues arise when people are socially isolated, face barriers to seeking health care (such as a lack of transportation) and face limited opportunities for support (not being able to access community services).

We urge you to maintain the \$77/month increase, while immediately re-instating the annual bus pass fee for \$45, and working to raise the PWD benefit rate to \$1200 per month by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living.

Sincerely yours,

Paola Ardiles  
PHABC President

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 9:59 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Letter re: Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes  
**Attachments:** Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes letter-March \_2016.pdf  
  
**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Ministry related

**From:** Cecilia Velasco [<mailto:staff@phabc.org>]  
**Sent:** March 22, 2016 9:34 AM  
**To:** [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca); Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Cc:** Paola Andrea Ardiles  
**Subject:** Letter re: Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes

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The attached letter outlines PHABC position on this issue and requests that you take it into consideration moving forward.

Thank you very much for your attention and if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.

Respectfully,

**Cecilia Velasco**  
Office Coordinator  
PHABC  
210-1027 Pandora Ave  
Victoria, BC V8V 3P6  
(250) 595-8422  
[staff@phabc.org](mailto:staff@phabc.org)  
[www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org)



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Phone: (250) 595-8422 / Fax: (250) 595-8622  
[www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org)

March 14, 2016

Honourable Premier Christy Clark  
Honourable Minister Michelle Stilwell

**Re: Persons with disability (PWD) income support changes**

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Significant health issues arise when people are socially isolated, face barriers to seeking health care (such as a lack of transportation) and face limited opportunities for support (not being able to access community services).

We urge you to maintain the \$77/month increase, while immediately re-instating the annual bus pass fee for \$45, and working to raise the PWD benefit rate to \$1200 per month by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living.

Sincerely yours,

Paola Ardiles  
PHABC President

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Clark.MLA, Christy LASS:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 6:16 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Letter regarding Provincial Budget  
**Attachments:** Letter to Premier Clark- Re budget 2016.pdf

**From:** Jane Bouey [<mailto:jane.bouey@parentsupportbc.ca>]  
**Sent:** February 18, 2016 4:23 PM  
**To:** Clark.MLA, Christy  
**Subject:** Letter regarding Provincial Budget

Dear Premier Clark,

Please find attached a letter from our Executive Director, on behalf of Parent Support Services Society of BC.

**Jane Bouey**

Communications Coordinator &  
Executive Assistant



**Parent Support Services Society of BC**

204-5623 Imperial St.  
Burnaby BC  
V5J 1G1  
604-669-1616 ext 110  
[jane.bouey@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:jane.bouey@parentsupportbc.ca)  
<http://parentsupportbc.ca>





Parent Support Services  
Society of BC

February 18, 2016

Honourable Christy Clark  
Premier  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1X4

[Christy.Clark.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Christy.Clark.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Dear Premier Clark,

Parent Support Services Society of BC would like to congratulate you and the government of BC for the \$217 million increase in funding for the Ministry of Child and Family Development. (\$152 million for children in care and related programs, \$51 million for children and youth in care with special needs, \$11 million for child care centres, \$3 million for helping adoption of children in care.) In our work, we know that this first step will make a positive difference that additional frontline social workers (and support staff) should make, in the lives of the families we serve.

The increase in assistance for individuals who have Persons with Disabilities designations – is welcome. However this small increase, is largely offset by the addition of a \$52 monthly fee for persons with disabilities who utilize the \$45-per-year transit pass. We have heard from our families, the lifesaving difference this bus pass makes in their lives. It allows these citizens to freely access community resources, get to volunteer and paid work, travel to recreational activities. We call on the government to reconsider this additional monthly fee.

PSS also has questions about the logistics of how individuals with PWD designations will pay this \$52/mth fee. Many of the families we know, would be unable to apply on line, use a debit or credit card due to their limitations. Accessing disability assistance already requires assistance for those for whom English is an additional language, who struggle with literacy, or who do not know how to use computers.

Ninety percent of the families we work with, live in poverty. We would have welcomed the adoption of a poverty reduction strategy.

...2

PROVINCIAL OFFICE

204 – 5623 Imperial Street  
Burnaby, BC V5J 1G1  
Ph 604.669.1616  
Fax 604.669.1636  
Toll Free 1.877.345.9777  
Email: [office@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:office@parentsupportbc.ca)

GRG Support Line  
Ph 604.658.4740  
Fax 604.669.1636  
Toll Free 1.855.474.9777  
Email: [grgline@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:grgline@parentsupportbc.ca)

REGIONAL OFFICES

Metro Vancouver, Coastal,  
Fraser Valley & Interior  
204 – 5623 Imperial Street,  
Burnaby, BC V5J 1G1  
Ph 604.669.1616  
Fax 604.669.1636  
Toll Free 1.877.345.9777  
Email: [office@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:office@parentsupportbc.ca)

North  
P.O. Box 21106  
Sprucedale RPO  
693 West Central Street  
Prince George, BC V2M 7A5  
Ph. 250.982.0600  
Toll Free 1.877.345.9777  
Email: [parentnorth@shaw.ca](mailto:parentnorth@shaw.ca)

Victoria  
Ph 250.384.8042  
Toll Free 1.877.345.9777  
Email: [office@parentsupportbc.ca](mailto:office@parentsupportbc.ca)

Central Island  
P.O. Box 86  
Nanaimo Bay, BC V9P 9J5  
Ph 250.468.9658  
Fax 250.468.9668  
Toll Free 1.877.345.9777  
Email: [parent@telus.net](mailto:parent@telus.net)

Another positive step was the elimination of MSP premiums for all children. However we are disappointed that funding for public education will not meet the increased costs that school districts face.

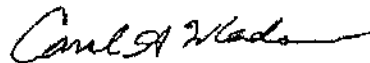
We had hoped Government, given the hundreds of business and community organizations that have endorse \$10/day childcare, would have adopted this well thought out plan.

At this time we also want to repeat our call you to take leadership in recognizing of the value of grandparents who are raising their grandchildren full time and other kinship care providers.

You can do this by providing these families with a monthly benefit, respite, child care and training equivalent to that provided to foster parents.

In conclusion, we sincerely want to applaud the action this government took last year ending the clawback of child support payments for single parents. We have heard, first hand, that this made a significant difference in the lives of thousands of families in BC.

Yours sincerely,



Carol Madsen  
Executive Director  
Parent Support Services Society of BC

cc BC Members of the Legislative Assembly

Creating a world where children and families are nurtured, valued, and safe

[www.parentsupportbc.ca](http://www.parentsupportbc.ca)

Celebrating 40 Years of Helping Families



March 5, 2016

s.22

s.22

CORRESPONDENCE

MAR 11 2016

OFFICE OF THE  
PREMIER

Premier ~~Charles~~

Recently Ministry Employment  
and Social Assistance issued  
an increase for welfare and  
provincial disability.

However this is not adequate  
as rental portion is \$37500/mo.  
In Kelowna rooms rent for 500 to  
600 per month. A 2 bedroom apt  
for shared accommodation is  
a minimum of \$50 plus utilities  
not inc. cable. Welfare 600/mo PW 99406/mo  
It is time that the rental portion  
was raised to cover current  
room rental costs.

At the coast Vancouver, Surrey  
etc rent is even higher.

Also education courses should  
be made available when on assistance.  
Drug testing should be mandatory.  
before addicts/alcoholics qualify  
for assistance.

On welfare one can earn \$200  
anything more is deducted, not  
right removes incentive for  
welfare recipients to work and  
get back into mainstream society.

s.22

(over)

*This is form for welfare recipients need to get assistance*



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

## SHELTER INFORMATION

(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY) CASE NUMBER

(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY) SR NUMBER

The personal information requested on this form is collected under the authority of and will be used for the purpose of administering the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*. The collection, use and disclosure of personal information is subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Any questions about this information should be directed to your local Employment and Assistance Office.

This form is NOT a tenancy agreement. This form should be used ONLY if a tenancy agreement is NOT available. This form is for ministry information only. For information on tenancy agreements and rental housing, see the Residential Tenancy Branch website at <http://www.rtc.gov.bc.ca>. All information provided to the ministry may be verified.

### CLIENT INFORMATION

CLIENT LEGAL NAME	BIRTHDATE (YYYY MMM DD)	CURRENT DATE (YYYY MMM DD)
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### RENTING OR INTENDING TO RENT AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS

UNIT #	STREET ADDRESS	CITY/TOWN	POSTAL CODE
MAILING ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT)		CURRENT PHONE NUMBER	
RENTAL START DATE	IS THE RENTAL UNIT ON RESERVE LAND? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	PHONE NUMBER AFTER MOVE <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS ABOVE, OR:	

### PLEASE COMPLETE SECTION A, B OR C (Please complete one section ONLY):

#### Section A - Renting a Self-Contained Unit or Room (with or without roommates)

TOTAL RENT \$	CLIENT'S PORTION OF RENT (IF SHARED) \$ <i>we have couch 375.00</i>	TOTAL # OF PEOPLE AT GIVEN ADDRESS ADULTS _____ CHILDREN _____
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#### Section B - Room and Board (common areas shared with landlord, meals ARE provided)

AMOUNT PER MONTH \$	IS THE CLIENT OR CLIENT'S SPOUSE RELATED TO THE PERSON(S) PROVIDING ROOM AND BOARD? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <i>Not adequate</i>
------------------------	---

#### Section C - Room Only (common areas shared with landlord, meals ARE NOT provided)

AMOUNT PER MONTH \$	TOTAL # OF PEOPLE SHARING ROOM ADULTS _____ CHILDREN _____
------------------------	---

### OTHER COSTS

SECURITY DEPOSIT REQUIRED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	CLIENT'S PORTION \$	DOES CLIENT SHARE A KITCHEN OR BATHROOM WITH OWNER? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	ARE UTILITIES INCLUDED IN RENT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
---	------------------------	---	---

To the Client: If any utilities are NOT included, please provide copies of the utility bills to ministry staff when received. The client must provide a rent receipt to the ministry as soon as the first month's rent is paid (unless rent is paid directly to the landlord by the ministry).

### LANDLORD INFORMATION

To the Landlord: The ministry may arrange to set up monthly direct deposit payments of the rent directly to the landlord, on the client's behalf. For more information on how to set up direct deposit, please visit [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/programs/direct-deposit-service-providers.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/programs/direct-deposit-service-providers.html) or call 1 866 866-0800.

NAME OF REGISTERED OWNER	NAME OF LANDLORD OR PROPERTY MANAGER / AGENT (IF DIFFERENT) <i>Time low income people</i>		
ADDRESS OF LANDLORD <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS ABOVE, OR PROVIDE ADDRESS BELOW	CURRENT PHONE NUMBER OF LANDLORD <i>were provided for</i>		
UNIT #	STREET ADDRESS	CITY/TOWN	POSTAL CODE
MAILING ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT) <i>adequate</i>			
LANDLORD OR PROPERTY MANAGER'S SIGNATURE		DATE (YYYY MMM DD)	



Minister of  
Assistance to  
and  
Premier Clark  
Parliament Bldg  
Government St  
Victoria BC  
V1T 2T1

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 9:42 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Today's Question Period

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Tamie Nohr  
Constituency Assistant | Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>

☞ Please consider the environment before printing this email

Confidentiality Warning: This message and any attachments are intended only for the use of the intended recipient(s), are confidential and may be privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, retransmission, conversion to hard copy, copying, circulation or other use of this message and any attachments is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail, and delete this message and any attachments from your system. Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: S.22  
Sent: March 16, 2016 10:15 PM  
To: Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <[Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
Subject: Today's Question Period

Dear Ms. Stilwell,  
I watched Question Period from today and I'm sorry but I just had to write.

I write with sadness, disbelief and disgust that yourself and your government would even THINK that such a small increase, bus pass issue aside, is adequate for people who are already stressed and dealing with so much in their lives.

That you would even THINK that making someone live on less than \$1000.00 a month in the province with the highest cost of living is frankly unbelievable.

That you would even THINK that giving tax breaks to the very wealthy over supporting vulnerable and struggling people in our society is ok.

I am just shaking my head that so many uncaring, self-serving people have been elected to an office that should be respected for the responsibility entrusted in you. Clearly, this concept has escaped all of you, starting at the top with Christy Clark.

Ms. Stillwell, you can be sure that I and many others like myself will be working very, very hard in the next election to ensure this does not happen again.

Regards,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 9:03 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189359 s.2 SDSI Response

Ref: 189359

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 16, 2016, regarding the recently announced Persons with Disabilities rate increase. I am pleased to respond.

I apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and they want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22

Sent: March 16, 2016 10:15 PM

To: Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>

Subject: Today's Question Period

Dear Ms. Stilwell,

I watched Question Period from today and I'm sorry but I just had to write.

I write with sadness, disbelief and disgust that yourself and your government would even THINK that such a small increase, bus pass issue aside, is adequate for people who are already stressed and dealing with so much in their lives.

That you would even THINK that making someone live on less than \$1000.00 a month in the province with the highest cost of living is frankly unbelievable.

That you would even THINK that giving tax breaks to the very wealthy over supporting vulnerable and struggling people in our society is ok.

I am just shaking my head that so many uncaring, self-serving people have been elected to an office that should be respected for the responsibility entrusted in you. Clearly, this concept has escaped all of you, starting at the top with Christy Clark.

Ms. Stilwell, you can be sure that I and many others like myself will be working very, very hard in the next election to ensure this does not happen again.

Regards,  
s.22

Dear [client name],

You are receiving this letter because you currently get the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS).

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with Disabilities designation will receive an increase to their monthly assistance rate.

Every year people who get STS receive a one-time payment in April. This year, you will receive a prorated cheque on April 20, 2016 for \$329. This represents five months of STS (April to August 2016).

Starting in September, you will automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77. This increase replaces the STS amount (which is equivalent to \$66 per month) and an extra \$11 a month.

As a PWD, you may be eligible for a refund through the Ministry of Finance on the tax paid for fuel purchases under the B.C. Government Fuel Tax Refund Program for Persons with Disabilities. If you have a vehicle in your name, you can register for the motor fuel tax refund (see the Ministry of Finance Tax Bulletin for more information: [https://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents\\_library/bulletins/mft\\_004.pdf](https://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents_library/bulletins/mft_004.pdf))

Once registered, you may also qualify for a 25 per cent discount on your Basic Autoplan Insurance. All you have to do is bring your confirmation letter from the Fuel Tax Refund Program to your Autoplan broker's office to have the discount added to your policy.

If you have any questions, please contact the ministry at 1-866-866-0800.



## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 9:24 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Bus Pass Program for people with disabilities  
**Attachments:** Bus Pass letter.doc  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** Judy Norbury [mailto:s.22]  
**Sent:** March 15, 2016 2:48 PM  
**To:** premier@gov.bc.ca; Stilwell.MLA, Michelle ; McRae.MLA, Don  
**Subject:** Bus Pass Program for people with disabilities

Please read the attached letter and share it with your caucus. Copies of the letter have also been sent to the local Comox Valley newspapers.

Thank you for your attention.

KInd regards,

Judy Norbury  
s.22

on behalf of the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee

To: Premier Christy Clark, Michelle Stillwell, Don McRae and others in the Legislature,  
concerning the increase to Provincial Disability Income Allowance and the new BC Bus  
Pass Transit rules:

On behalf of the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee, I am writing to express our strong objection to the new policies regarding disability income. To say there will be a \$77 increase in the monthly income of people with disabilities was welcome news, I'm sure, to many folk. And then to claw back \$52 monthly, plus an annual administration fee of \$45, was a real slap in the face for those who depend on the public transit Bus Pass for their transportation needs. For many people with disabilities riding the bus is an important part of their social network in addition to their shopping or medical needs. To force them to make a choice between a slightly more financially comfortable life and the freedom to travel around their community independently is grossly unfair and mean-spirited. And to say that the new policy offers people "more choice" is the worst form of political doublespeak.

We are asking your government to reverse the additional charge for the Bus Pass Program and allow people to enjoy an actual increase in their income plus continue to have the freedom to use the transit system.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Judy Norbury  
for the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 7, 2016 11:59 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Cc:** 'premier@gov.bc.ca'; McRae.MLA, Don LASS:EX  
**Subject:** 189341 Norbury SDSI Response  
**Attachments:** Bus Pass letter.doc

Ref: 189341

Judy Norbury  
Comox Valley Accessibility Committee  
s.22

Dear Ms. Norbury:

Thank you for your letter dated March 15, 2016, addressed to Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, Don McRae, MLA for Comox Valley, and to me expressing concerns about the recently announced Persons with Disabilities rate increase. As Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, I am pleased to respond.

I appreciate receiving your comments and commend the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee for its advocacy on behalf of all people with disabilities.

I want to assure you that the BC Bus Pass program remains in place. People on disability assistance can still access the program and the application process will remain unchanged.

Our government is committed to assisting persons with disabilities gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being and increased participation in the community.

To note, beginning September 1, 2016, all clients with the Persons with Disabilities Designation will receive a monthly rate increase as follows:

- Clients who don't receive a discounted annual bus pass or Special Transportation Subsidy, will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.
- Clients who choose to receive a discounted annual bus pass will receive a rate increase of \$25 per month.
- Clients who currently receive the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) worth \$66 per month, will receive an STS payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, they will automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the STS and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

The monthly rate increase builds on changes our government has already made to help people with disabilities lead fuller and more secure lives, including an increase in earnings exemptions, annual earnings exemptions, changes to asset limits, receiving gifts or inheritances, and the Accessibility 2024 plan to make B.C. the most progressive place in Canada for people with disabilities.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your feedback.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier  
Don McRae, MLA for Comox Valley

**From:** Judy Norbury [mailto:s.22]  
**Sent:** March 15, 2016 2:48 PM  
**To:** [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca); Stilwell.MLA, Michelle ; McRae.MLA, Don  
**Subject:** Bus Pass Program for people with disabilities

Please read the attached letter and share it with your caucus. Copies of the letter have also been sent to the local Comox Valley newspapers.

Thank you for your attention.

Kind regards,

Judy Norbury

s.22

on behalf of the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 12:15 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: changes coming to PWD, Budget 2016 Summary  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Tamie Nohr

Constituency Assistant | Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>



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**From:** Mcfaul, George [mailto:George.Mcfaul@viha.ca]  
**Sent:** March 14, 2016 12:54 PM  
**To:** 'premier@gov.bc.ca'; Coleman.MLA, Rich  
**Cc:** deJong.MLA, Mike; McRae.MLA, Don; Lake.MLA, Terry; Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** RE: changes coming to PWD, Budget 2016 Summary

Salutations.

I am saddened and angered by the effect of this budget on Persons with Disability.

I work closely with Persons with Disability, who are doing the best they can to survive on a meagre amount of financial support. Most British Columbians would be hard pressed to pay even their housing costs with \$900 per month. I see on a daily basis how these unfortunate people are forced by circumstances to live with disability and with severe financial restraints. Disability is for the most part unalterable; financial restraint however is directly affected by the Disability Payment. This amount, \$906, has been frozen since 2007, in spite of substantial increases in the cost of living; and I might add in stark contrast to the salaries of public servants.

