

## FOR THE RECORD

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### **CHILD POVERTY AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

#### **Fewer British Columbians need assistance**

- The number of children and families dependent on income assistance is the lowest since the 1980s.
- One in seven children (135,000 – almost the population of Abbotsford) lived in families on income assistance in the 1990s. This represented more than 10% of the child population.
- By September 2006, the number of children who were part of families on income assistance had dropped to 33,000 – or 3% of the child population.
- The number of food bank recipients is down 10.5% since 2004.

#### **We are providing more services to children**

- Full dental and optical services for children in low- to moderate-income families through the Healthy Kids Program.
- Doubled the School Start-up Supplement to help families on income assistance cope with the costs of purchasing school supplies. This program helps 29,000 children – a number equal to the entire population of Port Moody or Campbell River.

#### **We are providing more help to low-income families who need it**

- Most people earning up to \$16,000 a year pay no provincial income tax at all.
- We have the lowest provincial income tax rates among provinces for the first two tax brackets up to about \$67,000 in income.
- In 2005 we reduced or eliminated provincial income taxes for about 730,000 British Columbians—almost 7 times the population of Kelowna
- Families of four with incomes less than \$29,000 do not pay for MSP, and premiums have been reduced or eliminated for 290,000 people.
- About 6,500 more children are eligible for subsidized child care because the income threshold for the subsidy rose from \$21,000 to \$38,000. An additional 6,000 families will receive an increase in their existing subsidy.
- The newly launched Rental Assistance Program provides \$40-million a year to low income working families to help pay rent.

#### **There are more jobs in B.C. than ever**

- BC has created 320,000 jobs since December 2001, leading Canada in job creation.
- BC's unemployment rate is 4.6%, which is one of the lowest rates in 30 years.
- More than 48,000 people on income assistance have been placed directly in jobs since 2001.

\*Sources can be provided on request.