

**HUMA follow-ups from April 29, 2024, on Supplementary Estimates (C), 2023-24
and Mains 2024-25**

- 1. Would you commit to sending to this committee a list of all the meetings that you have had with your provincial counterparts regarding the Canada Disability Benefit since July of 2023? (see transcript p. 5)**

After being appointed as the Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Minister Khera sent an introductory letter with an offer to meet bilaterally with all of her provincial and territorial counterparts.

Since July 2023, Minister Khera participated in a series of bilateral meetings with her Federal-Provincial/Territorial (F-P/T) counterparts regarding the Canada Disability Benefit. This includes meetings with: New Brunswick, Nunavut, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Alberta, Yukon, British Columbia, and Quebec.

PEI is scheduled for June 2024.

- 2. Can the minister table to this committee the number of people who are expected to be raised above the poverty line by the Canada Disability Benefit? (see transcript p. 22)**

The Government estimates that, once fully mature (2027-28), the CDB will lift 25,000 working-age persons with disabilities, and 15,000 of their family members, out of poverty each year.

- 3. Can you table a list of organizations and people who requested a benefit of 200 dollars a month from the Canada Disability Benefit to be accessed only through the Disability Tax Credit and only available in July of 2025? (see transcript p. 22)**

The Government has engaged with the disability community on various aspects of the Canada Disability Benefit (the Benefit) and the broader Disability Inclusion Action Plan since 2021. Shortly after the Canada Disability Benefit Act received Royal Assent in June 2023, the Government launched a two-phase plan to engage the disability community and other stakeholders in the development of Benefit regulations. The first phase of this engagement process took place between summer 2023 and winter 2024. Engagement activities included Ministerial and technical roundtables, bilateral meetings, and briefs submitted by organizations. In addition, the Government launched an online engagement tool from November 15, 2023, to January 4, 2024, to gather input from all Canadians on key benefit design details; 4,522 responses were received, 3,743 of which provided substantive input.

During this first phase of engagement, 12 of 54 organizations that submitted briefs suggested that individuals who qualify for any existing disability supports, including the Disability Tax Credit and other federal programs, should be automatically eligible for the Canada Disability Benefit. The remaining 42 did not touch on eligibility supports.

Among responses that provided substantive input to the online engagement tool, 433 respondents indicated support for using the Disability Tax Credit as one method of eligibility, 136 of which expressed specific support for the Disability Tax Credit as the sole eligibility criterion. While a number of concerns were raised regarding the Disability Tax Credit, many respondents strongly urged the Government to prioritize implementing the Benefit as quickly as possible so as to begin making payments.

While recognizing the concerns that have been raised regarding the Disability Tax Credit as an eligibility condition for the Canada Disability Benefit, the Government determined that relying on the DTC would allow for the fastest and most efficient implementation of the Benefit. Over 500,000 working-age persons with disabilities already hold a Disability Tax Credit certificate and, depending on their income level could qualify for the Canada Disability Benefit without providing any further proof of disability. The DTC does not require an applicant to have any level of income but rather it is based on the disability's functional limitation and impact on one's ability to carry over regular activities of daily living. In addition, the development of a new disability adjudication model for the Canada Disability Benefit would be complex, time consuming and require additional consultation with the disability and medical communities, which would have significantly delayed the delivery of the Benefit while imposing new administrative burdens on potential applicants and health care providers. As an additional consideration, holding a DTC certificate would also allow persons with disabilities to qualify for other federal supports, including the Registered Disability Savings Plan and the Canada Workers Benefit disability supplement. A valid DTC certificate may also provide access to the following tax measures:

- Multigenerational home renovation tax credit;
- Home accessibility tax credit;
- Canada caregiver credit;
- Medical expense tax credit;
- Tuition, education, and textbook amounts;
- Home buyers' plan;
- Canadian dental care plan;
- Lifelong Learning Plan;
- Disability supports deduction;
- Excise gasoline tax refund.

With regard to benefit amount and calculations, stakeholders suggested a wide range of values and factors to take into consideration in determining the benefit amount. During engagement activities, stakeholders advocated for an amount that reduces poverty among persons with disability, avoids creating barriers to employment, and supplements existing benefit programs.