The amount dedicated in this year's budget is inadequate in itself. Perhaps a \$77 increase might have been considered a 'good start', if there was commitment to regular increases, at least tied to the cost of living. However, to learn that hidden within this so-called increase is a removal of transportation subsidies, it is clear that this government does not consider its most vulnerable citizens worthy of the 'prosperity' lauded within this budget. Claiming to provide additional support (that in itself does not come close to maintaining cost of living even at 2007 levels), while clawing back the majority of it as a transportation payment, is double speak in the extreme. I have heard both the Minister of Finance and the Premier refer to the transportation scheme as a means of 'providing options' to recipients as to how they wish

to spend their money. The ludicrousness of this statement indicates the extent to which the speakers are disconnected from the lives of the people they are referring to.

Sincerely,

George McFaul

*George McFaul, BA, IMHA PDD*  
Vocational Work Crew Leader/Psychosocial Rehab Practitioner  
Tel: 250-331-8515 x68491, cell 250-218-5403

Rehab programs support people on their individual journey of recovery

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**Subject: Budget 2016 Summary**

Good morning community stakeholders. Yesterday the 2016/17 Provincial Budget was tabled. This is government's direction for the coming year.

**Effective September 2016**, all Persons with Disability (PWD) clients will receive a rate increase of up to \$77 a month.

The rate increase includes changes to realign transportation supports and provides greater equity and choice for all PWD clients.

There are approximately 100,000 people with the PWD designation. About 55,000 receive funding for transportation costs, through either a subsidized bus pass or a Special Transportation Subsidy. About another 45,000 people do not receive transportation assistance, many because they do not live in communities served by public transit.

Starting September 1, 2016, the rate increase will come into effect and PWD clients will be able to choose how they receive transportation support.

- PWD clients who do not have a BC Bus Pass or Special Transportation Supplement will receive a \$77 per month increase to their support allowance.
- PWD clients who access the BC Bus Pass Program will receive a \$25 per month increase to their support allowance plus the subsidized bus pass. After September 1, clients will have the option to turn in their bus pass at any time and receive the full \$77 in the following months.
- PWD clients receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy (which is equivalent to \$66 a month) will see this included within the monthly \$77 rate increase effective September 1; this provides an additional \$11 per month to their support allowance. The 2016 lump-sum payment for STS that will be included with April's Disability Assistance payment will be pro-rated for 5 months (April - August).

The BC Bus Pass program remains in place. Currently, BC Bus Pass holders receive \$52 in value a month in the form of a bus pass. Once the changes are effective, all people with the PWD designation will receive up to \$77 cash per month, and they can decide how to spend it.

People on disability assistance will still have access to a subsidized bus pass for \$52 per month plus the annual \$45 administration fee. However, in some communities, a bus pass costs less than \$52 a month and people may be better off purchasing a pass directly from BC Transit.

There is no change to the BC Bus Pass Program for low-income seniors. The ministry will continue to provide a subsidized pass to eligible seniors for the annual \$45 administration fee.

In summary, Budget 2016 provides an extra \$170 million over the next three years to support rate increase and an additional \$250 million over the next three years to address caseload pressure for temporary income assistance, disability assistance and related supplementary benefits.

Regards,

Jeannine Bousquet  
Manager Community Relations and Service Quality  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Service Delivery Division  
108 Richards Street  
Nanaimo, V9R 2S8  
250-619-2811



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

(11)

s.22

01 March 27th, 2016  
s.22

Ministry of Social Development  
and Social Innovation - Accessibility  
Re: Letter of March 2nd 2016.  
Hi,

Your letter is vague. It does not give the name of the new act or act being introduced by Minister Stillwell today. I cannot verify if I do not know the name of that act.

The other points that will help me are;

Re: Myths and Reality (my submission to the ~~off~~ report -  
"For the Common Good")

Since I will as a disability go on to benefit from all the four points in Myths and Reality as well others I have a lot spelling out in writing just where you plan to act on this and when you plan to act on the ~~one~~



(2.)

can't  
Assures Re: Show on Disability  
in Rural B.C. and could benefit  
them too. You need to be more transpor-  
tent and not so vague on this  
thing.

Your answer awaited

s.22 Fred Blum

①

s.22

Hon. Stephane Cadieux  
Min. of Social Development  
and Social Innovation

Re: Civil Rights For  
Disabled Workers.

I have been advocating  
for years for Civil Rights For  
Disabled Workers. It is a long  
road I have on my behalf of  
those on disability. I success-  
fully got a federal petition  
through Ottawa. Right now  
there is a pending federal  
bill. There has been interest  
on the part of two federal M.P.s  
to put the bill through  
Ottawa.

Right now there exist in  
the records of your ministry  
"Myth and Reality" it forms  
part of the Accessibility 2024  
report. I have attempted a provincial  
petition on two occasions. Both  
have been turned down.

(2)

Minister you have a mandate from those of us on disability in Accessibility 2024 to move forward and implement the findings of Mythe and Reality and every other demand of those of us who are Stake Holders. What I was being informed in November of our second failure of the physical petition of those of disability said that what is needed is a province wide petition to get political what I am assuming for you to do is give me your word that you will help to ensure that Mythe and Reality and the rest of the items that were asked for in the 2014 meeting. What I am asking for is your work with me to achieve these goals. What I would like is a letter from you confirming support. I want to work with you and your ministry peacefully to get all the points in Mythe and Reality dealt with (into law). Your action and response to this letter is well come and I earnestly hope that our cooperation will be peaceful and happy. Your letter is as mentioned earnestly awaited.

~~Constance~~  
s.22

(3)

Count

Minister I have decided to add some more. Minister my reason for wanting to work with you and your department is that I have experience in the field. I have been on disability since

s.22

Three times now I have been in need of a vehical replacement I live in rural B.C. there is no transit for 1.3 km. There is the experience I have had of trying to get a livelihood going. It is in the marine industry. There are no federal or provincial funding agencies that cover start up and operation of such things. Mine is in the marine industry. I have been had to get a five year up and running as a registered company. Without development and operating funds we are nothing.

I have been trying to get certified -icates of competency for my chosen field and to have successful return to the wage (these two depend on rehab). There is a issue rehab by the medical end does not allow for pening intervention. I have tried to advocate with the legislature in Victoria. They call legislative secretary.

Minister if you read Why the and Reality you would see

(11)

that I have given you the  
plain truth. Minister what I ask you to do  
respectfully is come forward and  
let me know just when you intend  
to act and get the recommendations  
of the ~~and~~ Reality and the  
problems of these ~~and~~ disability  
in ~~and~~ ~~Bel.~~ I am ~~as~~ ~~one~~  
others on disability willing to work  
with you on these issues but  
we need the minister's cooperation.  
Would you please write me soon  
and let me know you will be  
moving on these issues and when.

Minister it would be helpfully  
and I am a stakeholder from  
the Commission findings of 2014  
and do get in accordance with  
those findings. However  
it would be helpful if you would  
let me know just in accordance  
with the as to when you will  
act. Once again respectfully I  
ask you to write and let me  
know. I appreciate your written  
reply and would you include the  
date for appointment of such.  
Your written outline and reply is respectfully  
awaited. Thanks,  
Ced B. Lee

s.22



March 30, 2015

s.22

Ref: 189333

Dear s.22

Thank you for your letters received March 14, 2016, regarding progress on issues raised through the 2014 public consultation on what government, businesses and communities can do to reduce barriers and increase accessibility for people living with disabilities. We are pleased to respond.

We had almost 30,000 visits to our website and close to 1,150 people participated in 23 accessible, in-person consultation sessions around the province. In total, we received more than 7,500 comments, with ideas, suggestions, and solutions, including your document "Persons with Disabilities Myth and Reality".

As a result of that consultation in June 2014, the Premier announced Accessibility 2024, the 10-year plan to make British Columbia the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities. To date, a lot of progress has been made towards the commitments made in Accessibility 2024. This includes most recently the announcement to make access to transportation more equitable for rural British Columbians—an issue you raised specifically in "Myth and Reality".

As we make further progress, we will endeavor to keep you apprised.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Accessibility Secretariat

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 12, 2016 8:48 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** Persons with Disabilities

Hello

I'm messaging you as i am a person with disabilities however, i find it impossible to survive on the. Current rate of pwd my rent is 800 and i receive 886. U would be grateful for anything you could do to help.

Thank you

s.22

Sent from my Sony Xperia™ smartphone

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 11:39 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189306 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189306

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 12, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, regarding your Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, and we are pleased to respond.

We would like to be of assistance, but there was not enough information in your email for us to identify you as a client, and for a ministry staff member to contact you to discuss your concerns.

If you are able to write back with your full name and contact information, we can try to reach you accordingly.

For more immediate assistance, you may wish to contact an Employment and Assistance office, where staff are best able to assist you. A directory of offices across the province can be found at [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html).

You may also reach the ministry by calling 1-866-866-0800. This number is available from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and during the lunch period. Using this line, callers may now leave a call back number, keep their place in line and get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 12, 2016 8:48 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** Persons with Disabilities



Hello

I'm messaging you as i am a person with disabilities however, i find it impossible to survive on the. Current rate of pwd my rent is 800 and i receive 886. U would be grateful for anything you could do to help.

Thank you

s.22

Sent from my Sony Xperia™ smartphone

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2016 10:53 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Increase to the Disability pension

**Importance:** High

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 10, 2016 2:06 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Increase to the Disability pension  
**Importance:** High

Hello

I was just reading on the internet, that the government tabled in Feb.16, 2016 an increase for people with disabilities to amount of \$77 per month.

<http://inclusionbc.org/disability-supports/whats-new/sign-petition-raise-rates-leave-our-bus-pass-alone>

Question:

1. When will this \$77 increase officially be in affect or which pay period will actually see the increase?
2. Will the government consider increasing the amount over at least \$100 ?

Thoughts:

1. For the people with various disabilities, money hardship is especially challenging! In my case, my s.22 s.2 has a s.22 Richmond apartment, just last year did a rent increase. So with the usual utilities costs (phone, basic TV and hydro) and now with the apartment increase, and the usual tax deductions, this does not leave a lot of money for a person to live (food, bills, etc.).
2. For some people who have a difficult time balancing their finances they would need every penny of the proposed \$77 increase!!

**Note:** My s.22 does not have a bus pass s. mode of transportation is by walking or when s. parents or his friends pick him up.

Best Regards  
s.22  
Richmond, BC

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
COMMUNITY LIVING BC OFFICE

Referral # \_\_\_\_\_  
Refer to: \_\_\_\_\_

MAR 10 2016

LMN Response ☒ Reply Direct ☐ Info file ☐ FNA ☐  
DML Response ☐ Reading ☐

Other: Rush

Pacific Developmental  
Pathways Ltd.

109 - 20434 - 64 Ave.  
Langley, BC V3Y 1N4

107 - 32865 Ventura Ave.  
Abbotsford, BC V2S 6A3

1 - 45830 Chehalis Ave  
Chilliwack, BC V2P 1N6

March 7, 2016

Honourable Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
PO Box 9058 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Minister,

I am writing at the request of MLA John Martin, following a meeting on March 4, 2016, in which I outlined concerns about the proposed changes to transportation access for people who receive "PWD" benefits.

First, let me state that I am a supporter of both the Government and any decision which increases the equity of services and supports, especially to people with developmental disabilities. Your Government has brought together changes such as the creation of Community Living BC (CLBC), which have made a positive difference in the lives of people who live with the challenge of an intellectual disability.

The changes proposed to eliminate the buss pass for people receiving disability benefits, while increasing the amount they receive to allow them to spend the money as they wish, is certainly based on a desire to allow people to self-determine how they wish to use their benefits. It is acknowledged that a buss pass is only a benefit where people have access to quality bus services.

The problem with the direction is that it has not taken into account how people who attend CLBC Community Inclusion and Employment Programs use bus passes and their transportation allowances. The changes proposed actually make their position much worse.

Typically, a person attending a program funded by CLBC would attend the program using some form of "para-transit" or "Handy DART" service at a cost of approximately \$91 per month. Most programs, both employment and community inclusion, take advantage of the free bus pass as a way of providing access to programming in the community.

The total amount received for a person in our programs is as follows:  
Their basic PWD benefit is \$716.13 per month. They also receive a "Comfort Allowance" of \$236.29 per month, of which \$46 per month is designated as a

"Transportation Allowance". Their current monthly expenditure for transportation is approximately \$94.75, leaving \$857.54 for other expenses.

Under the proposed system, the monthly benefit increases to \$984 per month, however, the costs increase by \$52 per month and the "free bus pass" has been eliminated. The net income after paying transportation costs is now \$837.25 - an annual loss of \$243.48.

In effect, the people in our programs will receive a \$31.71 increase in monthly benefits with a \$52 increase in costs.

I believe that The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation was unaware that CLBC has been registering clients of Community Inclusion Programs to receive the additional \$46 per month "transportation allowance". This has created an unintended, negative impact on many, many people who access services through Community Living BC.

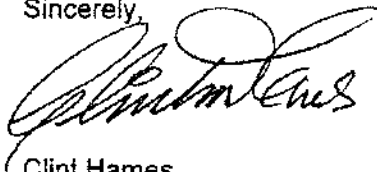
Here is a basic spreadsheet using actual income and expense from one of the people in our program. It is typical for all of our program participants.

Transportation Revenue and Expense Comparison			
Revenue	Current Monthly	Proposed Monthly	Annual
PWD Basic	\$716.00		\$8,592.00
PWD Shelter	\$236.29		\$2,835.48
(Includes \$46 Transportation)			
PWD Total	\$952.29		\$11,427.48
PWD With Increase		\$984.00	\$11,808.00
Expense	Current Monthly	Proposed Monthly	Annual
Handy DART	\$91.00		\$1,092.00
Bus Admin Fee	\$3.75		\$45.00
Monthly Bus Pass	\$-		
Total Expenses (Current)	\$94.75		\$1,137.00
Net Income After Transportation	\$857.54		\$10,290.48
Handy DART		\$91.00	\$1,092.00
Monthly Bus Pass		\$52.00	\$624.00
Bus Admin Fee		\$3.75	\$45.00
Total Expenses (New system)		\$146.75	
Net Income After Transportation		\$837.25	\$10,047.00
Difference After New Program			\$(243.48)

I hope that this helps you understand the concerns we have. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I really appreciate that you are hearing a lot of very loud and critical voices with respect to this issue. I am trying to be as helpful as possible in having you understand some of the concerns. As a company, we really appreciate the work that you do to improve the lives of people with disabilities in BC. We're happy to be a part of a solution that works for everybody.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clint Hames', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Clint Hames  
President / CEO

C. John Martin, MLA (via e-mail)

Pacific Developmental Pathways Ltd  
109 - 20434 64th Avenue, Langley, B.C. V2Y 1N4

RECEIVED

3715 W7B



Honourable Michelle Sliwetz

Minister of Social Development and Social Enterprise

PO Box 9058  
STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E1

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 11:00 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Persons with Disabilities

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 8, 2016 8:25 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Fwd: Persons with Disabilities

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** s.22  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 8, 2016 at 8:20 PM  
**Subject:** Persons with Disabilities  
**To:** [michelle.stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:michelle.stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Michelle Stilwell:

I am writing to you today, as s.22 who was born with a cognitive disability. s.2 will turn s.22 lives with us in our home in Coquitlam. s.2 has a s.22 who was also born with a cognitive disability. s.22 is a couple of years younger than s.22 Both s.22 work a few hours per week, s.22 and s.22 in Coquitlam.

s.22 and I too will s.2 in the next couple of years. s.22 but I, having worked most of my life in small businesses, have no pension beyond what the government provides. We have some savings and a house.

Why I am I telling you this? Because we are greatly concerned about s.22 future. It is becoming increasingly obvious to us that we, and we alone, will have to provide s.2 with the financial support that s.2 will need in order to secure a stable and fulfilling quality of life. s.22 fondest wish is to have a place of their own. This is our wish, too, but the prospects of this becoming a reality are dimming rapidly, as the cost of housing spirals out of control in our community.

What does that mean to my wife and I? Well, it means that we will have to give up any retirement dreams that we may have had. This is because the government (your government) does not provide sufficient PWD funding for s.2 and people like s. to live independently in our community, and clearly has no intention of doing so.

Did you know that no one is building housing for people with mental disabilities? The only option available to s.22 is Home Share, which is a kind of foster parenting for adults with mental disabilities. But unlike the foster parent program for youth, which is intended to be transitional, this is proposed as a permanent, life-long solution for adults with disabilities.



s.22 would at best, face an uncertain future, spending the rest of s. life living with strangers, and never having a place of s. own. s. would be subject to the whims of these (hopefully) kind-hearted individuals, who may sooner or later find that their own circumstances have changed, and would then have to end their paid relationship with s.22 And we will no longer be there to help s.2

Parents of children with mental disabilities are facing the daunting task of creating our own housing projects. Typically, this is a 10 year (or more) endeavor which requires intensive effort (and financial contributions) by parents in order to see such a project to completion (example the HYAD project in North Vancouver). Those with the talent, energy, money and connections, may be successful in completing such a project. Most others will not be so fortunate.

What our children need is a fair PWD pension that is indexed to inflation and to the cost of living in the community in which they live. They need financial flexibility and freedom from the checks and balances (and confusion and rules and reports) of the welfare system. This is a basic human need. The PWD must be re-envisioned to provide a quality of life for people who have no other prospects.

People with disabilities are not created equal. s.22 may never be employable beyond a token amount. s.2 will not have the opportunities that someone like you have had, no matter how hard s. tries. People with mental disabilities are truly the most vulnerable members of our society. And yes, I love my dog too, but my dog is not a person, as our premier should know.

When it was first announced that the PWD was boosted to \$906 per month, we were pleasantly surprised. With no increase since 2005, this was a welcome (if small) improvement. But then we found out about the bus pass claw-back.

s.22 rely on their bus passes. This is literally their ticket to independence, to inclusion, to work, to attend various Special Olympics activities s.22 and to socialize with their peers. Sure, they may rely on the 'Mom and Dad taxi' from time to time. But that will end some day.

I understand the idea of choice. But there is really no choice for s.22 The PWD today is far from being remotely capable of providing appropriate housing costs for s.22 in today's market. People with disabilities are either living at home and saving every penny that they can towards their future, or they are living in the community and have no money to spare for bus passes. This is not a real choice.

I was personally saddened and embarrassed for you when you voiced the party line about the protests being politically motivated by the NDP. It must have been very difficult for you, of all people, to speak those lines, knowing what is at stake here.

I hope that the bus pass situation will be reconsidered. And I hope that we could engage in a meaningful dialog into what could be done for our children with mental disabilities in terms of affordable housing. Inclusiveness is a worthy goal, but without proper, stable funding, it is not obtainable.

There is an old saying: 'Out of sight, out of mind.' By planning to isolate our children with disabilities in the homes of strangers, with no means of accessing affordable transit, that saying certainly appears to hold true, even today.

Best Regards,  
s.22

s.22

A member of Tri-Cities Inclusive Homes and Friends (TIHAF)

(An organization of parents seeking affordable housing solutions in the Tri-Cities area for our children with disabilities)

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 10:56 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: bus passes persons with disabilities  
**Attachments:** COSCO letter Michelle Stilwell bus pass Mar. 9,2016.docx  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** Lorraine Logan [mailto:[S.22](mailto:S.22)]  
**Sent:** March 9, 2016 11:58 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Cc:** [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca); Heyman, George ; Robinson.MLA, Selina ; Jane Dyson  
**Subject:** bus passes persons with disabilities

Please see attached letter concerning bus pass policy for persons with disabilities.

