

# MEDIA STATEMENT

Wednesday March 22, 2023



## **Manitoba's minimum wage still not a living wage**

*Statement by MFL President Kevin Rebeck in response to the Stefanson government's announcement that Manitoba's minimum wage will increase to \$15.30 on October 1:*

Rising prices at the grocery store and in the cost of housing are making it harder for working families to make ends meet, and these high costs are hitting low-income workers the hardest.

Today's announcement means that our minimum wage will still fall \$3 short of a living wage, which is the wage workers need to earn to meet their basic needs. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba has calculated that the living wage is \$18.34 in Winnipeg. That means that even after the minimum wage increases to \$15.30 in October, there will be people who work full-time but still live in poverty in Manitoba.

According to Statistics Canada data, 56 per cent of minimum wage earners are women. The majority of minimum wage earners are adults, 58 per cent of minimum wage earners work for firms that employ more than 100 people, and a majority of these minimum wage workers have worked in the same job for over a year.

It is important to remember that Brian Pallister and Heather Stefanson refused to make meaningful increases to the minimum wage for six years, leaving workers who earn it poorer.

This government's formula for minimum wage increases was put in place by Brian Pallister in 2016, starting with a base rate of \$11.00 that was well below the poverty line. As a result, despite the fact that the minimum wage has been indexed to inflation since then, Manitoba's minimum wage remains well below the poverty line and will never rise above it, unless it is significantly rebased.

The Stefanson government's funding formula keeps people in poverty, and will never lift them out. It is an insult to basic human dignity to have Manitobans working full-time and still living in poverty.

– 30 –

Contact: Andrew Tod, 204-391-0063 / [atod@mfl.mb.ca](mailto:atod@mfl.mb.ca)

USW9074:AT/EM.cope342