



For Immediate Release

August 15, 2016

## **AUSTERITY IS NOT THE ANSWER**

Peter Gilmer, Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry and spokesperson for Poverty Free Saskatchewan, urged the government today to abandon its recently announced crippling cuts to social expenditures so injurious to the lowest income residents of the province.

“The reductions in benefits distributed via the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability, the Seniors Income Plan, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement undoubtedly will drive more low income people into deep poverty,” said Gilmer. “It appears there is nothing ‘assured’ or ‘guaranteed’ when it comes to financial support for the disabled, seniors and vulnerable families.”

In 2015 the government held public consultations to develop a comprehensive anti-poverty plan. “The government has now reneged on its promise, even after drafting an anti-poverty framework report.”

Gilmer also pointed out that in Regina 55,000 families with two or more persons earn incomes less than the calculated living wage - \$58,245 annually. “The government’s announced cuts foreshadow a grim future of austerity that will lead to higher income inequality, higher poverty rates and lower social mobility,” he said.

Poverty Free Saskatchewan’s analysis of the effects of the budget, ***Budget 2016: Transformation or Austerity?*** urges the government to abandon its social expenditure roll backs and proceed with the development of an anti-poverty plan supported by anti-poverty legislation.

***Budget 2016: Transformation or Austerity?*** and other documents outlining Poverty Free Saskatchewan’s vision for eliminating poverty can be downloaded at [www.povertyfreesask.ca](http://www.povertyfreesask.ca)

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