Respectfully

Lorraine Logan, President, COSCO



Council of Senior Citizens'  
Organizations of BC

Representing Seniors Since 1950

## COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ORGANIZATIONS OF B.C.

March 9, 2016

Honourable Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development & Social Innovation  
Parliament Buildings, Victoria B.C.

Dear Minister Stilwell:

I am writing on behalf of COSCO (Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of B.C.) to influence you and your government to reverse your decision concerning the bus pass policy you have just altered for persons with a disability. COSCO represents over 100,000 older adults in this province and I am sure many of these elders have been affected by this decision.

One of the worst enemies concerning older adults is isolation and loneliness. With this new policy of the monthly increase of \$77.00 and then withdrawing the bus pass, therefore allowing the recipient to decide on how to spend that extra money may result in persons staying at home, putting the funds to proper food or some small entertainment. Many will find other immediate uses for these funds.

Surely, this government can find the means to maintain the bus pass program and still administer the monthly increase. I do not think it is the intent for any authority to punish the most vulnerable of our society, especially persons who have a disability.

Please reconsider this mandate and reverse this decision. We want all members of our society to have access to the public transportation system. This should not be determined on the size of your pocket book.

Sincerely

Lorraine Logan  
President, COSCO ([www.coscobc.org](http://www.coscobc.org))

cc. Premier Christy Clark  
George Heyman, NDP Critic, Transportation  
Jane Dyson, Executive Director, Disability Alliance of B.C.  
Selina Robinson, NDP Critic, Seniors Issues

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 7, 2016 11:45 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189253 Logan SDSI Response  
**Attachments:** COSCO letter Michelle Stilwell bus pass Mar. 9,2016.docx

Ref: 189253

Lorraine Logan  
President  
Council of Senior Citizens Organization of BC  
s.22

Dear Ms. Logan:

Thank you for your letter dated March 9, 2016, expressing concerns about the recently announced Persons with Disabilities (PWD) rate increase. I am pleased to respond.

I want to assure you that the BC Bus Pass program remains in place. People on disability assistance can still access the program and the cost of a discounted bus pass will remain unchanged. There is also no change to the BC Bus Pass Program for low-income seniors.

Our government is committed to assisting persons with disabilities gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being and increased participation in the community.

To note, beginning September 1, 2016, all clients with the PWD designation will receive a monthly rate increase as follows:

- Clients who don't receive a discounted annual bus pass or Special Transportation Subsidy, will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.
- Clients who choose to receive a discounted annual bus pass will receive a rate increase of \$25 per month.
- Clients who currently receive the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) worth \$66 per month, will receive an STS payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, they will automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the STS and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

The monthly rate increase builds on changes our government has already made to help people with disabilities lead fuller and more secure lives, including an increase in earnings exemptions, annual earnings exemptions, changes to asset limits, receiving gifts or inheritances, and the Accessibility 2024 plan to make B.C. the most progressive place in Canada for people with disabilities.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your feedback.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** Lorraine Logan [mailto:s.22]  
**Sent:** March 9, 2016 11:58 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Cc:** [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca); Heyman, George ; Robinson.MLA, Selina ; Jane Dyson  
**Subject:** bus passes persons with disabilities

Please see attached letter concerning bus pass policy for persons with disabilities.

Respectfully

Lorraine Logan, President, COSCO

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 10:47 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Subsidized bus pass

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

-----Original Message-----

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 9, 2016 8:44 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Subsidized bus pass

Hon. Michelle Stilwell,

I am a parent of an s.22 who is a PWD recipient and utilizes the yearly subsidized bus pass. The transit system is a necessity in s. life to attend S. day program, job and Special O activities, and is s.2 only means of independent transportation. By taking away the bus pass program s. transportation costs increase by well over 100% from \$45 to \$624 per year. A significant increase for someone living below the poverty line.

To give an increase to the PWD amount and take something away at the same time would appear to lessen the blow, but our children with disabilities and their caregivers feel they are being penalized by using BC Transit, as they will benefit very little from the increase. It is NOT a choice it is their only means of transportation and independence.

In order for s.2 to benefit from the full monthly PWD increase of \$77 s. would not be able to purchase a bus pass, have to quit s. job, day program and Special O activities. This is not healthy or progress in any way, shape or form.

I challenge you to make the honourable decision to reconsider the bus pass claw backs in respect of those who are not as fortunate as we are, who have lifelong challenges and disabilities, who are already living below the poverty line and who rely on city transit.

Regards,

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 5:31 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: Subsidized bus pass

**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** s.22  
**Date:** March 9, 2016 at 8:44:05 PM PST  
**To:** [michelle.stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:michelle.stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)  
**Subject:** Subsidized bus pass

Hon. Michelle Stilwell,

I am a parent of an s.22 who is a PWD recipient and utilizes the yearly subsidized bus pass. The transit system is a necessity in s. life to attend s. day program, job and Special O activities, and is s. only means of independent transportation. By taking away the bus pass program s. transportation costs increase by well over 100% from \$45 to \$624 per year. A significant increase for someone living below the poverty line.

To give an increase to the PWD amount and take something away at the same time would appear to lessen the blow, but our children with disabilities and their caregivers feel they are being penalized by using BC Transit, as they will benefit very little from the increase. It is NOT a choice it is their only means of transportation and independence.

In order for s. to benefit from the full monthly PWD increase of \$77 s. would not be able to purchase a bus pass, have to quit s. job, day program and Special O activities. This is not healthy or progress in any way, shape or form.

I challenge you to make the honourable decision to reconsider the bus pass claw backs in respect of those who are not as fortunate as we are, who have lifelong challenges and disabilities, who are already living below the poverty line and who rely on city transit.

Regards,

s.22



## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 5:34 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Re: 189250 s.22 SDSI Response

**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Thank you Michelle,

I'm glad to hear "the discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place" as you state in your second paragraph, but this might be where my confusion stems from.

If the discounted bus pass is still in place, why do those who use the bus pass receive \$52 less a month than those who don't? The Riders Guide gives the cost of an adult monthly bus pass of \$52. So it would appear the PWD clients who use the bus will go from paying \$45 to \$669 per year as apparently there will be a \$45 administration fee tacked on as well.

The PWD increase is welcome and long overdue after the 9 year freeze, but everyone should be entitled to receive the same amount of increase regardless of whether they or not use the bus. The idea of giving something yet taking something else away at the same time especially from those with disabilities, such a small minority of folks who are unable to advocate for themselves is very sad.

I would appreciate an explanation and clarification on your second paragraph, as well as an answer to my question above, as I am hoping to clear up my confusion on the mixed messages I am getting.

Thanks so much. I do appreciate you taking the time to read and respond to my concerns.

s.22

On Mar 15, 2016, at 9:02 AM, Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX <[SD.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SD.Minister@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Ref: 189250  
s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 9, 2016, and apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates. Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell

Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From s.22 \_\_\_\_\_

Sent: March 9, 2016 8:44 PM

To: Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <[Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>

Subject: Subsidized bus pass

Hon. Michelle Stilwell,

I am a parent of s.22 \_\_\_\_\_ who is a PWD recipient and utilizes the yearly subsidized bus pass. The transit system is a necessity in s. \_\_\_\_\_ life to attend s. \_\_\_\_\_ day program, job and Special O activities, and is s. \_\_\_\_\_ only means of independent transportation. By taking away the bus pass program s. \_\_\_\_\_ transportation costs increase by well over 100% from \$45 to \$624 per year. A significant increase for someone living below the poverty line.

To give an increase to the PWD amount and take something away at the same time would appear to lessen the blow, but our children with disabilities and their caregivers feel they are being penalized by using BC Transit, as they will benefit very little from the increase. It is NOT a choice it is their only means of transportation and independence.

In order for s. \_\_\_\_\_ to benefit from the full monthly PWD increase of \$77 s. \_\_\_\_\_ would not be able to purchase a bus pass, have to quit s. \_\_\_\_\_ job, day program and Special O activities. This is not healthy or progress in any way, shape or form.

I challenge you to make the honourable decision to reconsider the bus pass claw backs in respect of those who are not as fortunate as we are, who have lifelong challenges and disabilities, who are already living below the poverty line and who rely on city transit.

Regards,

s.22

Page 159

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 9:02 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189250 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189250

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 9, 2016, and apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22  
Sent: March 9, 2016 8:44 PM  
To: Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
Subject: Subsidized bus pass

Hon. Michelle Stilwell,

I am a parent of an s.22 who is a PWD recipient and utilizes the yearly subsidized bus pass. The transit system is a necessity in S. life to attend s. day program, job and Special O activities, and is S. only means of independent transportation. By taking away the bus pass program s. transportation costs increase by well over 100% from \$45 to \$624 per year. A significant increase for someone living below the poverty line.

To give an increase to the PWD amount and take something away at the same time would appear to lessen the blow, but our children with disabilities and their caregivers feel they are being penalized by using BC Transit, as they will benefit very little from the increase. It is NOT a choice it is their only means of transportation and independence.

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I challenge you to make the honourable decision to reconsider the bus pass claw backs in respect of those who are not as fortunate as we are, who have lifelong challenges and disabilities, who are already living below the poverty line and who rely on city transit.

Regards,

s.22

;

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 10:47 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 9, 2016 9:14 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### City

North Vancouver

### Address

s.22

City, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

### Comments & Feedback

Dear Ms. Stilwell,

I know you are defending your government's feeble increase in benefits for people with disabilities. I assume, because you are a super woman with disabilities, that you imagine most others can also educated and work themselves out of poverty. I implore you to have compassion on those less able than you who will forever be stuck trying to live (in costly Vancouver!) on that shameful pittance allotted to them. Please work with our government to raise the benefits!

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 12:34 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Re: 189245 s.22 SDSI Response

**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Hello,

There was no miscommunication being circulated, nor misunderstanding on my part. I am not a person with disabilities. As I said below, the benefits should be increased - a lot more than they were! It is appalling that our BC Liberal government expects people with disabilities to live on that minuscule amount in Vancouver. I can see why there hasn't been yearly increases; it's because the government didn't want to draw attention to the cruel inadequacy of the PWD benefit. I have always voted Liberal, but now that I see how it treats the vulnerable disabled I feel angry and disillusioned.

Sincerely  
s.22

Ref: 189245

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 9, 2016, and apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation

subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca]

**Sent:** March 9, 2016 9:14 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Name**

s.22

**Email**

s.22

**City**

North Vancouver

**Address**

s.22

City, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

**Comments & Feedback**

Dear Ms. Stilwell,

I know you are defending your government's feeble increase in benefits for people with disabilities. I assume, because you are a super woman with disabilities, that you imagine most others can also educated and work themselves out of poverty. I implore you to have compassion on those less able than you who will forever be stuck trying to live (in costly Vancouver!) on that shameful pittance allotted to them. Please work with our government to raise the benefits!



**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 12:10 PM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189245 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189245

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 9, 2016, and apologize for any confusion that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

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These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

---

**From:** Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca [mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca]

**Sent:** March 9, 2016 9:14 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Name**

s.22

**Email**

s.22

**City**

North Vancouver

**Address**

s.22

City, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

**Comments & Feedback**

Dear Ms. Stilwell,

I know you are defending your government's feeble increase in benefits for people with disabilities. I assume, because you are a super woman with disabilities, that you imagine most others can also educated and work themselves out of poverty. I implore you to have compassion on those less able than you who will forever be stuck trying to live (in costly Vancouver!) on that shameful pittance allotted to them. Please work with our government to raise the benefits!

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 8, 2016 2:00 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [mailto:[Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)]  
**Sent:** March 8, 2016 9:46 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### City

Duncan

### Address

s.22

Duncan, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

### Comments & Feedback

An \$11 increase for PWD is an insult to our intelligence. You tell me how this improves our struggle to survive.

Thank You,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 11:52 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189226 s.22      SDSI Response

Ref: 189226

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 8, 2016, and apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

---

**From:** [Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca) [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 8, 2016 9:46 AM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency

**Name**

s.22

**Email**

s.22

**City**

Duncan

**Address**

s.22

Duncan, British Columbia s.22

Canada

[Map It](#)

**Comments & Feedback**

An \$11 increase for PWD is an insult to our intelligence. You tell me how this improves our struggle to survive.

Thank You,

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 8, 2016 10:24 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Assistance rates

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 5, 2016 4:46 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Assistance rates

Dear Minister: Michelle Stilwell:

The recent calculations for disability assistance seem to be somewhat misguided. For example, the “up to \$77 per month rate increase” to people on disability assistance is an inadequate sum to add to a rate that hasn’t been increased in nine years. The cost of food alone has more than doubled in that time.

Until this new plan for the money for those with disabilities, they got the \$45 red compass card. Now, according to the ministry of social development, (and the new provincial budget) they are losing use of that card in September, and will be supplied with the \$52 monthly transit pass – which new sum will be clawed back out of their already meager disability cheques. If it costs only \$45 per annum administration fee for the once a year issued compass card – how much does it cost to pay someone to do claw-backs from those cheques every month?

According to many who worked out the numbers, these changes will give the disabled a net increase of a mere \$25 a month for those receiving bus passes, and only \$11 per month for those needing special transportation subsidies. In the past, an average person could only justify paying \$52 if they used transit 2 times a day, at least five days a week. Faresavers made more sense – when they were still accepted for Skytrain travel. So it isn’t really appropriate to ask those on disability (or seniors for that matter) to pay so much for a pass they probably don’t need every day.

What I don’t get is why the Minister of Social Development doesn’t separate the transportation issue from the disability assistance by giving the option to those who apply for the subsidized red compass card (like seniors do) and add the \$45 to the cheques of those who can’t use them because the bus/skytrain etc. can’t accommodate their needs, or they live outside of the area served by Compass and Translink. That way the question of fairness is answered.

The point of “fairer for everyone” isn’t really about money. It’s about fair access. The ministry could do a lot better for all those on disability assistance by offering other subsidies to those who aren’t able to use public transit. And the assistance rates should be increased so they have fair access to basics like food and accommodation – from a rate that reflects the current cost of living.

I hope you will consider the points I have made, and have your ministers and civil servants spend a little time researching what kind of assistance would be most appropriate for the disabled in 2016.

Sincerely,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 7, 2016 11:27 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189224 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189224

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 8, 2016 about the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016 and assure you that the discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass (including a red compass card) and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer 2016. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes are intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance throughout the province, and build on our commitment to assisting persons with disabilities gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being, and participation in the community.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell



Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** s.22

**Sent:** March 5, 2016 4:46 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** Assistance rates

Dear Minister: Michelle Stilwell:

The recent calculations for disability assistance seem to be somewhat misguided. For example, the “up to \$77 per month rate increase” to people on disability assistance is an inadequate sum to add to a rate that hasn’t been increased in nine years. The cost of food alone has more than doubled in that time.

Until this new plan for the money for those with disabilities, they got the \$45 red compass card. Now, according to the ministry of social development, (and the new provincial budget) they are losing use of that card in September, and will be supplied with the \$52 monthly transit pass – which new sum will be clawed back out of their already meager disability cheques. If it costs only \$45 per annum administration fee for the once a year issued compass card – how much does it cost to pay someone to do claw-backs from those cheques every month?

According to many who worked out the numbers, these changes will give the disabled a net increase of a mere \$25 a month for those receiving bus passes, and only \$11 per month for those needing special transportation subsidies. In the past, an average person could only justify paying \$52 if they used transit 2 times a day, at least five days a week. Faresavers made more sense – when they were still accepted for Skytrain travel. So it isn’t really appropriate to ask those on disability (or seniors for that matter) to pay so much for a pass they probably don’t need every day.

What I don’t get is why the Minister of Social Development doesn’t separate the transportation issue from the disability assistance by giving the option to those who apply for the subsidized red compass card (like seniors do) and add the \$45 to the cheques of those who can’t use them because the bus/skytrain etc. can’t accommodate their needs, or they live outside of the area served by Compass and Translink. That way the question of fairness is answered.

The point of “fairer for everyone” isn’t really about money. It’s about fair access. The ministry could do a lot better for all those on disability assistance by offering other subsidies to those who aren’t able to use public transit. And the assistance rates should be increased so they have fair access to basics like food and accommodation – from a rate that reflects the current cost of living.

I hope you will consider the points I have made, and have your ministers and civil servants spend a little time researching what kind of assistance would be most appropriate for the disabled in 2016.

Sincerely,

s.22

February 19, 2016

Premier Christy Clark  
PO Box 9041,  
Stn Prov Govt,  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E1

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER'S OFFICE	
Referred to:	
Referred to:	
MAR 08 2016	
Info/Response <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reply Direct <input type="checkbox"/> Info File <input type="checkbox"/> RFA <input type="checkbox"/>
File Response <input type="checkbox"/>	Requiring <input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	

**RE: PROVINCIAL BUDGET AND DISABILITY RATES**

Dear Premier Clark,

I write on behalf and at the behest of the Board of Directors of the Positive Living Society of British Columbia, a member-controlled charitable society run by and for its more than 5,700 members of record, each of whom (including all directors) is a person living with HIV. Of our 5,700 members, substantial percentages (especially those who have advanced HIV disease or are long-term survivors of HIV) rely on the current Disability Benefits as their main source of income.

The purpose of this letter is to register our *strong* disappointment with the recent Provincial Budget with respect to the announced increase in Disability Rates by \$77 per month per person effective September 2016. The current monthly Disability Rate in BC (\$906) is woefully inadequate in meeting the basic needs of those with Disabilities and the \$77 monthly increase, while a step in the right direction (1% increase over 9 years), is insufficient and quite frankly disrespectful. Positive Living BC believes that the Disability Rate in BC should match that of the Alberta Government's Disability (AISH) Rate of \$1588 per month.

Furthermore, we *strongly* condemn the elimination of the current Special Transportation Subsidy (a lump sum paid to recipients of approximately \$800 annually) and the BC Bus Pass Program

803 East Hastings Street  
Vancouver  
BC V6A 1R8

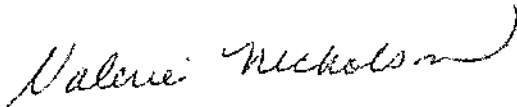
**WWW.POSITIVELIVINGBC.ORG**  
REGISTERED NON-PROFIT SOCIETY REG # 11928-2085

t 604.893.2200  
e info@positivelivingbc.org  
f 604.893.2251

(\$45 annual cost to applicants) and the replacement of it with the user-pay model (\$45 annually plus a monthly charge of between \$52 - \$66 monthly). This has the net effect of negating much of the announced Disability Rate increase. This in fact, amounts to a 1,300-per-cent increase in the price of transit to people with disabilities in BC.

Positive Living BC calls on the BC Government to utilize its newly established \$100 million Prosperity Fund to maintain the current Special Transportation Subsidy and BC Bus Pass Program and to increase the Disability rate in BC to \$1588 monthly.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie Nicholson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Valerie Nicholson  
Chairperson

CC: Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, Michelle Stilwell  
Leader of the Opposition, John Horgan  
Social Development and Social Innovation Critic, Michelle Mungell



April 7, 2016

Ref: 189211

Valerie Nicholson  
Chairperson  
Positive Living Society of British Columbia  
803 East Hastings Street  
Vancouver BC V6A 1R8

Dear Ms. Nicholson:

I want to thank you for your letter dated February 19, 2016, addressed to Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, expressing concerns about the recently announced Persons with Disabilities (PWD) rate increase. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation and, as Minister, I am pleased to respond.

