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WORKERS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR EI WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS INCOME SUPPORT THROUGH NEW RECOVERY BENEFITS

While many Canadians have seen their jobs come back and have returned to work since the start of the pandemic, the Government of Canada recognizes that there remain other workers in sectors that have been particularly hit hard who continue to need support. That is why, today, the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Chrystia Freeland, and the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough, announced the introduction of Bill C-2, to create three new temporary Recovery Benefits to support Canadians who are unable to work for reasons related to COVID-19. These new Benefits are being proposed as part of the Government of Canada's plan to support Canadians as we work to build back a stronger, more resilient economy. Since the introduction of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) in the early days of the pandemic, at a time when we asked Canadians to stay home, close to 9 million Canadians have received the Benefit to help to pay their bills and support their fami-

lies. Subject to this legislation receiving Royal Assent, the new Benefits would provide income support to Canadians while promoting economic recovery by introducing measures that encourage people to safely return to work. Specifically, the legislation includes:

A Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) of \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks, to workers who are self-employed or are not eligible for EI and who still require income support. This Benefit would support Canadians who have not returned to work due to COVID-19 or whose income has dropped by at least 50%. These workers must be available and looking for work, and must accept work where it is reasonable to do so;

A Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB) of \$500 per week for up to two weeks, for workers who are sick or must self-isolate for reasons related to COVID-19. This Benefit supports our commitment to ensure all Canadian workers have access to paid sick leave; and,

A Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB) of \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks per household, for eligible Canadians unable to work because they must care for a child under the age of 12 or family member because schools, day-cares or care facilities are closed due to COVID-19 or because the child or family member is sick and/or required to quarantine. More detailed eligibility criteria can be found online. Canadians will be able to apply for the CRB, CRSB, and CRCB through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for one year up until September 25, 2021.

As announced on August 20, temporary measures to help Canadians access EI benefits more easily are effective September 27, 2020, for one year. These changes will also establish a minimum weekly benefit payment of \$500 for all EI recipients, at the same level as the CRB. Bill C-2 also includes proposed amendments to the Canada Labour Code to ensure that federally regulated employees have access to

job-protected leave to ensure they can avail themselves of these Benefits.

In addition, as part of Bill C-2, the Government of Canada announced its intention to amend and extend the application of the Public Health Event of National Concern Payments Act (PHENCPA) to December 31, 2020. Enacted in March at the beginning of the pandemic, PHENCPA enables the Government to access the funds required for a significant part of the COVID-19 response measures that make up Canada's Economic Response Plan. Under this proposed approach, the Government is seeking Parliamentary approval for access to funding, subject to prescribed limits until the end of 2020, for measures that will protect the health and safety of Canadians and support individuals businesses. This spending authority can only be used for specific measures approved in advance by Parliament as part of Bill C-2. This legislation is necessary to ensure that Canadians and the businesses where they work continue to receive the

support they need. The current legislation expires on September 30, 2020.

To help build a stronger workforce, the Government of Canada will also invest an additional \$1.5 billion in the Workforce Development Agreements with provinces and territories to offer Canadians the skills training and employment supports they need. This support will respond to the increased number of Canadians looking to re-enter the workforce, and targets workers and employers in sectors hardest-hit by COVID-19, as well as groups particularly disadvantaged as a result of the pandemic. This is in addition to the \$3.4 billion already being provided to provinces and territories

under the Labour Market Development Agreements and Workforce Development Agreements in 2020-2021.

Quote
"Canadians have shown tremendous strength in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and we know that it is still here with us. Our Government remains committed to supporting Canadians. These measures will make sure Canadians continue to have the income supports they need and that we continue to provide sufficient resources for the fight against COVID-19."

– Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland



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