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Andrew Weaver

Member Of the Legislative Assembly
Oak Bay – Gordon Head

December 16, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I have always believed that we as individuals and as a society benefit when we commit ourselves to helping improve the lives of others. This is particularly true when we consider the most vulnerable in our communities.

The evidence supports this belief. The economics and the historical precedent are clear that reducing poverty, homelessness and inequality promotes greater prosperity, security and opportunity for all of us. Poverty-related crime rates decrease, the social and health care costs associated with poverty and addiction decline, and we as a society can shift our focus to preventative, rather than reactionary, measures to addressing these issues.

It is now time we did more. British Columbia currently has the highest child poverty rate in the country. We cannot stand idly by while so many of our fellow citizens struggle to put food on the table, to keep a roof over their heads, or to survive on our streets.

It is for this reason that I support community-based initiatives like the Community Action Plan on Poverty (CAPP) that look for local solutions to reduce poverty. As an MLA and as an individual, I commit to doing my part to help promote and address the 10 key areas and actions that CAPP has identified as being necessary to address poverty in our communities. To begin, I will commit to taking three concrete actions:

1. Under the 'Health' focus, I will work to help improve our adolescent mental health care system.
2. Under the 'Strong Local Economy' focus, I will work to support the development of local industries that provide long-term, high-paying jobs that keep people in our communities, like our clean technology industry.
3. Under the 'Housing' focus, I will advocate for further investment into affordable housing during the 2014 budget debate.

These are three initial steps I commit to taking in the coming months. Reducing poverty requires a long-term, concerted effort and so in addition to these three steps I will continue to look for other ways that I can work to help address poverty in our communities.

For information on my progress in achieving these commitments, please visit my website (www.andrewweavermla.ca) and consider signing up for my community newsletter.

Thank you for your work in helping to address poverty in our community.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Weaver', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Weaver
MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head