I appreciate receiving your comments and commend the Positive Living Society of British Columbia for its advocacy on behalf of all persons with disabilities.

I want to assure you that the BC Bus Pass program remains in place. People on disability assistance can still access the program and the application process will remain unchanged.

Our government is committed to assisting persons with disabilities gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being and increased participation in the community.

To note, beginning September 1, 2016, all clients with the PWD designation will receive a monthly rate increase as follows:

- Clients who don't receive a discounted annual bus pass or Special Transportation Subsidy, will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.
- Clients who choose to receive a discounted annual bus pass will receive a rate increase of \$25 per month.
- Clients who currently receive the Special Transportation Subsidy (STS) worth \$66 per month, will receive an STS payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, they will automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes the STS and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

.../2

The monthly rate increase builds on changes our government has already made to help people with disabilities lead fuller and more secure lives, including an increase in earnings exemptions, annual earnings exemptions, and the Accessibility 2024 plan to make B.C. the most progressive place in Canada for people with disabilities.

With respect to the financial supports offered to clients with disabilities, I would like to distinguish that while Alberta Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) has higher disability payments, British Columbia supports more clients per capita. This is in part because AISH disability programs require permanent or enduring disability, whereas B.C. stipulates a severe mental or physical impairment with duration of at least two years. Alberta also requires that the condition substantially limits a person's ability to earn a livelihood; B.C.'s disability assistance program does not refer to employability, only that the condition directly impacts a person's ability to perform daily living activities.

B.C. is still the only province to have annual earnings exemptions for people with disabilities, meaning an individual can earn \$9,600 per year without impacting their income assistance rate. This allows people whose ability to work may fluctuate throughout the year to earn money when they can.

B.C. has also joined Alberta in providing the highest asset limits in Canada for people with disabilities at \$100,000 per individual, and in allowing unlimited cash gifts without affecting disability assistance.

I hope this assists you in clarifying the recently announced rate increases and the differences in rates between the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Stilwell', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 6:42 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Cc:** justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca; contact@peterjulian.ca; local@peterjulian.ca  
**Subject:** Persons With Disabilities - Bus Pass Program

Dear Premier Clark, please read this email.

I am a person living with various disabilities, and unfortunately I'm not able to get by with the increased cost of living here in the lower mainland (Burnaby/Vancouver).

I would appreciate it if you could explain why PWD in Alberta are funded at approximately \$400 per month more than PWD in your own province. Do you believe that's fair, comparing the cost of living in both provinces, Alberta and British Columbia? Do you even realize, or do you even care that it has been many years since PWD rates in BC have increased? I would sincerely love to hear an explanation.

**Another point is the Bus Pass Program.**

This year is the first year that I was working towards to be comfortable enough to get on the bus and Skytrain. It's been a real challenge for me. I have the application, and filled it out, but then the price went from about **\$49.00 per year** and you and your government sky rocketed the cost to about **\$52.00 per month, not per year**. If you have any compassion in your heart at all, can you really believe that is fair?

Please stop the bus pass changes, and please increase the PWD rates to, at least be in line with Alberta.

Premier Clark, I honestly don't understand.

Most days I feel that the system (both you and the federal government) are against me, and others like me; it seems very personal and very wrong.

I **am** grateful for what help I do receive, but there are days, and they are becoming more and more frequent that I feel there's no point in going on. There doesn't seem to be a way out, and the stress is overwhelming.

Regards,

s.22

c.c.  
PM Justin Trudeau  
Peter Julian MP

s.22

## **D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** Sales, Kiley <Kiley.Sales@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 5:20 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Hello Jeff,

Sorry for the late reply.

Here's s.22 email: s.22

Kiley

**From:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX [mailto:SD.Minister@gov.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** March 29, 2016 4:06 PM  
**To:** Sales, Kiley  
**Cc:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Hi Kiley,

Do you have the constituents email address, mailing address, or any contact information?

Thanks,  
Jeff

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 11:03 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Please cc. Minister Oakes office on the response.

Thanks!

**From:** Sales, Kiley [mailto:Kiley.Sales@leg.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 10:27 AM  
**To:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Mitchell, Sheila LASS:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Hello Kristen,

Thank you for following up on this.

Yes, please draft response.

Kiley

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX [mailto:Kristen.Blake@gov.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** March 29, 2016 10:20 AM  
**To:** Sales, Kiley <Kiley.Sales@leg.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Mitchell, Sheila <Sheila.Mitchell@leg.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Hello Kiley,

Just following up on this one.

Let me know if you would like us to draft a Ministry Response.

Thanks!  
Kristen

---

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 17, 2016 5:05 PM  
**To:** Sales, Kiley LASS:EX  
**Cc:** Mitchell, Sheila LASS:EX; Richmond, Valerie D SDSI:EX; Keene, Jeff SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Hello Kiley,

I can have the Ministry respond if you want?

s.22 for a couple days so I have cc'd Valerie and Jeff who will be assisting with cases when I am gone.

Thanks,  
Kristen

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**From:** Sales, Kiley [mailto:Kiley.Sales@leg.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 10:20 AM  
**To:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Cc:** Mitchell, Sheila LASS:EX  
**Subject:** Cariboo North Constituent s.22

Hello Kristen,

I hope that you're keeping well.

s.22 is a woman with disabilities. She wrote our MLA inbox to express her frustrations around obtaining certain benefits and/or services offered to people who are disabled.

Here's what she has to say:

Hi Coralee,



Since becoming disabled I have hit a few brick walls when attempting to obtain a benefit/service. Because I worked for s.22 and receive CPP disability and another small pension I do not qualify for any provincial benefits. If I had been lazy and stayed home on provincial assistance I would qualify for all the benefits that are available. I did up a spreadsheet and was amazed at all of the benefits available to them. If they utilize the benefits, they have the potential to receive more than I receive every month. The amount they receive on their cheque is not the much but they have no additional expenses. If they have to go to Vancouver for medical they are provided with an allowance to cover expenses; they have zero rated MSP and Pharmacare. There are many more comparisons where they are provided with the funds or services where I have to pay. The provincial disability qualifies them for everything they need at no cost. I no longer have an extended benefit pkg because I am unable to work so I have signed up for a private coverage. It will cost me 156.00 per month plus my MSP premiums – monthly rate to be determined, I believe it will be 38.00 So I am paying 190 per month for medical services that should be as free to me as it is to anyone.

Also the home owner grant supplement is only available to the disabled on provincial assistance or having to spend money on personal care (150.00 per month or at least 2000.00 on home modifications. I thought I could get in under the home modification clause – not a chance. I am legally blind, I do not need to widen my doorways, install lifts or any other modifications along those lines. I needed better lighting in and around my house and proper railings on my front entrance to my home which I paid for and had installed. These expenses do not qualify as they are not considered "permanent ". I only need them because of my disability – they should qualify. Is this fair – definitely not!

I am tired of the disparity between the provincial disabled and the federal disabled. I am no longer willing to sit back and accept the regulations. This is my first step in my journey to get things changed to a fair and equitable system for all. Please contact me and let me know what can be done to correct the current system.

Sincerely,  
s.22

Kristen, not sure how we can respond to this one. Any ideas?

*Kiley Sales  
Constituency Assistant  
To the Honourable Coralee Oakes  
MLA, Cariboo North*

#401 410 Kinchant Street | Quesnel, B.C. V2J 7J5 | Tel: 250 991 0296 | Fax: 250 992 5629

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** .. s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 23, 2016 8:35 AM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** s.22

**Importance:** High

hello

my name is s.22

i come from the s.22

i am on disability and just like to know how am i to live off 96 dollars for the whole month

oops i mean 76 dollars !!

i had s.22 ; and had to set up trust fund to keep disability which cost me over 7000 and just to be pushed -- forced off disability from the people who run these kinda of trusts in victoria and some man here in paying back ??

s.22  
s.22

and like the disability people pay back .. must really dont care about people mental healthy or just eating as how am i to eat on 76 dollars .. they have put this into my life -- when i got this little s.22  
s.22

i am one of the first people of this land and i feel i had get off disability and use the money to better myself with that i really didnt have choice in this matter

i am not going away and i am not looking for person to say -- food banks -- or are you living low income housing ??

why should i have to move .. i need clean safe .. place as i am in

have many issues s.22 --- and many years of shame --- guilt -- from most people in canada for being 1st nations and this ugly head IS STILL WALKING AROUND AND THIS ATTACK ON ME WITH WELFARE TAKEN THIS MONEY FROM SOMEONE WHO ONLY GET 96 DOLLARS A MONTH ???

I am been doing many years of self-care and still working on self not that its your business s.22

but if i dont get reply back maybe its time go to the news about how 1st nations are still treated from the government and that this law that only people who got res school monet "welfare" cant touch if the out off from that was your children where put into foster home !! and should have the same law !!

the 1st people of this land are only after whats right .. to feel we both in our own country and to be treated with respect and total understanding on what was put on our people and that some of us really are doing self-care and do need every damn little cent from disability

s.22

surrey bc

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 23, 2016 1:43 PM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: 189339 s.2 SDSI Response

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

AC: Add to 189421.

hello whoever you are ?

my full name is s.22

i live surrey and i know what they are going to say Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

that there is nothing they can do , as had a mr gerry dao investigative officer s.17 -- SR ##1-25219946091

AND HE DID TELL ME THAT HAD REPAY THIS MONEY AS I USED TOO MUCH OF THE MONEY THAT IS OK WITH MSDSI

AND WHAT I AM GETTING AS SAID IN EMAIL -- THEY FORCED ME TO MADE THE CHOICE TO GET OFF ADVISABILITY AND YES I DIDNT TOTALLY UNDSRAND THAT I HAD TO REPORT THIS MONEY I USED EACH MONTH TO LIVE ON AS THE MSDSI FEEL THAT PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ISSUES SHOULD BE UNDER THE POWER OF THEM BECAUSE OF THE LITTLE MONEY THEY GIVE ,, MY RENT IS 850.00 Y BECAUSE ITS NEW APT AND FOR THE SIZE AND WHATS INCLUDED IN RENT IT VERY GOOD DEAL -- AND MOST PEOPLE WHO ARE ON "WELFARE " ARE LOOKED DOWN ON WHEN LOOKING FOR SAFE-- CLEAN-- PLACE TO CALL HOME AND MOST LANDLORDS WANT SOMEONE WHOS WORKING AND HAS THIS AND THAT -SO THEY DONT GET PEOPLE WHO ARE ON "WELFARE" .but the point i am getting at is why the heck did the people in vic bc send me letter saying i needed to send them break down what i have used the money for-- and i did so .. then get letter from this gerry saying i had repay this 946.42 so this was only because of the money i got from s.22  
s.22

i hope my poor noneducational words are getting to what i am trying to say ?

so they feel that because of this money i got from goverment ,that i should use it to live off and not the "welfare" this isnt right as being trated fair with out jugdement to what my race is .as i know when it comes to 1st nations people have a diffrent out line for us and its less then the others .

but i have got intouch with others about me being trated as i did a big wrong when i didnt totally understand this trust and from what i was told from mr gerry dao "we dont get trusts like this " hmmm

i am only sharing what i feel .

hands up  
all my relations

s.22

From: [SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca)

To: s.22

CC: [Premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: 189339 S- SDSI Response

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 2016 19:24:35 +0000

Ref: 189339

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 15, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, regarding the repayment of a disability assistance debt. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, and we are pleased to respond.

We would like to be of assistance, but there was not enough information in your email for us to identify you as a client, and for a ministry staff member to contact you to discuss your concerns.

If you are able to write back with your full name and contact information, we can try to reach you accordingly.

For more immediate assistance, you may wish to contact an Employment and Assistance office, where staff are best able to assist you. A directory of offices across the province can be found at [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html).

You may also reach the ministry by calling 1-866-866-0800. This number is available from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and during the lunch period. Using this line, callers may now leave a call back number, keep their place in line and get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 8:26 AM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** s.22

HELLO I AM IN NEED OF SOME INFO AND HOPEFULLY HELP

I AM s.22 UNDER THE s.22

s.22  
s.22

WHAT I LIKE TO KNOW WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE WHO GET RES SCHOOL MONEYS - FROM BEING PUT INTO RES SCHOOL ?

WHAT I AM GETTING AT -- I WAS ON DISABILITY -- WELFARE--- AND UNDER THE OUT LINE --TRUST-- THERE WASNT REALLY ANY THING I COULD USE MONEYS ON---MY DISALITY IS s.22 . AS I GOT MONEYS s.22 I HAD TO USE THE MONEYS I DID

FINENALLY -- AFTER 13 YEARS OF GOING THROUGH THIS HELL AGAIN -- BUT I HAVE TO PAY BACK .. WELFARE .. DISABILITY 942.00 AND I DID SEND OVER 7000.00 TO GET TRUST , TO KEEP MY DISABILITY AND AS SAID BEFORE - WHAT I COULD USE THIS MONEY ON I DIDNT REALLY FALL UNDER WHAT WAS STATED ? AND I DID TELL WELFARE I WAS GETTING THIS MONEY AND .WHEN I DID GET IT ..THE PEOPLE WHO HANDLE THE TRUSTS AND THE WELFARE FORCED MY HAND TO GET OFF WELFARE AND USE THIS LITTLE MONEY TO LIVE OFF . I AM JUST VERY CONFUSED AND FEELING LIKE BECAUSE I GOT THIS MONEY - s.22

s.22  
s.22 .. THE DEPARTMENT WHO HANDLES THE TRUSTS - PUSHED ME INTO USING THIS MONEY TO LIVE OFF AND NOW I HAVE USED IT TO LIVE OFF MOST OF THIS LITTLE MONEY IS GONE I HAVE BEEN CLEAN --s.22 AS OF THIS DATE AND BEING GOING TO TREATMENT CENTERS .DO THE SELF-CARE AND WORKING ON THE THINGS THAT WHERE PUT ON MY SELF-- AND MOTHER .. I KNOW MY WORDS MAYBE HARD TO UNDERSTAND AS I HAVE s.22

BUT I AM JUST FEEL LIKE THE THE PEOPLE WORK FOR WELFARE-DISABILTY AND WHO WORK TRUST DEPARTMENT CAME AFTER ME BECAUSE OF THIS LITTLE MONEY I DID GET FROM GOVERMENT FOR BEING ABUSED IN FOSTER HOME .

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

s.22

ALL MY RELATIONS

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 31, 2016 11:17 AM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: 189339 s. SDSI Response

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

g day

s.22 here again

as i would call that 1 888 but i dont have day time mins to sit wait

i dont have money to even buy food that i do need as being 1st nations and with s.22

s.22 ,just found out that i cant just eat whatever

i am just at my end , how will i make it and how i am going to eat and even looking for job what interviews

should i go to ,because if i dont get hired it wasting money on bus fare

and how many trips can i make on 76.00

i guess we 1st nations and others just need to ??

i am only doing self-care and being clean s.22 is a never ending story

i feel that no ones cares and that i should just go hungry on what food a can get with 76.00

thanks

s.22

---

**From:** s.22  
**To:** sdsi.executivecorrespondenceservices@gov.bc.ca  
**Subject:** RE: 189339 s. SDSI Response  
**Date:** Wed, 23 Mar 2016 13:52:45 -0700

### **December 1, 2015**

There is no longer any limit on the exempt amount of trust disbursements used for any item or service that promotes the person's independence.??? this on pwd site ....

---

**From:** s.22  
**To:** sdsi.executivecorrespondenceservices@gov.bc.ca  
**Subject:** RE: 189339 s. SDSI Response  
**Date:** Wed, 23 Mar 2016 13:43:26 -0700

hello whoever you are ?

my full name is s.22

i live surrey and i know what they are going to say Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

that there is nothing they can do , as had a mr gerry dao investigative officer 604-664-0727-- SR ##1-25219946091

AND HE DID TELL ME THAT HAD REPAY THIS MONEY AS I USED TOO MUCH OF THE MONEY THAT IS OK WITH MSDSI

AND WHAT I AM GETTING AS SAID IN EMAIL -- THEY FORCED ME TO MADE THE CHOICE TO GET OFF ADVISABILITY AND YES I DIDNT TOTALLY UNDSAND THAT I HAD TO REPORT THIS MONEY I USED EACH MONTH TO LIVE ON AS THE MSDSI FEEL THAT PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ISSUES SHOULD BE UNDER THE POWER OF THEM BECAUSE OF THE LITTLE MONEY THEY GIVE ,, MY RENT IS 850.00 Y BECAUSE ITS NEW APT AND FOR THE SIZE AND WHATS INCLUDED IN RENT IT VERY GOOD DEAL -- AND MOST PEOPLE WHO ARE ON "WELFARE " ARE LOOKED DOWN ON WHEN LOOKING FOR SAFE-- CLEAN-- PLACE TO CALL HOME AND MOST LANDLORDS WANT SOMEONE WHOS WORKING AND HAS THIS AND THAT -SO THEY DONT GET PEOPLE WHO ARE ON "WELFARE" .but the point i am getting at is why the heck did the people in vic bc send me letter saying i needed to send them break down what i have used the money for-- and i did so .. then get letter from this gerry saying i had repay this 946.42 so this was only because of the money i got s.22

s.22

i hope my poor noneducational words are getting to what i am trying to say ?

so they feel that because of this money i got from goverment ,that i should use it to live off and not the "welfare" this isnt right as being trated fair with out jugdement to what my race is .as i know when it comes to 1st nations people have a diffrent out line for us and its less then the others .

but i have got intouch with others about me being trated as i did a big wrong when i didnt totally understand this trust and from what i was told from mr gerry dao "we dont get trusts like this " hmmm

i am only sharing what i feel .

hands up  
all my relations

s.22

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From: SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca

To: s.22

CC: Premier@gov.bc.ca

Subject: 189339 s. SDSI Response

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 2016 19:24:35 +0000

Ref: 189339

s.22

Dear s.22



Thank you for your email of March 15, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, regarding the repayment of a disability assistance debt. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, and we are pleased to respond.

We would like to be of assistance, but there was not enough information in your email for us to identify you as a client, and for a ministry staff member to contact you to discuss your concerns.

If you are able to write back with your full name and contact information, we can try to reach you accordingly.

For more immediate assistance, you may wish to contact an Employment and Assistance office, where staff are best able to assist you. A directory of offices across the province can be found at

[www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html).

You may also reach the ministry by calling 1-866-866-0800. This number is available from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and during the lunch period. Using this line, callers may now leave a call back number, keep their place in line and get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier

From: . . [mailto:s.22]

Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2016 8:26 AM

To: OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX

Subject: s.22

HELLO I AM IN NEED OF SOME INFO AND HOPEFULLY HELP

I AM s.22 UNDER THE s.22.....

.s.22

,s.22

WHAT I LIKE TO KNOW WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE WHO GET RES SCHOOL MONEYS - FROM BEING PUT INTO RES SCHOOL ?

WHAT I AM GETTING AT -- I WAS ON DISABILITY -- WELFARE--- AND UNDER THE OUT LINE --TRUST-- THERE WASNT REALLY ANY THING I COULD USE MONEYS ON---MY DISALITY IS s.22 ... AS I GOT MONEYS s.22 . I HAD TO USE THE MONEYS I DID

FINENALLY -- AFTER 13 YEARS OF GOING THROUGH THIS HELL AGAIN -- BUT I HAVE TO PAY BACK .. WELFARE .. DISABILITY 942.00 AND I DID SEND OVER 7000.00 TO GET TRUST , TO KEEP MY DISABILITY AND AS SAID BEFORE - WHAT I COULD USE THIS MONEY ON I DIDNT REALLY FALL UNDER WHAT WAS STATED ?

