

NO PLACE for Poverty

Everyone has a right to housing, food and dignity!

News Release

Advocates lobby for 2011 Territorial Election to Focus on Poverty

Yellowknife, 23 August 2011: The 29 supporters of the No Place for Poverty alliance are today launching their “Anti-Poverty Election 2011” Toolkit for use by anti-poverty champions across the Northwest Territories in the upcoming election.

The purpose of the toolkit is to engage community members in talking about poverty where they live, and to ask candidates in every riding to pledge to make working on poverty their top priority in the next Legislative Assembly.

The tool kit has been sent to more than 100 community “champions” throughout the Northwest Territories. The kit includes myths and facts about poverty in the NWT, material for generating discussion and a letter to present to candidates asking them to pledge to make poverty a priority, as well as poster and flyer templates for hosting a community meeting.

The public launch of the Anti-Poverty Election 2011 Toolkit will take place Tuesday, August 23rd at 11:00 a.m. at the Baker Community Centre in Yellowknife.

“We’ve been talking about the need for a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy for almost two years and we really need to see some action,” says Aggie Brockman, of Alternatives North, about the impetus to create the election toolkit. “We want to make sure that the anti-poverty strategy is a top priority for the next assembly,” she says.

All candidates in the upcoming territorial election will be asked to pledge they will make a government-wide anti-poverty strategy a major objective of their term, and a key priority for the 17th assembly. They will be asked to work collaboratively on the strategy with business, labour and community groups. All candidates will be sent letters to sign in the first part of September. Written responses are due by September 19th at 4:00 p.m. at noplaceforpoverty@gmail.com or by fax to 873-5497 or by Canada Post to Box 444, Yellowknife NT X1A 2N3.

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The No Place for Poverty alliance will report results as they come in on Facebook and Twitter. As well, ads in regional papers and mail drops to small communities will tell voters where their candidates stand on making poverty a priority in the next assembly.

About the No Place for Poverty alliance: A group of social justice, women's groups and labour organizations got together in December 2009 to present the government with existing research that showed poverty is a major issue in the NWT. A workshop that included 81 delegates from 20 NWT communities in October last year produced a list of recommendations to government, including the need to begin collaborative work on an anti-poverty strategy. While Premier Roland promised to develop a discussion paper on the strategy in February 2010, and consultation took place last winter, the government's paper or consultation results have not yet been made public.

Anti-Poverty Election 2011 Toolkits are available online at www.alternativesnorth.ca

For more information about the Anti-Poverty Election 2011 Toolkit, please contact Aggie Brockman at 873-4588 or at abrockman@ssimicro.com