

Prime Minister's remarks announcing support for Canadians with disabilities

June 5, 2020
Ottawa, Ontario

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Hello everyone.

The videos and reports that have surfaced from across the country over the past few days are disturbing.

And they bring to light the systemic realities facing far too many Canadians.

Later today, I'll be speaking with Cabinet, and to the RCMP commissioner.

We need to ensure that each one of these individual cases is investigated properly.

But we also need a larger reflection on changing the systems that do not do right by too many Indigenous people and racialized Canadians.

We can't solve all of this overnight.

But we need to make a change, and we need to start today.

No matter who you are, COVID-19 will have had an impact on you in one way or another.

Because everyone has been affected by this pandemic.

And as we mark National Accessibility Week, we're reminded that some people have been hit especially hard.

Whether it's buying PPE, or covering the cost of support workers, many Canadians with disabilities are facing unexpected bills that can be hard to pay.

To help cover these costs, today I can announce that we are introducing a one-time, non-taxable payment of \$600 for Canadians with disabilities.

And we're not stopping there.

We're also establishing a National Workplace Accessibility Stream, to help people with disabilities find, and keep, a good job.

And we're funding five new projects across the country that will help people get

supportive devices to overcome barriers in the workplace.

I know that Minister Qualtrough will have more to say about all of this later today.

Earlier today, we received the job report for May.

The numbers show that more Canadians returned to work last month, but that many, many people continue to face a really tough time.

That tells us that we are moving forward, but we need to stay focused on getting people back on the job.

That's why we extended the wage subsidy through the coming months – and have approved over 300,000 applications to support millions of jobs.

There's still a long way to go, but we're starting to see some progress.

Roughly 1.2 million Canadians who were accessing the Canada Emergency Response Benefit no longer need this help.

This is encouraging news, but we're nowhere near done.

As I've said before, to really move forward we need a Canada-wide plan on safely and effectively restarting the economy.

Having the right approach, and the right resources to back it up, will determine where we are not just in the coming weeks, but into the fall and winter.

Canadians have sacrificed too much over the past couple of months to lose the progress we've made.

As we restart, we must do so safely with all the right precautions in place.

We know that the provinces and territories are under a lot of pressure right now, and are facing real financial challenges because of this pandemic.

And we want to help as much as possible.

We must move quickly and carefully to get this done, to support the services Canadians rely on, and to get our communities back up and running.

That's why our government has already taken action across the board on this restart.

And now, we're making a substantial offer to keep supporting this work.

Yesterday, at our twelfth First Ministers' Meeting since this crisis began, I brought our government's commitment to the table.

The federal government is ready to contribute \$14 billion more for the things that all

Canadians need.

As you go back to work, we want to make sure you are protected, wherever you are.

Here's what the premiers and I will work on for a safe restart agreement, which would cover the next, critical, six to eight months.

We're talking about more personal protective equipment for healthcare workers on the frontlines, so they can focus on saving lives instead of worrying about their safety.

We're talking about making sure businesses have the PPE they need, so that every Canadian is safe on the job no matter where in the country they go back to work.

We're talking about childcare, so that every parent knows there's a safe place for their kids.

Because when moms and dads get back to work, they shouldn't have to worry about how their kids are doing.

We all know that there are too many seniors who've gotten sick from COVID-19.

And along with our elders, there are many people who are especially at risk if they get the virus.

So we want to provide immediate assistance so that the most vulnerable are protected.

We're also talking about sick pay of up to 10 days for workers who currently don't have benefits.

The federal government would provide the funds needed to make this happen.

And we're talking about support for cities and municipalities, so that when Canadians get back to work, they can count on the services they need like public transit and community programs.

I'm looking forward to working with the premiers to make this happen.

Provinces and territories are facing different realities, so flexibility will be important.

But here's the bottom line:

For seniors and people who need extra support, for kids and for workers – this plan is for you.

With this safe restart agreement, we're proposing a standard of support to keep every Canadian, right across the country, safe and healthy as we get our country back on its feet.

At this time, our main priority is helping people get through the crisis.

But we're also thinking about what lies ahead in the coming months, years and decades.

World Environment Day reminds us that we can't build a better future if we don't have a plan to fight climate change.

Our government has made ambitious environmental commitments, and today, we're following through on them.

We are announcing 60 new nature conservation initiatives across Canada.

Half of these projects will be led by Indigenous peoples. The goal isn't just to protect our environment, but to support local economies and create good jobs for Canadians.

We are living in unprecedented times.

But this is not the first moment that Canadians have been called to work together.

This weekend, as we mark the anniversary of D-Day, we remember all those who fought and died defending the values that we hold dear.

Like the brave women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces today, our veterans served with courage and selflessness.

And they served together.

Just as we stand here this morning because of their sacrifice, Canadian troops stood on Juno Beach because of those who came before them.

Because of the Allied forces who had, this same week four years earlier, completed the rescue of over 300,000 soldiers trapped on the beaches of Dunkirk.

It was a remarkable operation.

And not just because of the number of lives that were saved, but because of the number of people who helped save them.

Hundreds of everyday men and women gave their boats to rescue their fellow citizens.

They would have never succeeded alone.

But together, they changed the course of history.

And 80 years later, as we face our own fight, their stories stand as a reminder to us all.

Right now, we each have a role to play:

As a business owner using the wage subsidy to keep your employees on the payroll.

As a young person helping your community through a Canada Summer Jobs placement.

Or even just by staying home when you can, and following physical distancing when you're out.

No matter what you're doing to help – thank you.

If we keep working together, if we keep supporting each other, we will get through this.

Thank you.