AND I DID TELL WELFARE I WAS GETTING THIS MONEY AND .WHEN I DID GET IT ..THE PEOPLE WHO HANDLE THE TRUSTS AND THE WELFARE FORCED MY HAND TO GET OFF WELFARE AND USE THIS LITTLE MONEY TO LIVE OFF . I AM JUST VERY CONFUSED AND FEELING LIKE BECAUSE I GOT THIS MONEY --s.22 ..... s.22

s.22 . THE DEPARTMENT WHO HANDLES THE TRUSTS - PUSHED ME INTO USING THIS MONEY TO LIVE OFF AND NOW I HAVE USED IT TO LIVE OFF MOST OF THIS LITTLE MONEY IS GONE

I HAVE BEEN CLEAN -- s.22 AS OF THIS DATE

AND BEING GOING TO TREATMENT CENTERS .DO THE SELF-CARE AND WORKING ON THE THINGS THAT WHERE PUT ON MY SELF-- AND MOTHER .. I KNOW MY WORDS MAYBE HARD TO UNDERSTAND AS I HAVE s.22

BUT I AM JUST FEEL LIKE THE THE PEOPLE WORK FOR WELFARE-DISABILTY AND WHO WORK TRUST  
DEPARTMENT CAME AFTER ME BECAUSE OF THIS LITTLE MONEY I DID GET FROM GOVERMENT FOR BEING  
ABUSED IN FOSTER HOME .

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

s.22

ALL MY RELATIONS

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 4:49 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

Hi my name is s.22 im wondering how to get on dissability income i have s.22  
s.22 together i just moved to the island about a month ago cant do any physical  
labour plz get back to me

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 31, 2016 8:42 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189416 s.2 SDSI Response

Ref: 189416

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 22, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, regarding eligibility for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits. Minister Stilwell has asked that we respond on her behalf, and we are pleased to do so.

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation has the mandate to help individuals and families in need and move people to sustainable employment. The ministry is also committed to providing continuous assistance to persons with disabilities who are not able to fully participate in the workforce.

The ministry supports persons with disabilities through the PWD designation under the BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) program. We are not able to comment on your eligibility for assistance, as this would have to be determined when you submit the required documents. The following general information on the PWD designation, however, may be helpful.

To receive the PWD designation, applicants must be at least 18 years of age, have a severe physical or mental impairment and be significantly restricted in their ability to perform daily living activities. These conditions must be confirmed by health professionals in British Columbia on the PWD designation application form. Assistance to persons with disabilities is income- and asset-tested, and the payment of assistance is based on ongoing financial eligibility.

You may view a sample PWD application form online at [www.eia.gov.bc.ca/pwd/apply.htm](http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/pwd/apply.htm). You may also access the online self-serve assessment and application tool at [www.eia.gov.bc.ca/bcea.htm](http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/bcea.htm) to gain more information about assistance programs, begin the application process and obtain an initial assessment of eligibility. For a list of current PWD rates, please visit [www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/mhr/da.htm](http://www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/mhr/da.htm).

The assessment of eligibility for the PWD designation is based solely on the information provided in the application form, so it is important that the completed application contains clear and detailed information regarding any medical conditions.

If you already have the PWD designation you do not have to reapply for PWD status. You will have to apply for disability assistance, however, so that your financial eligibility can be confirmed, before you can begin receiving monthly benefits.

Questions regarding your specific situation and eligibility for assistance are best addressed by ministry staff at your local Employment and Assistance office. A directory of offices across the province may be accessed online at [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html).

You may also reach the ministry by calling, toll free, 1-866-866-0800. Callers using this number now have the option of leaving a call back number and keep their place in line. They will also get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Social Innovation

---

**From:** s.22

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 4:49 PM

**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX

**Subject:**

Hi my name is s.22 im wondering how to get on dissability income i have s.22  
s.22 together i just moved to the island about a month ago cant do any physical  
labour plz get back to me

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 11:09 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** cpp disability clawback

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

Dear Minister Stilwell,

I was very much heartened to hear that your ministry will be looking into no longer clawing back benefits for those receiving support from Work Safe BC and and Cpp Survivor Benefits. I would also like to request that when you make these changes that you include those children who receive CPP benefits because their parents receive Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits. I am on disability and my s.22 , who is also disabled but on provincial disability gets s. CPP benefits, which are designed to help children further their education, clawed back whenever s. attempts to upgrade s. 2 education. We need to be doing everything we can as a society to help people on disability improve their lives and increase their independence. This change will help provide a small bit of extra income to those who are motivated enough to pursue their education. Attempts, by people with disabilities, to better themselves and become more productive and contributing members of our society should be rewarded, not penalized which is what the current system does. I look forward to hearing you announce this change. I realize that it does not involve large numbers of people but it will make a tremendous difference to those affected by this ongoing clawback.

Sincerely,  
s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 6:14 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PWD/CPP

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

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**From:** Ashton.MLA, Dan [<mailto:Dan.Ashton.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 2:06 PM  
**To:** Blake, Kristen SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PWD/CPP

Hi Kristen,

Please see forwarded letter from a constituent and this issue is something we get a lot of mail on here in Penticton. I thought maybe you could address this? If you respond could you please cc us to keep us in the loop?

Thanks,

*Sue Hopley*

Constituency Assistant to Dan Ashton, M.L.A.  
Penticton-Peachland  
210-300 Riverside Drive  
Penticton, B.C.  
V2A 9C9  
250-487-4400

[Sue.Hopley@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Sue.Hopley@leg.bc.ca)

**From:** S.22  
**Sent:** March 15, 2016 3:51 PM  
**To:** Ashton.MLA, Dan <[Dan.Ashton.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Dan.Ashton.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PWD/CPP

Dear Dan Ashton

I am a person with physical disabilities, I am currently receiving monies from the Province as well as survivors CPP.

My complete disbelief is this. The province deducts dollar for dollar of what I receive from CPP. Yet if a person on disability works they can make up to 800 monthly and collect from the province.

I am like so many others unable to work. Unable to get ahead and receive a "little" extra to live a "little" better. So why do I have to live below poverty and a person that can work can collect from the province and make a paycheck, without penalization? Seriously, not 1 person I have told this to agrees with the "rule"! It makes no sense at all.

I received a cheque of arrears from CPP and this is considered to be earnings and so now I have an overpayment which I have to pay back. I thought this was a cheque to help with funeral such cost, there for I did not claim, due to a letter saying I was not to receive arrears from CPP.

I believe there was a change in "yearly" allowable earnings.

Please take this info to the next "meeting" to discuss how we can "HELP" the poor from becoming poorer.

Very disturbing and unfair treatment of those who "are" disabled". This has become a matter that I believe is the government is forcing disabled persons to work that can not

s.22



**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 9, 2016 2:35 PM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Re: 188645 s.22 SDSI Response

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**AC:** ADM Draft. To RIPD-SPB for Bullet Points.

Dear Ms. Upton,

Thank you for your recent correspondence received today via email. I believe that you may have misunderstood my purpose for bringing this to Honourable Gibson's attention. It was not to go back onto Disability Assistance.

My purpose for addressing the concerns was that I found a flaw within the legislation and policy that required clarification for both your IA offices, as well as your Loss Risk Management Offices.

Those offices are under the understanding a person in receipt of Disability Assistance must be registered in the Self Employment if they are operating a business. Regardless if the business is incorporated, they classified all monies deposited into the incorporated business as income of the Disability Recipient. Regardless if I had overhead, expenses and wages to others paid out. Thus is the reason my disability Benefits were discontinued in October of 2015.

Perhaps you may want to enlighten your offices with respect to this. As well, as adjust my overpayment as required, as they determined all the monies the incorporated company made as my income and claimed I was overpaid and now owe a debt to your Ministry. This occurred both presently, as well as when I was in Prince George in 2007.

Also, how may I retain only Medical Benefits? I don't require money from Disability, as I am employed and I am making \$900.00 per month presently, I hope this will increase as my office gets busier.

Thank you so much for taking the time to look into this matter, and hopefully any other person that have had the same circumstances can be helped based on your ruling.

s.22

s.22

s.22

Important - Confidential Information from National People Locator. The sender intends that this electronic message is for exclusive use by the person to whom it is addressed. This message may contain information that is confidential or privileged and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not an intended recipient, be aware that any disclosure, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication, or the use of its contents, is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please immediately notify the sender of your inadvertent receipt and delete this message from all data storage systems. Thank you.

On Mar 9, 2016, at 1:44 PM, SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
<[SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:SDSI.ExecutiveCorrespondenceServices@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Ref: 188645

s.22

Dear I<sup>s.22</sup>

Thank you for enquiring with Simon Gibson, MLA for Abbotsford–Mission, on January 12, 2016, about regulations surrounding income received from an incorporated company. MLA Gibson has shared your concerns with the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, who has asked that I respond on her behalf. I am pleased to do so.

Disability assistance remains a payer of last resort program, which means that most sources of income and assets must be accessed and pursued by recipients before they rely on disability assistance. There are some exceptions, such as the earnings exemption.

As the owner of a business, in order to receive disability assistance, you are required to pursue any reasonable income or assets from that business that may be available to you. As the owner of an incorporated business, you may still be eligible for assistance.

You are not required to enroll in the Self-Employment Program. You do, however, need to report any income or assets transferred to you from your business. The Annual Earning Exemption will apply to any salary you receive from your business. If your business pays you a dividend or transfers assets to you, this may count as income without exemption and be deducted from your assistance.

The ministry has recently announced changes to disability assistance that will make it easier for clients to save and develop assets.

Individuals with the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation may now have a maximum of \$100,000 in assets. For a couple or family where two people have the PWD designation, the asset limit is now \$200,000.

Persons on disability assistance can now receive an inheritance or cash gifts without losing their assistance.

Restrictions on the use of trust funds have been eliminated.

These changes were requested during the Accessibility 2024 consultations, and the government is responding in order to help people with disabilities save for the future.

This builds on other changes we have made in the last year, such as annual earning exemptions, exempting child support and increasing earnings exemptions for people with children who have disabilities.

Should you wish to reapply for income assistance, please provide the requested documentation outlined in the ministry's letter to you.

For more information, I encourage you to contact your local Employment and Assistance office. A directory of offices across the province can be found at [www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html](http://www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/contacts/offices.html). You may also reach the ministry by calling, 1-866-866-0800, toll free. Callers using this number now have the option of leaving a call back number and keep their place in line. They will also get an up-front message of the expected wait time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Debi Upton  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Service Delivery Division  
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

cc: Simon Gibson, MLA, Abbotsford–Mission

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 2:06 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: How you make suicide more appealing.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** REPLY DIRECT (STAFF/CU SIGNATURE)

-----Original Message-----

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 27, 2016 1:35 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** How you make suicide more appealing.

Michelle, I don't think you're going to read this and I fully expect to get a canned response, but I figured I'd try anyways.

I went through a number of emotions after the bus pass program was drastically changed. Quite a bit of despair, anger and after seeing comments like the ones below, quite a bit of sadness. One person has been posting comments about their decision to commit suicide as a result of the openly hostile policies that your government has embraced while you have sat as minister.

Perhaps your goal and the goal of your party is to push the disabled into suicide or the much "cleaner" option of euthanasia. If so, it is working and come June, your efforts will begin to bear fruit. I'll end up on that list myself one day and I'll be sure to have the executor of my final wishes send you a note.

And before you discount my opinion as being fomented by the NDP, let me tell you that the NDP has failed the disabled equally by having such a spineless and worthless disability critic.

Sadly, this person in this thread will likely take their own life and die silently. No connection will be made to you and your policies. How I wish that were not true, because at least then, their life and death would mean something.

As your own twitter says... Silence is a perpetrator's best friend.

On Sat, Mar 26, 2016 at 5:46 AM, Anonymous <noreply-comment@blogger.com> wrote:

> Anonymous has left a new comment on the post "BC Budget Gives People  
> with Disabilities First Rat...":  
>

> Bill, let me be clear; It has taken herculean strength to make the  
> decision to take my own life, and it will take even greater courage to  
> accomplish it successfully. I don't want to die simply because I am  
> depressed due to a chemical imbalance in my brain. I want to die  
> because I am hungry, penniless, traumatized, soon-to-be homeless with  
> 2 little dogs that I cherish and love more than anything, and I happen  
> to live in the only province in Canada that does not have a human  
> rights commission. So where's the hope?  
>  
> I am quoting from a publication prepared by the BC Poverty Reduction  
> Coalition...  
>  
> "Basic civil and political rights, such as freedom of speech and the  
> right to vote, are relatively well protected in Canadian law, but  
> economic and social rights to basic necessities such as food, water,  
> housing, and education are routinely violated.  
> Without these rights secured, poverty is a barrier to accessing civil  
> and political rights in a meaningful and effective way. This has a  
> disproportionate impact on marginalized groups including women, LGBTQ  
> communities, racialized and Indigenous persons, and people with  
> disabilities, among others.  
> In 1976 Canada ratified the United Nations International Covenant of  
> Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Yet BC continues to have one of  
> the highest rates of poverty in Canada and is the very last province  
> in the country to commit to a comprehensive poverty reduction plan,  
> which would protect and fulfill those rights. It's time for our  
> governments to comply with their obligations under international law.  
>  
> The ONLY control I have left over my life is to take it.  
>  
> There is absolutely nothing I can do to change my circumstances for  
> the better; the government of the province of BC has made certain of  
> that, and has been allowed to do so for many years. It is nothing  
> short of a violation of human rights en masse, and to the point of barbarianism.  
>  
> With all due respect, it would take a lot more than a bus pass to even  
> remotely convince me that my life is worth living. It's degrading and  
> humiliating enough to be a member of a marginalized group of people,  
> who through no fault of their own are dependent upon support and  
> resources in order to survive. Add in the fact that my particular  
> group of marginalized people "the disabled", are habitually placed so  
> low on the government's list of priorities, that you'd have to look up to see the bottom!  
>  
> There are some things in life that are so beyond egregious and evil,  
> that the only thing that comes to mind is "a holocaust". This is one  
> of those situations, and I do not want to be a holocaust victim any more.  
>  
> Post a comment.

>

> Unsubscribe to comments on this post.

> Anonymous has left a new comment on the post "BC Budget Gives People with Disabilities First Rat...":

>

> SUICIDE. THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE. I GIVE UP. I'M TIRED OF BEING SICK,

> I'M TIRED OF BEING SO POOR I CAN'T AFFORD TOILET PAPER, I'M TIRED OF

> FEELING TERRIFIED 24/7 THAT I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MY RENT, I'M TIRED

> OF THINKING ABOUT THE FACT THAT I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO FUTURE, I'M TIRED

> OF FEELING LIKE IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING DISABLED, AND BY VIRTUE OF

> THAT, I SHOULD BE PUNISHED TO THE POINT OF STARVATION AND

> HOMELESSNESS. I APOLOGIZE FOR BEING A BURDEN ON THE BC PROVINCIAL

> GOVERNMENT, IT WON'T BE LONG NOW. IT'S MORE THAN OBVIOUS THAT DISABLED

> PEOPLE ARE CLEARLY BEING PUNISHED FOR THE "BURDEN" THEY ARE ON

> SOCIETY. THEREFORE, HERE IS MY MESSAGE TO THE BC GOVERNMENT..."YOU

> WIN. YOUR PLAN IS WORKING, BUT YOU SHOULD REALLY WAIT UNTIL YOU DO A

> FINAL BODY COUNT BEFORE YOU CAN CLAIM VICTORY AND START CRACKING OPEN

> THE CHAMPAGNE.GIVE IT ANOTHER 6 MONTHS, THEN YOU CAN HAVE A BIG PARTY

> TO COUNT ALL THE MONEY THE PROVINCE HAS SAVED. EVEN BETTER, ONCE ALL

> OF US GOOD-FOR-NOTHING DISABLED PEOPLE CLEAR OUT AND KILL OURSELVES,

> THAT WILL FREE UP SOME HOUSING AND A FEW MORE DOLLARS TO CONTRIBUTE

> TOWARD NEW REFUGEES, WHO EVIDENTLY SEEM TO BE MORE WORTHY OF RECEIVING

> COMPASSION, HOUSING, MONEY, SUPPORT, ETC., THAN ME...A BORN AND BRED

> DISABLED BRITISH COLUMBIAN. I KNOW, I GET IT, COMPASSION, HOUSING,

> MONEY AND SUPPORT IS ONLY DOLED OUT TO THOSE WHO WILL ATTRACT

> INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION, AND SUBSEQUENTLY MORE TOURISTS AND RICH HOME

> BUYERS. BC'S DISABLED AND MARGINALIZED CITIZENS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A

> LAST PRIORITY - THE PROVINCE'S DIRTY LITTLE SECRET...READ MY

> LIPS...ARMAGEDDON...I MEAN THE D O W N T O W N E A S T S I D E. THIS

> GOVERNMENT IS NOTHING BUT AN INSENSITIVE, DISCONNECTED AND HEARTLESS

> PACK OF NAZIS, AND THAT'S A COMPLIMENT! GOOD RIDDANCE

## **D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Nelson, Greg <Greg.Nelson@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 3:24 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX; Huck, Ron LASS:EX; Taylor, Kathy J LASS:EX; Ennis, Randall LASS:EX  
**Subject:** RE: How you make suicide more appealing.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Thanks Jeff. There is nothing much I can do about this since the suicide note is from an unknown source (noreply-comment@blogger.com) forwarded by s.22 I did find the on-line blog at: <http://billtieleman.blogspot.ca/2016/02/bc-budget-gives-people-with.html> and checked farther into the correspondence in event of identifying information but no luck.

Greg

Friday, 18 March 2016 at 00:54:00 GMT-7

Anonymous said...

SUICIDE. THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE. I GIVE UP. I'M TIRED OF BEING SICK, I'M TIRED OF BEING SO POOR I CAN'T AFFORD TOILET PAPER, I'M TIRED OF FEELING TERRIFIED 24/7 THAT I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MY RENT, I'M TIRED OF THINKING ABOUT THE FACT THAT I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO FUTURE, I'M TIRED OF FEELING LIKE IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING DISABLED, AND BY VIRTUE OF THAT, I SHOULD BE PUNISHED TO THE POINT OF STARVATION AND HOMELESSNESS. I APOLOGIZE FOR BEING A BURDEN ON THE BC PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, IT WON'T BE LONG NOW. IT'S MORE THAN OBVIOUS THAT DISABLED PEOPLE ARE CLEARLY BEING PUNISHED FOR THE "BURDEN" THEY ARE ON SOCIETY. THEREFORE, HERE IS MY MESSAGE TO THE BC GOVERNMENT..."YOU WIN. YOUR PLAN IS WORKING, BUT YOU SHOULD REALLY WAIT UNTIL YOU DO A FINAL BODY COUNT BEFORE YOU CAN CLAIM VICTORY AND START CRACKING OPEN THE CHAMPAGNE.GIVE IT ANOTHER 6 MONTHS, THEN YOU CAN HAVE A BIG PARTY TO COUNT ALL THE MONEY THE PROVINCE HAS SAVED. EVEN BETTER, ONCE ALL OF US GOOD-FOR-NOTHING DISABLED PEOPLE CLEAR OUT AND KILL OURSELVES, THAT WILL FREE UP SOME HOUSING AND A FEW MORE DOLLARS TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARD NEW REFUGEES, WHO EVIDENTLY SEEM TO BE MORE WORTHY OF RECEIVING COMPASSION, HOUSING, MONEY, SUPPORT, ETC., THAN ME...A BORN AND BRED DISABLED BRITISH COLUMBIAN. I KNOW, I GET IT, COMPASSION, HOUSING, MONEY AND SUPPORT IS ONLY DOLED OUT TO THOSE WHO WILL ATTRACT INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION, AND SUBSEQUENTLY MORE TOURISTS AND RICH HOME BUYERS. BC'S DISABLED AND MARGINALIZED CITIZENS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LAST PRIORITY - THE PROVINCE'S DIRTY LITTLE SECRET...READ MY LIPS...ARMAGEDDON...I MEAN THE D O W N T O W N E A S T S I D E. THIS GOVERNMENT IS NOTHING BUT AN INSENSITIVE, DISCONNECTED AND HEARTLESS PACK OF NAZIS, AND THAT'S A COMPLIMENT! GOOD RIDDANCE Thursday, 24 March 2016 at 01:57:00 GMT-7 disabled mom said...

Anonymous, don't give up, never give up

Thursday, 24 March 2016 at 18:35:00 GMT-7 Bill Tieleman said...

I strongly agree with disabled mom - anonymous Thursday at 1:57 - please do not give up - many of us are fighting to win back bus passes and restore dignity to people with disabilities. Your anger is understandable, your frustration well founded but please stay with us for this fight.

Thursday, 24 March 2016 at 22:31:00 GMT-7 Anonymous said...

Bill, let me be clear; It has taken herculean strength to make the decision to take my own life, and it will take even greater courage to accomplish it successfully. I don't want to die simply because I am depressed due to a chemical imbalance in my brain. I want to die because I am hungry, penniless, traumatized, soon-to-be homeless with 2 little dogs that I cherish and love more than anything, and I happen to live in the only province in Canada that does not have a human rights commission. So where's the hope?

I am quoting from a publication prepared by the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition...

"Basic civil and political rights, such as freedom of speech and the right to vote, are relatively well protected in Canadian law, but economic and social rights to basic necessities such as food, water, housing, and education are routinely violated.

Without these rights secured, poverty is a barrier to accessing civil and political rights in a meaningful and effective way. This has a disproportionate impact on marginalized groups including women, LGBTQ communities, racialized and Indigenous persons, and people with disabilities, among others.

In 1976 Canada ratified the United Nations International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Yet BC continues to have one of the highest rates of poverty in Canada and is the very last province in the country to commit to a comprehensive poverty reduction plan, which would protect and fulfill those rights. It's time for our governments to comply with their obligations under international law.

The ONLY control I have left over my life is to take it.

There is absolutely nothing I can do to change my circumstances for the better; the government of the province of BC has made certain of that, and has been allowed to do so for many years. It is nothing short of a violation of human rights en mass, and to the point of barbarianism.

With all due respect, it would take a lot more than a bus pas to even remotely convince me that my life is worth living. It's degrading and humiliating enough to be a member of a marginalized group of people, who through no fault of their own are dependent upon support and resources in order to survive. Add in the fact that my particular group of marginalized people "the disabled", are habitually placed so low on the government's list of priorities, that you'd have to look up to see the bottom!

There are some things in life that are so beyond egregious and evil, that the only thing that comes to mind is "a holocaust". This is one of those situations, and I do not want to be a holocaust victim any more.

Saturday, 26 March 2016 at 05:30:00 GMT-7 disabled mom said...

I posted your reply on my face book group. Here are a comments people left.

So Sorry you Feel this Way, & No your not the Only One, Some How Keep Busy or Just Go Out & Enjoy the Beautiful SUN & Remember There are Other s that are Worse OFF Than you Hugs

That is how all of us felt this way too. You are not alone. Find a way to fight this demons inside of you. Go back to school or job training. Get some professional help.



i understand the thought. i contemplated the same but then i reminded myself suicide is NOT an option. because if we choose to end our life, we have to come back to a 3d world with three times more intensity. and i'm pretty sure my soul did in the past, and i sort of vaguely remember the void souls go, after suicide. it all looks like its all doom and gloom in this current paradigm. but not so. fairly soon, we will all be lifted up to 5d. that keeps me going

Saturday, 26 March 2016 at 08:03:00 GMT-7 disabled mom said...

i understand the thought. i contemplated the same but then i reminded myself suicide is NOT an option. because if we choose to end our life, we have to come back to a 3d world with three times more intensity. and i'm pretty sure my soul did in the past, and i sort of vaguely remember the void souls go, after suicide. it all looks like its all doom and gloom in this current paradigm. but not so. fairly soon, we will all be lifted up to 5d. that keeps me going

That is how all of us felt this way too. You are not alone. Find a way to fight this demons inside of you. Go back to school or job training. Get some professional help.

So Sorry you Feel this Way, & No your not the Only One, Some How Keep Busy or Just Go Out & Enjoy the Beautiful SUN & Remember There are Other s that are Worse OFF Than you Hugs Saturday, 26 March 2016 at 08:07:00 GMT-7 Post a Comment

-----Original Message-----

From: Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX [mailto:SD.Minister@gov.bc.ca]

Sent: March 30, 2016 14:03

To: Nelson, Greg <Greg.Nelson@leg.bc.ca>; Huck, Ron <Ron.Huck@leg.bc.ca>; Taylor, Kathy <Kathy.Taylor@leg.bc.ca>; Ennis, Randall <Randall.Ennis@leg.bc.ca>

Subject: FW: How you make suicide more appealing.

Hi everyone,

Found this letter concerning. We will be drafting a response from the Minister but I wanted to show you for your review.

Thanks,

Jeff Keene | Administrative Assistant to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
Phone: (250-356-7750)

-----Original Message-----

From: Bryce, Krista D [mailto:Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca]  
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2016 2:06 PM  
To: Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
Subject: FW: How you make suicide more appealing.

-----Original Message-----

From: s.22  
Sent: March 27, 2016 1:35 PM  
To: Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
Subject: How you make suicide more appealing.

Michelle, I don't think you're going to read this and I fully expect to get a canned response, but I figured I'd try anyways.

I went through a number of emotions after the bus pass program was drastically changed. Quite a bit of despair, anger and after seeing comments like the ones below, quite a bit of sadness. One person has been posting comments about their decision to commit suicide as a result of the openly hostile policies that your government has embraced while you have sat as minister.

Perhaps your goal and the goal of your party is to push the disabled into suicide or the much "cleaner" option of euthanasia. If so, it is working and come June, your efforts will begin to bear fruit. I'll end up on that list myself one day and I'll be sure to have the executor of my final wishes send you a note.

And before you discount my opinion as being fomented by the NDP, let me tell you that the NDP has failed the disabled equally by having such a spineless and worthless disability critic.

Sadly, this person in this thread will likely take their own life and die silently. No connection will be made to you and your policies. How I wish that were not true, because at least then, their life and death would mean something.

As your own twitter says... Silence is a perpetrator's best friend.

On Sat, Mar 26, 2016 at 5:46 AM, Anonymous <noreply-comment@blogger.com> wrote:

> Anonymous has left a new comment on the post "BC Budget Gives People  
> with Disabilities First Rat...":  
>  
> Bill, let me be clear; it has taken herculean strength to make the  
> decision to take my own life, and it will take even greater courage to  
> accomplish it successfully. I don't want to die simply because I am  
> depressed due to a chemical imbalance in my brain. I want to die  
> because I am hungry, penniless, traumatized, soon-to-be homeless with  
> 2 little dogs that I cherish and love more than anything, and I happen  
> to live in the only province in Canada that does not have a human

> rights commission. So where's the hope?

>

> I am quoting from a publication prepared by the BC Poverty Reduction

> Coalition...

>

> "Basic civil and political rights, such as freedom of speech and the

> right to vote, are relatively well protected in Canadian law, but

> economic and social rights to basic necessities such as food, water,

> housing, and education are routinely violated.

> Without these rights secured, poverty is a barrier to accessing civil

> and political rights in a meaningful and effective way. This has a

> disproportionate impact on marginalized groups including women, LGBTQ

> communities, racialized and Indigenous persons, and people with

> disabilities, among others.

> In 1976 Canada ratified the United Nations International Covenant of

> Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Yet BC continues to have one of

> the highest rates of poverty in Canada and is the very last province

> in the country to commit to a comprehensive poverty reduction plan,

> which would protect and fulfill those rights. It's time for our

> governments to comply with their obligations under international law.

>

> The ONLY control I have left over my life is to take it.

>

> There is absolutely nothing I can do to change my circumstances for

> the better; the government of the province of BC has made certain of

> that, and has been allowed to do so for many years. It is nothing

> short of a violation of human rights en mass, and to the point of barbarianism.

>

> With all due respect, it would take a lot more than a bus pas to even

> remotely convince me that my life is worth living. It's degrading and

> humiliating enough to be a member of a marginalized group of people,

> who through no fault of their own are dependent upon support and

> resources in order to survive. Add in the fact that my particular

> group of marginalized people "the disabled", are habitually placed so

> low on the government's list of priorities, that you'd have to look up to see the bottom!

>

> There are some things in life that are so beyond egregious and evil,

> that the only thing that comes to mind is "a holocaust". This is one

> of those situations, and I do not want to be a holocaust victim any more.

>

> Post a comment.

>

> Unsubscribe to comments on this post.

>

> Anonymous has left a new comment on the post "BC Budget Gives People with Disabilities First Rat...":

>

> SUICIDE. THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE. I GIVE UP. I'M TIRED OF BEING SICK,

> I'M TIRED OF BEING SO POOR I CAN'T AFFORD TOILET PAPER, I'M TIRED OF

> FEELING TERRIFIED 24/7 THAT I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MY RENT, I'M TIRED  
> OF THINKING ABOUT THE FACT THAT I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO FUTURE, I'M TIRED  
> OF FEELING LIKE IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING DISABLED, AND BY VIRTUE OF  
> THAT, I SHOULD BE PUNISHED TO THE POINT OF STARVATION AND  
> HOMELESSNESS. I APOLOGIZE FOR BEING A BURDEN ON THE BC PROVINCIAL  
> GOVERNMENT, IT WON'T BE LONG NOW. IT'S MORE THAN OBVIOUS THAT DISABLED  
> PEOPLE ARE CLEARLY BEING PUNISHED FOR THE "BURDEN" THEY ARE ON  
> SOCIETY. THEREFORE, HERE IS MY MESSAGE TO THE BC GOVERNMENT..."YOU  
> WIN. YOUR PLAN IS WORKING, BUT YOU SHOULD REALLY WAIT UNTIL YOU DO A  
> FINAL BODY COUNT BEFORE YOU CAN CLAIM VICTORY AND START CRACKING OPEN  
> THE CHAMPAGNE.GIVE IT ANOTHER 6 MONTHS, THEN YOU CAN HAVE A BIG PARTY  
> TO COUNT ALL THE MONEY THE PROVINCE HAS SAVED. EVEN BETTER, ONCE ALL  
> OF US GOOD-FOR-NOTHING DISABLED PEOPLE CLEAR OUT AND KILL OURSELVES,  
> THAT WILL FREE UP SOME HOUSING AND A FEW MORE DOLLARS TO CONTRIBUTE  
> TOWARD NEW REFUGEES, WHO EVIDENTLY SEEM TO BE MORE WORTHY OF RECEIVING  
> COMPASSION, HOUSING, MONEY, SUPPORT, ETC., THAN ME...A BORN AND BRED  
> DISABLED BRITISH COLUMBIAN. I KNOW, I GET IT, COMPASSION, HOUSING,  
> MONEY AND SUPPORT IS ONLY DOLED OUT TO THOSE WHO WILL ATTRACT  
> INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION, AND SUBSEQUENTLY MORE TOURISTS AND RICH HOME  
> BUYERS. BC'S DISABLED AND MARGINALIZED CITIZENS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A  
> LAST PRIORITY - THE PROVINCE'S DIRTY LITTLE SECRET...READ MY  
> LIPS...ARMAGEDDON...I MEAN THE D O W N T O W N E A S T S I D E. THIS  
> GOVERNMENT IS NOTHING BUT AN INSENSITIVE, DISCONNECTED AND HEARTLESS  
> PACK OF NAZIS, AND THAT'S A COMPLIMENT! GOOD RIDDANCE

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** De Whalen <s.22 ->  
**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2016 8:05 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Reid.MLA, Linda LASS:EX; Yap.MLA, John LASS:EX; Wat.MLA, Teresa LASS:EX  
**Cc:** Margaret Hewlett; John Roeder; / s.22  
**Subject:** Letter to Premier re: PWD Bus Pass  
**Attachments:** PWD Bus pass letter to Clark Mar 2016.doc

March 28, 2016

Premier Christy Clark  
Linda Reid, MLA Richmond East and Speaker  
John Yap, MLA Richmond Steveston  
Teresa Wat, MLA Richmond Centre

Greetings:

I am sending you this letter on behalf of the Richmond Poverty Response Committee (PRC). We are very concerned that your government is treating persons with disabilities (PWD) badly by giving them a small income increase and then clawing it back through a new fee for the transit pass.

Most persons with disabilities are doubly disadvantaged by the effects of poverty. Taking away their primary means to counteract social isolation and participate fully in society is just plain mean.

We urge your government to reverse the decision on the PWD bus pass. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Deirdre Whalen  
Chair, Richmond PRC

cc. Richmond PRC Executive Committee and Staff

s.22

"Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can quietly become a power no government can suppress, a power that can transform the world." Howard Zinn, 2010

March 24, 2016  
Premier Christy Clark  
West Annex, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
Dear Premier Clark:  
**Re: Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Bus Pass fee increase**

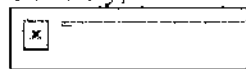
The Richmond Poverty Response Committee (PRC) is writing to urge the BC government to roll back their decision on the Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Bus Pass fee increase.

The Richmond PRC is very disappointed that the Government's recent budget has dramatically increased the fee for the PWD Bus Pass. The 0.08% rise in disability rates is welcomed, but it is mostly cancelled out by the nearly 1500% increase in cost for the Bus Pass.

People with disabilities already deal with significant challenges and are disproportionately represented in people experiencing the effects of poverty. Hiking the Bus Pass fee will force them to choose between paying for food, paying their rent or having access to transit. Implementing this cost increase is both cruel and antithetical to good governance. For many people with disabilities your government's decision will increase the probability of social isolation. Even those with strong support networks will be negatively affected if they have to rely on others to get them around. Increasing the cost of the Bus Pass places additional burdens on people who are already dealing with far too many burdens. To quote one of our Richmond residents, "the Bus Pass was the one part of PWD that worked perfectly."

The Richmond PRC urges you to reconsider your decision. Increasing PWD rates should not mean clawing it back through the Bus Pass program, particularly when British Columbia projects a strong surplus. Surely a province that boasts of having the highest economic growth in Canada should not build its surplus on the backs of the disabled.

Sincerely,

A rectangular box with a dashed border and a small 'x' icon in the top-left corner, used to redact a signature.

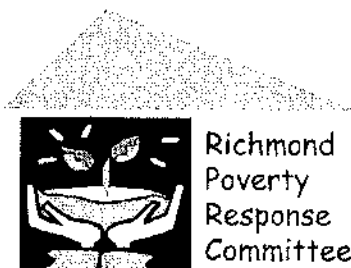
Deirdre Whalen

Chair, Richmond Poverty Response Committee

cc. Richmond PRC Executive Committee

City of Richmond, Mayor and Council

Richmond Centre for Disability



March 24, 2016

Premier Christy Clark  
West Annex, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Premier Clark:

**Re: Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Bus Pass fee increase**

The Richmond Poverty Response Committee (PRC) is writing to urge the BC government to roll back their decision on the Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Bus Pass fee increase.

The Richmond PRC is very disappointed that the Government's recent budget has dramatically increased the fee for the PWD Bus Pass. The 0.08% rise in disability rates is welcomed, but it is mostly cancelled out by the nearly 1500% increase in cost for the Bus Pass.

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The Richmond PRC urges you to reconsider your decision. Increasing PWD rates should not mean clawing it back through the Bus Pass program, particularly when British Columbia projects a strong surplus. Surely a province that boasts of having the highest economic growth in Canada should not build its surplus on the backs of the disabled.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deirdre Whalen".

Deirdre Whalen  
Chair, Richmond Poverty Response Committee

cc. Richmond PRC Executive Committee  
City of Richmond, Mayor and Council  
Richmond Centre for Disability



## Valley Integration to Active Living Society (V.I.T.A.L.S.)

March 22, 2016

Honourable Christy Clark, MLA  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark:

### **RE: BC Budget 2016 – Disability Assistance Rates and Transportation Programs**

We are writing in response to your government's budget, tabled on February 16, 2016, which announced a modest increase of \$77 to persons with disabilities benefits while also drastically changing important programs that improve access to transportation for many people with disabilities. For the reasons set out in this letter, our organizations strongly oppose the changes to the BC Bus Pass Program and the Special Transportation Subsidy. We call on the government to leave these programs in place, and to provide a meaningful rate increase for all income assistance and disability assistance recipients.

The BC Bus Pass Program currently offers an annual bus pass at a reduced cost of \$45 per year for disability assistance recipients in areas where BC Transit and Translink operate. The Special Transportation Subsidy provides a lump sum subsidy to people who reside in an area where the Bus Pass Program operates, but are unable to use public transit because of a disability, to help offset the cost of alternative transportation. Approximately 55,000 of the 100,000 provincial disability assistance recipients rely on one of these two transportation programs. Our organizations all work directly with people with disabilities, and are acutely aware of the importance of these programs to ensure people are able to move about their communities, whether that be to shop for basic necessities, attend medical appointments, or take part in social gatherings.

As you know, those who rely on these programs will now be charged \$52/month for a bus pass, or \$66/month for the Special Transportation Subsidy. This means that for those recipients, the rate increase is actually only \$25 or \$11, respectively. Further, the government has said that it will still charge the \$45 per year "administrative fee" on top of that. Promoting the change as a \$77 increase to disability rates is misleading and unfair.

While the government maintains that its aim is to make the system fairer for people with disabilities who do not currently receive support for transportation, the proposed changes are not the right approach. It has been almost a decade since the government has increased income assistance and disability rates—and at \$906 per month, disability assistance rates in BC are among the lowest in the country. In Alberta, for example, the government increased the comparable disability benefit (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)) to \$1588 in 2012. The recently announced \$77 increase to BC's disability assistance rates would be a welcome (if inadequate) change, if it were truly providing that increase to all. It would only cost an additional \$14-20 million to provide the \$77 increase to all disability assistance recipients and also maintain the current transportation programs.

When the change was announced, the Honourable Minister of Finance Michael de Jong spoke about how it would allow those on disability assistance "the freedom to make their own choice about how to





## Valley Integration to Active Living Society (V.I.T.A.L.S.)

meet their own unique transportation needs". For many living in poverty in BC, this is not a real choice. While the \$77 increase will undeniably help those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate, it creates an impossible choice for those that do rely on these transportation programs. With disability assistance frozen at a paltry \$906 per month—an amount clearly inadequate to meet basic needs—it will be difficult not to opt to put the \$77 each month toward previously unmet needs like food or rent. The Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy allowed vulnerable members of our communities to make a \$45 purchase once per year, and then have a reliable method of transportation year-round. The proposed changes to these programs will result in social isolation for those who "choose" not to renew, particularly for those with disabilities that restrict their mobility.

Finally, we are concerned about implementation of the proposed changes, which will inevitably be fraught with practical problems for both disability assistance recipients and Ministry staff. Over the last several years, there has been a radical shift from in-person services at local Ministry offices to services that are primarily delivered through a centralized phone line and over the internet. Wait times on the phone line are long, and many users of Ministry services lack the reliable phone or computer access required to access the services—and may also lack the capacity to navigate the new systems. It is difficult to reach Ministry staff at all, let alone the appropriate staff for a particular matter. Many that rely on the current transportation programs fear they will be unable to access Ministry staff in a timely way to resolve the issues that arise, and that staff will be ill-equipped to address the problems.

As our provincial government tabled its budget, it celebrated BC's strong financial outlook. Minister de Jong emphasized that BC is in a position to "offer greater support to the most vulnerable among us." It is long past due for the government to make real commitments to do just that – and to share some of this province's wealth with the members of our communities that need it most.

Our organizations collectively urge you to:

- Bring back the \$45 per year bus pass for people with disabilities;
- Eliminate the new \$52/month bus pass fee;
- Allow everyone receiving PWD benefits to keep the \$77/month increase;
- Introduce a rural transportation subsidy for those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate; and
- Raise income and disability assistance significantly by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living, and index to inflation.

Sincerely,



Tim Coogan

For the Board of Directors of Valley Integration To Active Living Society

cc. Hon. Mike de Jong, MLA, Minister of Finance  
Hon. Michelle Stilwell, MLA, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
John Horgan, MLA, Leader of the Opposition  
Bill Routley, MLA, Cowichan Valley

Chilliwack People First  
c/o 9353 Mary St.  
Chilliwack, B.C. V2P4G9

Mar 15, 2016

Hon. Michelle Stilwell  
Ministry of Social Development  
Rm 247 Parliament Building  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Stilwell,

We are writing to you about the announcement of an increase in the PWD allowance in September of \$77. a month. That is an 8.5 % increase after almost 9 years. This small amount doesn't come close to making up for the large increases in our costs of rent, utilities, groceries, etc. For a person who is not employed the costs of rent and utilities now take about 75% of their total income, leaving little for food and other needs.

The increases in allowable earnings have been a help to those who have paid employment, but are not any help to those without jobs.

Then we heard that the disability bus pass cost will be raised from \$45. a year to \$669. Almost 1500%! This huge jump in the transportation costs takes back more than 2/3 of the small allowance increase, leaving us with a less than 3% raise after all this time. Almost all of our members use the the annual bus pass and it is their link to the rest of the community. Some are now having to decide whether having a monthly pass is worth it. This is not helping people who live with disabilities stay connected in our community.

A more reasonable improvement in the monthly allowance would be 15-20% (after 9 years) to \$1087. and leave the bus pass subsidy at \$45. a year. This would more closely help with the many increases in our costs of living.

We know that you are trying to help and that the government has limited amount of taxpayer money to spread around. What you are proposing does not help.

Respectfully,

The members of Chilliwack People First s.22  
s.22

cc: Premier Christy Clark, MLA John Martin s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** Anderson, Celine FIN:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 3:19 PM  
**To:** SDSI Executive Correspondence Services SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** Redirect from FIN: Disabled Bus Pass Clarification  
**Attachments:** FW: Disabled Bus Pass Clarification-- s.22 --SDSI Confirmation

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**AC: Add to 189418**

Hello,

Sending to SDSI for handling.

Thank you,

*Celine Anderson*

Correspondence Coordinator  
Ministerial Correspondence Section  
Ministry of Finance  
phone 604-660-3548

[Correspondence Intranet page](#) |

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 1:45 PM  
**To:** Minister, FIN FIN:EX  
**Subject:** Disabled Bus Pass Clarification

Dear Sir

Just a clarification on the increase in bus pass costs for disabled people. As of September 2016, I will have to pay \$52.00 per month for a pass in addition to the \$42.00 per year administrative fee.

However, in my community monthly bus passes for non disabled are cheaper and cost \$42.00 per month. As I am disabled but not stupid, of course I am going to purchase the non disabled pass, thereby saving myself \$120.00 per year. Since I do not wish to avail myself of the higher priced disabled bus pass, of course I will be exempted from paying the \$42.00 per year fee. I will now have an extra \$21.00 per month instead of \$11.00.

If I am not exempted that amounts to discrimination based on my disability. Another part of this badly thought out and ill spirited claw back.

Please confirm the above.

Thanks

s.22

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**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** FIN OFFICE FIN:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 23, 2016 12:38 PM  
**To:** s.22,  
**Cc:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Disabled Bus Pass Clarification  
  
**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

349808

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of February 24, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Michael de Jong, Q.C., Minister of Finance. Please accept our apology for the delay in responding.

Your inquiry falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation. We have forwarded your correspondence to the Honourable Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, for response.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Finance

cc: Honourable Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 1:45 PM  
**To:** Minister, FIN FIN:EX  
**Subject:** Disabled Bus Pass Clarification

Dear Sir

Just a clarification on the increase in bus pass costs for disabled people. As of September 2016, I will have to pay \$52.00 per month for a pass in addition to the \$42.00 per year administrative fee.

However, in my community monthly bus passes for non disabled are cheaper and cost \$42.00 per month. As I am disabled but not stupid, of course I am going to purchase the non disabled pass, thereby saving myself \$120.00 per year. Since I do not wish to avail myself of the higher priced disabled bus pass, of course I will be exempted from paying the \$42.00 per year fee. I will now have an extra \$21.00 per month instead of \$11.00.

If I am not exempted that amounts to discrimination based on my disability. Another part of this badly thought out and ill spirited claw back.

Please confirm the above.

Thanks  
s.22

*This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender immediately. This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If you are not the named addressee, you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this email. Please notify the sender immediately by email if you have received this email by mistake and delete this email from your system. If you are not the intended recipient, you are notified that disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited*

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Bryce, Krista D <Krista.Bryce@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 23, 2016 11:40 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Transit Passes for PWD

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

-----Original Message-----

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 22, 2016 6:22 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** michelle.mungal.mla@leg.bc.ca; Opposition Leader <oppositionleader@leg.bc.ca>; Clark.MLA, Christy <Christy.Clark.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Transit Passes for PWD

Michelle Stilwell,

I am writing in the hopes that your government has reconsidered its position of taking away the \$45/ year bus pass used by persons with disabilities.

Raising their rates by \$77 only to then ask them to give back \$52 a month to purchase a monthly bus pass fall short of highway robbery! That \$52 could have gone far in beginning to catch up with the cost of living.

If, as you claim, this is all about equity and choices, then perhaps you should remove the \$45/ year pass for low income seniors too? Hech, why not ask everyone to pay \$624/ year to use transit. But, Gordon Campbell tried that a few years ago and we heard the public outcry from the seniors then.....so this time your government decided to remove the pass from those who often cannot speak for themselves.....shame on you! I for one, cannot believe that there aren't Liberal MLAs who are not as equally disgusted with your decision and remain silent! Anyone with enough intelligence and understanding should know that this is not right.

The cost and hardship of removing the \$45 yearly pass is ONLY one of the issues. It is also an issue of inclusion, participation and safety. The pass allows PWD an affordable way to get around their community without the added confusion of having to use a transfer or handling cash. Many PWD who are unable to secure paid employment are the backbone of volunteerism in our community working at our food banks, hospitals and recycling programs, to name a few. They also attend many educational, cultural and recreation programs which allow them to congregate with others in a social environment. Taking away this affordable transit pass will impact on their ability to participate in our community. It is also an issue of SAFETY. if they choice to keep their \$77 and pay their \$2.50 as they go on transit, they are vulnerable to having to open up their wallets and purses in public to look for their cash...this just makes the already vulnerable more vulnerable! If they use a ticket, they also require a transfer, which may easily misplaced or lost.

If their are PWD living in communities without access to transit systems and if this this is truly why you have made this decision, then I respectfully suggest that you DEAL with their "transportation" needs, BUT leave those with disabilities who have the capacity to use transit systems, alone and give them back their \$45/year

passes. The only alternative is for PWD to return to the paratransit / handy-dart system ( at least they would get door to door service for their \$2.50 ride)! That is NEITHER a viable or realistic alternative as the Handy-dart service is already under increasing pressure to provide to service as it is.

So, in the spirit of true fairness, give back the \$45/ year pass to PWD.

Respectfully,

s.22 I have sent a copy of this message, for what it  
is worth, to my local MLA, Christy Clark

Sent from my iPad



## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

---

**From:** Clark.MLA, Christy <Christy.Clark.MLA@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 31, 2016 1:37 PM  
**To:** s.22 Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** RE: New submission from Contact Your Constituency Office  
**Attachments:** Re: Automatic reply: New submission from Contact Your Constituency Office; Transit Passes for PWD  
  
**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Good afternoon s.22

On behalf of the Hon. Christy Clark, MLA (Westside-Kelowna) thank you for your email. MLA Clark is currently away from the constituency office. However, we see you have included the Hon. Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation in your emails. We are confident Minister Stilwell will address your concerns.

Should you have any further questions regarding your inquiry please contact the office at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for taking the time to contact your local constituency office.

Regards,

OFFICE OF THE HON. CHRISTY CLARK, MLA  
Westside-Kelowna  
(T) 250.768.8426  
(F) 250.768.8436  
(W) [www.christyclarkmla.bc.ca](http://www.christyclarkmla.bc.ca)

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 1, 2016 1:35 PM  
**To:** Clark.MLA, Christy  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Your Constituency Office

### Name

s.22

### Email

s.22

### Riding

West side- Kelowna

### Comments & Feedback

Christy, Please explain to me why seniors who live on low and fixed incomes (OAS +GIS) which along with their CPP = \$1,400 a month making them eligible for the annual \$45 bus pass get to keep their bus

pass, while your government expects persons with disabilities whose incomes are less than \$1,000 a month to now pay \$624 a year ( 12 passes X \$52 a month) for transit? If your decision is truly, as you say about equity.....then take away the seniors bus pass! Or just give the disabled their rate increase of \$77 ( first increase in over 9 years) and leave their bus pass alone.

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 1, 2016 3:21 PM  
**To:** Clark.MLA, Christy LASS:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Automatic reply: New submission from Contact Your Constituency Office

s.22

Sent from my iPad

> On Mar 1, 2016, at 1:36 PM, Clark.MLA, Christy <[Christy.Clark.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Christy.Clark.MLA@leg.bc.ca)> wrote:  
>  
> This automated response is to confirm your email has been received by MLA Christy Clark's constituency office.  
>  
> In order to receive a timely response, please assist us by including your name, address with postal code and telephone number.  
>  
> Thank you for sharing your concerns with our office; your input is important and appreciated.  
>  
> Regards,  
>  
> Office of the Hon. Christy Clark, MLA  
> Westside-Kelowna  
> 3-2429 Dobbin Road  
> West Kelowna, BC V4T 2L4  
> Tel: 250-768-8426  
> Fax: 250-768-8436  
> Web: [christyclarkmlabc.ca](http://christyclarkmlabc.ca)  
>  
>

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 6:22 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle LASS:EX  
**Cc:** michelle.mungal.mla@leg.bc.ca; Opposition Leader; Clark.MLA, Christy LASS:EX  
**Subject:** Transit Passes for PWD

Michelle Stilwell,

I am writing in the hopes that your government has reconsidered its position of taking away the \$45/ year bus pass used by persons with disabilities.

Raising their rates by \$77 only to then ask them to give back \$52 a month to purchase a monthly bus pass fall short of highway robbery! That \$52 could have gone far in beginning to catch up with the cost of living.

If, as you claim, this is all about equity and choices, then perhaps you should remove the \$45/ year pass for low income seniors too? Hech, why not ask everyone to pay \$624/ year to use transit. But, Gordon Campbell tried that a few years ago and we heard the public outcry from the seniors then....so this time your government decided to remove the pass from those who often cannot speak for themselves.....shame on you! I for one, cannot believe that there aren't Liberal MLAs who are not as equally disgusted with your decision and remain silent! Anyone with enough intelligence and understanding should know that this is not right.

The cost and hardship of removing the \$45 yearly pass is ONLY one of the issues. It is also an issue of inclusion, participation and safety. The pass allows PWD an affordable way to get around their community without the added confusion of having to use a transfer or handling cash. Many PWD who are unable to secure paid employment are the backbone of volunteerism in our community working at our food banks, hospitals and recycling programs, to name a few. They also attend many educational, cultural and recreation programs which allow them to congregate with others in a social environment. Taking away this affordable transit pass will impact on their ability to participate in our community. It is also an issue of SAFETY. if they choice to keep their \$77 and pay their \$2.50 as they go on transit, they are vulnerable to having to open up their wallets and purses in public to look for their cash...this just makes the already vulnerable more vulnerable! If they use a ticket, they also require a transfer, which may easily misplaced or lost.

If their are PWD living in communities without access to transit systems and if this this is truly why you have made this decision, then I respectfully suggest that you DEAL with their "transportation" needs, BUT leave those with disabilities who have the capacity to use transit systems, alone and give them back their \$45/year passes. The only alternative is for PWD to return to the paratransit / handy-dart system ( at least they would get door to door service for their \$2.50 ride)! That is NEITHER a viable or realistic alternative as the Handy-dart service is already under increasing pressure to provide to service as it is.

So, in the spirit of true fairness, give back the \$45/ year pass to PWD.

Respectfully,

s.22

I have sent a copy of this message, for what it  
is worth, to my local MLA, Christy Clark

Sent from my iPad



March 22, 2016

Honourable Christy Clark, MLA  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark:

**RE: BC Budget 2016 – Disability Assistance Rates and Transportation Programs**

We are writing in response to your government's budget, tabled on February 16, 2016, which announced a modest increase of \$77 to persons with disabilities benefits while also drastically changing important programs that improve access to transportation for many people with disabilities. For the reasons set out in this letter, our organizations strongly oppose the changes to the BC Bus Pass Program and the Special Transportation Subsidy. We call on the government to leave these programs in place, and to provide a meaningful rate increase for all income assistance and disability assistance recipients.

The BC Bus Pass Program currently offers an annual bus pass at a reduced cost of \$45 per year for disability assistance recipients in areas where BC Transit and Translink operate. The Special Transportation Subsidy provides a lump sum subsidy to people who reside in an area where the Bus Pass Program operates, but are unable to use public transit because of a disability, to help offset the cost of alternative transportation. Approximately 55,000 of the 100,000 provincial disability assistance recipients rely on one of these two transportation programs. Our organizations all work directly with people with disabilities, and are acutely aware of the importance of these programs to ensure people are able to move about their communities, whether that be to shop for basic necessities, attend medical appointments, or take part in social gatherings.

As you know, those who rely on these programs will now be charged \$52/month for a bus pass, or \$66/month for the Special Transportation Subsidy. This means that for those recipients, the rate increase is actually only \$25 or \$11, respectively. Further, the government has said that it will still charge the \$45 per year "administrative fee" on top of that. Promoting the change as a \$77 increase to disability rates is misleading and unfair.

While the government maintains that its aim is to make the system fairer for people with disabilities who do not currently receive support for transportation, the proposed changes are not the right approach. It has been almost a decade since the government has increased income assistance and disability rates—and at \$906 per month, disability assistance rates in BC are among the lowest in the country. In Alberta, for example, the government increased the comparable disability benefit (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)) to \$1588 in 2012. The recently announced \$77 increase to BC's disability assistance rates would be a welcome (if inadequate) change, if it were truly providing that increase to all. It would only cost an additional \$14-20 million to provide the \$77 increase to all disability assistance recipients and also maintain the current transportation programs.

When the change was announced, the Honourable Minister of Finance Michael de Jong spoke about how it would allow those on disability assistance "the freedom to make their own choice about how to meet their own unique transportation needs". For many living in poverty in BC, this is not a real choice. While the \$77 increase will undeniably help those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate, it creates an impossible choice for those that do rely on these transportation programs. With disability



assistance frozen at a paltry \$906 per month—an amount clearly inadequate to meet basic needs—it will be difficult not to opt to put the \$77 each month toward previously unmet needs like food or rent. The Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy allowed vulnerable members of our communities to make a \$45 purchase once per year, and then have a reliable method of transportation year-round. The proposed changes to these programs will result in social isolation for those who “choose” not to renew, particularly for those with disabilities that restrict their mobility.

Finally, we are concerned about implementation of the proposed changes, which will inevitably be fraught with practical problems for both disability assistance recipients and Ministry staff. Over the last several years, there has been a radical shift from in-person services at local Ministry offices to services that are primarily delivered through a centralized phone line and over the internet. Wait times on the phone line are long, and many users of Ministry services lack the reliable phone or computer access required to access the services—and may also lack the capacity to navigate the new systems. It is difficult to reach Ministry staff at all, let alone the appropriate staff for a particular matter. Many that rely on the current transportation programs fear they will be unable to access Ministry staff in a timely way to resolve the issues that arise, and that staff will be ill-equipped to address the problems.

As our provincial government tabled its budget, it celebrated BC's strong financial outlook. Minister de Jong emphasized that BC is in a position to “offer greater support to the most vulnerable among us.” It is long past due for the government to make real commitments to do just that – and to share some of this province's wealth with the members of our communities that need it most.

Our organizations collectively urge you to:

- Bring back the \$45 per year bus pass for people with disabilities;
- Eliminate the new \$52/month bus pass fee;
- Allow everyone receiving PWD benefits to keep the \$77/month increase;
- Introduce a rural transportation subsidy for those living outside the areas where the Bus Pass Program and Special Transportation Subsidy operate; and
- Raise income and disability assistance significantly by October 1, 2016 to reflect the cost of living, and index to inflation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Laurel", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Laurel Lenormand  
Port Alberni Family Guidance Association

- c. Hon. Mike de Jong, MLA, Minister of Finance  
Hon. Michelle Stilwell, MLA, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation  
John Horgan, MLA, Leader of the Opposition  
Scott Fraser, MLA

## **D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 23, 2016 7:38 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** disability transit pass

**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

dear minister stilwell,

i am still waiting for your answer as to why the bc government can afford to give \$1M to syrian refugees, why they can afford to give \$15M to music enhancement but can't afford to extend a bc disability transit pass to those of us on cpp disability.

your silence is deafening madam minister. i feel as if i may as well be talking to the sphynx.

why are those on income assistance somehow better or more deserving than me who am on cpp disability? i worked very hard all my life to qualify for cpp disability. why am i now being penalized?

i submit the reason you won't answer me is that you don't have an answer. there is no other reason you would be so calloused and vindictive. many of us are legitimately disabled but you choose to blatantly discriminate against us. how long will this continue?

you have the capacity to change the regulations so that those of us on cpp disability can be extended a bc disability transit pass. the question is why won't you? is it that you need my \$91 per month to fund your extravagant giveaways? i am not into bashing syrian refugees but neither am i into being treated as a second class citizen.

perhaps you would rename it the bc welfare pass as many of us who are legitimately disabled can't get the pass. you would still be guilty of blatant discrimination but at least then you would not be guilty of false advertising.

the fact that i derive my income from a federal source does not absolve the bc government of its responsibility to see we receive equal benefits. i think that is only reasonable. you would agree, right?

when you recently decided to muddy the waters, i e-mailed you about that and you replied to me as if i was receiving income assistance and had a disability transit pass. do you not read your e-mails or are you incompetent? or both?

since january 2013, i have had to spend \$3549 on regular adult passes plus add-ons. this represents 10% of my income and is a hardship. i expect to be reimbursed for this outlay as this nonsense has gone on way too long. the only reason we can't have the disability transit pass extended to us is that you have it in for us, right?

i am willing to talk by phone but am s.22 so would much rather meet with you in person. you would then get to see my face and realize that i am a real person whose needs are not being met by your ministry. i can explain to you why i believe i should have a bc disability transit pass extended to me. you would be free to explain to me any reasons i have not already heard why you believe i



should not. we can go over all that. i promise i will not be vulgar or violent, but i may say things you don't like. that is to be expected when a person is ignored for so long, right?

please, let's talk!

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 29, 2016 5:49 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** disability transit pass  
  
**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

dear minister stilwell,

i am still waiting for a reply from you as to why the bc government can afford to give \$1M to syrian refugees, they can afford to spend \$15M on music enhancement, they can afford to spend many millions to shore up income assistance but they can't afford to extend a bc disability transit pass to those of us on cpp disability. do you have it in for us madam minister?

why are those on income assistance somehow better or more deserving than me who am on cpp disability? i worked very hard all my life to qualify for cpp disability. why am i now being penalized? do not try and tell me i am not being penalized because it would be a lie.

you have the capacity to change the regulations so that those of us on cpp disability can be extended a bc disability transit pass. why will you not do so? is it because you need my \$91 per month to fund your extravagant giveaways? christy clark was just bragging about how well the bc economy is doing. is this how you achieve it? by ignoring the needs of those with legitimate disabilities?

since january 2013, i have had to spend \$3549 on regular monthly passes. i expect to be reimbursed for this outlay as this has dragged on way too long. your way of dealing with this issue has been not to deal with it.

two weeks ago, i visited a friend in washington state. s.22, ) while there, we went across on the washington state ferry. they gave me the disability discount just on her say so. what is wrong with those in authority here? it is not like we are making our disabilities up. i did not choose to have s.22

i would like to meet with you in person. that way, i would become a real person to you and not just a number at the other end of a computer terminal. i promise i will not use profanity or be violent but i may say things you don't like. when a person's back is against the wall, they have no choice but to act. i could explain to you why i believe i should be extended a bc disability transit pass. i will write on one side of the page why i should have one and you can write on the other side of the page why i should not.

i submit that you really don't have any answers for me or we would have met months ago. you are also free to try and call me. i am s.22 and for the next few days i can't speak due to s.22 but i will do my best.

please, let's talk!

s.22

Page 231

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.22

March 21/16

Michelle Stilwell, Minister of Social Development  
 Legislative Building  
 Victoria, BC

Dear Minister Stilwell,

I am still waiting for your reply as to why the BC Government can afford to give \$1M to Syrian refugees, they can afford to give \$15M to music ensembles but they can't afford to extend a BC Disability Transit Pass to those of us on CPP disability. What have we done to merit this discrimination?

Why are there on income assistance somehow better or more deserving than me who am on CPP disability? I worked hard all my life to qualify for CPP disability. Why am I now being penalized?

You have the capacity to change the regulations so that those of us on CPP disability can be extended a BC Disability Transit Pass. The question is why won't you? Is it that you need my \$9 per month to fund your extravagant giveaways?

In your e-mail to me you talked to me as though I had been extended the pass. This means either you did not read my e-mail or you are incompetent.

Would the province of BC go bankrupt were I to be extended a BC Disability Transit Pass? Would the world come to an end? Why is everyone so intransigent?

2/

Perhaps you need to rename it the BC, we have  
pass seeing as many of us on LFP disability and are  
legitimate disabled can't get the pass. While you  
would still be guilty of discrimination, at least  
then you wouldn't be guilty of false advertising. I  
am not interested in bus fare or welfare but neither am  
I in being treated as a second class citizen.

Since January 2013 I have had to spend \$35.49  
on monthly passes. I expect to be reimbursed  
for this outlay ~~too~~ as this nonsense has gone  
on too long. The fact that I derive my income  
from a federal source does not absolve the  
province from seeing I receive equal benefits.  
You would agree that is only fair, right?

I would really like to meet with you in  
person. I promise I will not be violent or use  
profanity. That said, I may say things you  
don't like. I would like the chance to explain  
face to face why I believe I should be awarded  
a BC Disability Transit Pass. Please, let's  
talk!

s.22

s.22

s.22

change.org  
Inclusion BC

Recipient: Premier Christy Clark and Hon. Michelle Stilwell

Letter: Greetings,

Raise the rates, leave our bus pass alone.

03/09

Rec'd by constituency  
staff for PCC office.

Hand deliverd by ↓



**Pathways**  
Abilities Society

**Leslie Munro**  
Activity Quality  
Assurance Manager

123 Franklyn Road  
Kelowna, BC V1X 6A9  
Phone: 250-763-4839  
email: aqam@pathwayskelowna.ca

[www.PathwaysKelowna.ca](http://www.PathwaysKelowna.ca)

**CORRESPONDENCE**

MAR 11 2016

**OFFICE OF THE  
PREMIER**

# Signatures

Name	Location	Date
s.22	Vancouver, Canada	2016-02-18
	New Westminster, Canada	2016-02-18
	Victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Richmond, Canada	2016-02-18
	Port Moody, Canada	2016-02-18
	victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Vancouver, Canada	2016-02-18
	Victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Surrey, Canada	2016-02-18
	New Westminster, Canada	2016-02-18
	Abbotsford, Canada	2016-02-18
	Victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Surrey, Canada	2016-02-18
	Brentwood Bay, Canada	2016-02-18
	Burnaby, Canada	2016-02-18
	Vancouver, Canada	2016-02-18
	Surrey, Canada	2016-02-18
	Surrey, Canada	2016-02-18
	Vancouver, Canada	2016-02-18
	Sechelt, Canada	2016-02-18
	sidney, Canada	2016-02-18
	Maple Ridge, Canada	2016-02-18
	Vancouver, Canada	2016-02-18
	Saanichton, Canada	2016-02-18
	Victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Chilliwack, Canada	2016-02-18
	Mission, Canada	2016-02-18
	Victoria, Canada	2016-02-18
	Surrey, Canada	2016-02-18

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 20, 2016 11:25 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Imploring you to cancel the new rates for the annual Bus Pass for People with Disabilities

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Tamie Nohr

Constituency Assistant | Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>



Please consider the environment before printing this email

**Confidentiality Warning:** This message and any attachments are intended only for the use of the intended recipient(s), are confidential and may be privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, retransmission, conversion to hard copy, copying, circulation or other use of this message and any attachments is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail, and delete this message and any attachments from your system. Thank you.

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 18, 2016 11:17 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Imploring you to cancel the new rates for the annual Bus Pass for People with Disabilities

Dear Hon. Michelle Stilwell,

I live with constant pain which forced me to leave work and then live on disability payments. My rent has gone up as well as food & other items over the years, yet my payment each month has remained the same. I cannot cut back on expenses since my pay basically covers rent and food. It is so stressful each month trying to make it to the end of the month without running out of money.

I was so relieved to learn that the disability rates would be increased in the Fall. Then I learned of the increase for using a bus pass. I cannot afford a car anymore, so I need a bus pass to get to the doctors and for shopping for food. But if one subtracts the new bus pass rates from my monthly income, then the disability raise is practically non-existent.

I implore you to **cancel the new rates for the annual bus pass for people with disabilities**. It will be wise because people heal better when they are not stressed. Also the resulting increase each month for total disability payment, will at least help us catch up on rent and cost of living increases.



People do not choose to be disabled. Please do not punish us further by taking away our monthly increase. The Disabled can be a force of good if they are not starving or homeless. We need more compassion in this world and less punishment.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 11:22 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** Please cancel the new rates for the annual Bus Pass for People with Disabilities.

Dear Honourable Christy Clark.

I live with constant pain which forced me to leave work and then live on disability payments. My rent has gone up as well as food & other items over the years, yet my payment each month has remained the same. I cannot cut back on expenses since my pay basically covers rent and food. It is so stressful each month trying to make it to the end of the month without running out of money.

I was so relieved to learn that the disability rates would be increased in the Fall. Then I learned of the increase for using a bus pass. I cannot afford a car anymore, so I need a bus pass to get to the doctors and for shopping for food. But if one subtracts the new bus pass rates from my monthly income, then the disability raise is practically non existent.

I implore you to **cancel the new rates for the annual bus pass for people with disabilities**. It will be wise because people heal better when they are not stressed. Also the resulting increase each month for total disability payment, will at least help us catch up on rent and cost of living increases.

People do not choose to be disabled. Please do not punish us further by taking away our monthly increase. The Disabled can be a force of good if they are not starving or homeless. We need more compassion in this world and less punishment.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

---

**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 6, 2016 3:43 PM  
**To:** s.22  
**Subject:** 189389 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189389

s.22

Dear s.22

I want to thank you for your email of March 18, 2016, and apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If you already have a discounted annual bus pass (including a red Compass Card) and you want to continue using it, you have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to you in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee you already pay.

If you don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then you will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If you are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, you will receive your subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, you will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes your special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your feedback.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

**From:** s.22

**Sent:** March 18, 2016 11:17 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle

**Subject:** Imploring you to cancel the new rates for the annual Bus Pass for People with Disabilities

Dear Hon. Michelle Stilwell,

I live with constant pain which forced me to leave work and then live on disability payments. My rent has gone up as well as food & other items over the years, yet my payment each month has remained the same. I cannot cut back on expenses since my pay basically covers rent and food. It is so stressful each month trying to make it to the end of the month without running out of money.

I was so relieved to learn that the disability rates would be increased in the Fall. Then I learned of the increase for using a bus pass. I cannot afford a car anymore, so I need a bus pass to get to the doctors and for shopping for food. But if one subtracts the new bus pass rates from my monthly income, then the disability raise is practically non-existent.

I implore you to **cancel the new rates for the annual bus pass for people with disabilities**. It will be wise because people heal better when they are not stressed. Also the resulting increase each month for total disability payment, will at least help us catch up on rent and cost of living increases.

People do not choose to be disabled. Please do not punish us further by taking away our monthly increase. The Disabled can be a force of good if they are not starving or homeless. We need more compassion in this world and less punishment.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 20, 2016 11:23 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Disability Bus Pass Program Changes

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Tamie Nohr

Constituency Assistant | **Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum**  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>



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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 18, 2016 1:13 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle ; [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)  
**Cc:** Horgan.MLA, John ; Mungall.MLA, Michelle ; Karagianis.MLA, Maurine  
**Subject:** Disability Bus Pass Program Changes

Premier Christy Clark  
Hon. Michelle Stilwell

Dear Premier and Ms Stilwell

Please reconsider your recent decision to remove the annual bus pass program for PWD people in BC. I was horrified to hear the Govt is considering removing this program. Many of these people are mentally ill or have cognitive challenges that make it impossible for them to plan and save to purchase monthly bus passes. In addition, buses are often the only method these people have of reaching Govt PWD Offices. I have seen the PWD offices. They are filled with people needing immediate help. These people have hardly any idea on what is required on order to get that help. (navigating Govt red tape) The only saving grace is that

they are able to get to the Ministry office and have a Govt Social Worker help them out. By removing the yearly bus pass program, you are relegating a vast majority of PWD people to unbelievable hardships associated to maintaining their disability benefits.

If your plan is to further marginalize these people in our society, your new plan will surely succeed.

I haven't even mentioned the opportunities for socialization that the bus passes provide for so many PWD people. It is often their only form of transport to many programs in our community, including Recreations ctrs, doctors, hospital and so many other necessities.

PLEASE reconsider. I suspect that the idea to remove this program seemed like an easy way to save a few dollars, but considering that you are proposing a balanced budget for BC, and that in the big scheme of things, the cost of the bus pass program for PWD people is really a paltry sum of money compared to the entire provincial budget, you could reconsider.

s.22

**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** Collins, Alison J SDSI:EX on behalf of Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 10:21 AM  
**To:** s.22  
**Cc:** 'premier@gov.bc.ca'  
**Subject:** 189388 s.22 SDSI Response

Ref: 189388

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of March 18, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Christy Clark, Premier, and to me, regarding the recently announced Persons with Disabilities rate increase. As Minister I am pleased to respond.

I apologize for any confusion or anxiety that you are experiencing, due to misinformation being circulated around the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

The discounted bus pass for people with disabilities is still in place and the application process remains unchanged.

What will change is the monthly disability assistance rate. Your government is investing an additional \$170 million over three years to increase disability assistance rates.

Beginning September 1, 2016, all clients who have the Persons with the Disabilities designation will receive a monthly rate increase.

If clients already have a discounted annual bus pass and want to continue using it, they have the option of keeping that bus pass and receiving a rate increase of \$25 per month. The BC Bus Pass renewal notification will come to clients in late summer, 2016, as usual. There has been no change to the application process or the annual \$45 administration fee clients already pay.

If clients don't currently have an annual bus pass or the Special Transportation Subsidy, then they will receive a \$77 monthly rate increase.

If clients are receiving the Special Transportation Subsidy, they will receive their subsidy payment of \$329 in April to cover the April to August 2016 time period. Starting in September, clients will then automatically receive a monthly rate increase of \$77, which includes their special transportation subsidy and an additional \$11 a month rate increase.

These changes were intended to create a benefit for all people on disability assistance across the province.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell  
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

cc: Honourable Christy Clark, Premier

**From:** s.22

**Sent:** March 18, 2016 1:13 PM

**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle ; [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

**Cc:** Horgan.MLA, John ; Mungall.MLA, Michelle ; Karagianis.MLA, Maurine

**Subject:** Disability Bus Pass Program Changes

Premier Christy Clark  
Hon. Michelle Stilwell

Dear Premier and Ms Stilwell

Please reconsider your recent decision to remove the annual bus pass program for PWD people in BC. I was horrified to hear the Govt is considering removing this program. Many of these people are mentally ill or have cognitive challenges that make it impossible for them to plan and save to purchase monthly bus passes. In addition, buses are often the only method these people have of reaching Govt PWD Offices.

I have seen the PWD offices. They are filled with people needing immediate help. These people have hardly any idea on what is required in order to get that help. (navigating Govt red tape) The only saving grace is that they are able to get to the Ministry office and have a Govt Social Worker help them out. By removing the yearly bus pass program, you are relegating a vast majority of PWD people to unbelievable hardships associated to maintaining their disability benefits.

If your plan is to further marginalize these people in our society, your new plan will surely succeed.

I haven't even mentioned the opportunities for socialization that the bus passes provide for so many PWD people. It is often their only form of transport to many programs in our community, including Recreations ctrs, doctors, hospital and so many other necessities.

PLEASE reconsider. I suspect that the idea to remove this program seemed like an easy way to save a few dollars, but considering that you are proposing a balanced budget for BC, and that in the big scheme of things, the cost of the bus pass program for PWD people is really a paltry sum of money compared to the entire provincial budget, you could reconsider.

s.22



**D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX**

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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** Monday, March 14, 2016 1:40 PM  
**To:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX  
**Subject:** Thank you

Hi my name is s.22, I recently heard of the changes made to the transportation fund for persons with disabilities (pwd) and I am so happy. I am recovering from s.22 and I'm doing great, I work s.22 so I drive and never use the bus. I also go to s.2 and study s.22 buses aren't that great in our city of Abbotsford so driving is much more convenient. I wrote I paper last semester for s.22  
s.22

s.22 I have no idea how to implement this, but I think moving towards strategies like this needs to be in the forefront of the government's minds and decisions. As I read articles s.22 about the bus pass drama I look for solutions, not trying to point a finger. I think throwing money at the problem is a short term solution especially in this country that's loaded with resources and space to grow. Buses need to be turned into pwd eco car taxi services, give a person with disabilities an eco car so earn can earn a few dollars driving other pwds around, part time job with few hours that builds community, gives confidence, and looks for solutions. Thank you for your time Christy. Sincerely s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 12:23 PM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Disability costs

**Categories:** MINISTER SIGNATURE

Tamie Nohr

Constituency Assistant | Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>



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**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 17, 2016 7:41 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle  
**Subject:** Disability costs

Ms. Stilwell,

I volunteer with Supported Apartment Living, a highly successful program of Community Living Victoria. The amazing individuals in this program work, volunteer, do Special Olympics, and are engaged in their community in many other ways. Engagement in the Greater Victoria community requires transportation. How should someone with a walker get to Silver Threads? How should someone else get to the West Shore? Their independence is going to be limited by the new cost of bus passes. Do you want these folks to be isolated in their apartments, moving around only in their immediate neighbourhood? Did you experience that kind of isolation when you, apparently, were on social assistance?

The Premier said they hadn't explain the program well. The accurate explanation would be from the perspective of those affected: After a nine-year freeze, some people, by pure chance, will receive a \$77 increase. Others, with no difference except where they live, will get virtually nothing.

Please reconsider this decision.

s.22

## D'Argis, Julie SDSI:EX

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**From:** Nohr, Tamie <Tamie.Nohr@leg.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 20, 2016 11:19 AM  
**To:** Minister, SDSI SDSI:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Automatic reply: Disability costs

**Categories:** ADD TO EXISTING LOG

Tamie Nohr  
Constituency Assistant | Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum  
Office: 250-248-2625 | <http://michellestilwellmla.ca/>

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** s.22  
**Sent:** March 18, 2016 12:27 PM  
**To:** Stilwell.MLA, Michelle <[Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: Automatic reply: Disability costs

**Address:** s.22  
Copy of the original email:

Ms. Stilwell,

I volunteer with Supported Apartment Living, a highly successful program of Community Living Victoria. The amazing individuals in this program work, volunteer, do Special Olympics, and are engaged in their community in many other ways. Engagement in the Greater Victoria community requires transportation. How should someone with a walker get to Silver Threads?

How should someone else get to the West Shore? Their independence is going to be limited by the new cost of bus passes. Do you want these folks to be isolated in their apartments, moving around only in their immediate neighbourhood? Did you experience that kind of isolation when you, apparently, were on social assistance?

The Premier said they hadn't explain the program well. The accurate explanation would be from the perspective of those affected: After a nine-year freeze, some people, by pure chance, will receive a \$77 increase. Others, with no difference except where they live, will get virtually nothing.

Please reconsider this decision.

s.22

-----Original Message-----

From: Stilwell.MLA, Michelle [<mailto:Michelle.Stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]

Sent: March-17-16 7:41 PM

To: s.22

Subject: Automatic reply: Disability costs

Thank you for your email.

This automated response confirms that your message has been received. I review correspondence as quickly as possible, but due to the high volume of email I receive please allow at least two weeks for a response. If the matter is urgent please indicate that in your email or contact my office at 250-248-2625.

To help us provide the best service possible, please ensure your email includes your first and last name, phone number and address with postal code. Responses will not be provided to emails that do not include these details. This information will not be disclosed or distributed, and will be used only to follow up on your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Michelle Stilwell, MLA

Parksville-Qualicum

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Version: 2016.0.7497 / Virus Database: 4542/11830 - Release Date: 03/17/16