



Basic Income Manitoba Revenu de base Manitoba

A premier has to take the step to do it (basic income) provincially and the other provinces will want in. This is the way Medicare happened.

Senator Kim Pate

Basic Income Webinar, Sept. 10, 2025

GASP Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet¹

HALIFAX-- Canadian farmers (National Farmers Union) plan to lobby the federal government to implement a guaranteed annual income and to cap profits of the major grocery chains in the country.

Emily Baron Cadloff

The Canadian Press, Nov. 25, 2025²

Why are you — yes you — opposed to Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income?

By Barby Hall

In September 2024, Private Members Bill C-223, calling for the government to devise a national framework for a Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income for all Canadians 18 years and up, came before Parliament to be voted on at second reading.

The bill had already passed first reading after it was introduced in December 2021 by Leah Gazan, the NDP MP for Winnipeg Centre.

Had it passed this second vote, it would still need the Senate's approval. If approved, the proposal would have been taken on by the government for serious discussion as a possible policy for Canada.

Unfortunately, the bill went to the "nays" in Parliament, 273 to 54.³

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HUAQVStSNg>

² https://www.thecanadianpressnews.ca/politics/canadian-farmers-to-lobby-federal-government-to-cap-profits-of-major-grocers/article_70177a8a-332c-56ab-bcd2-cb9b1f9a9cb7.html

³ ourcommons.ca/Members/en/votes/44/1/859

Fortunately, thanks to Senator Kim Pate, a second bill, Bill S-206, calling for the Canadian government to develop a framework for the implementation of a Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income for all regions of Canada, is in committee in the Senate, having passed first and second readings there.

Once the bill has been discussed and debated, the committee will make a report and the bill will be voted on again for its third reading in the Senate. If passed, it will be sent back to the House of Commons for discussion and three more readings or votes. If passed by the Commons, the bill will require Royal Assent and then will be acted upon by the Canadian government.

This article is directed to those MPs who voted against Gazan's bill, as well as other people opposed to Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income.

Read on:

WHAT IS GUARANTEED LIVEABLE INCOME?

Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income, as its name implies, is a proposed monthly Basic Needs Income extended to all Canadians 18 years and up for the life of the individual, or in some renditions, as long and as often as needed.

It would be provided without prerequisites or strings attached, allowing individuals throughout their lives to meet their basic needs such as rent, mortgage payments, food, transportation, personal needs and incidentals.

During times when they cannot meet these needs through employment or other means, Basic Income would ensure that they would not become homeless or without food security. Some Basic Income proposals postulate a temporary discontinuance of the Basic Income during periods of high earnings.

Basic Income does not preclude or replace specific additional social, physical or mental health-related supports that an individual might need in addition to Basic Income, such as specialized home or personal care, equipment for the differently-abled, addictions counselling or recovery.

Though amounts vary, a common and mean monthly figure discussed for Basic Income is \$2,000 monthly. Taken out of context the phrase "common and mean" would traditionally amount to an insult. In this case it's more of a Godsend, but one that is attainable by mortals here in Canada.

ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

There is an elephant stalking the room of our minds and our country. Might as well bring him or her out into the open.

Does Basic Income bring us perilously close to being instantly labeled as a crazy fringe outlier, a commie or a mad Socialist? Would Basic Income, like our free healthcare system, further strain the cage bars of capitalism that constrict and strangle many people's road to success in life?

Forget the countries that have employed socialism or degrees of socialism and then made a mess of it with accompanying militarization, oppression or the emergence of dictators with rigid controls of the people's movements.

Canada is not obliged to cascade like Niagara Falls over the escarpment toward failure just because some other countries have gotten it wrong or fallen prey to other self-serving forces.

Oh my gawd, would the adoption of Basic Income mean that Canada had socialist leanings? Who cares?

We do what is right for the country, for its citizens and for the country's health & prosperity.

Yet in spite of all the terrific speeches and declarations of government claiming to see to its citizens' health and prosperity, there remains in reality a huge lack of actual measures to make it happen. Most politicians as evidenced by the recent defeat of Basic Income Bill C-223 in Parliament prefer the Wild West model; some people make it in our system, while many more stagnate, languish or fall through the cracks.

THE POOR ARE NOT DESERVING

The poor are not deserving.

That is basically what the MPs who voted against this bill are saying to all the Canadians who would benefit from a Basic Income.

Perhaps an uncomfortable image to wear, but it really would be a productive first step to come clean and admit it.

The poor in your estimation are not deserving.

Who are the poor?

The poor in our country are made up of:

- the working poor;
- the under-employed;
- those workers who are underpaid and exploited;
- the unemployed, both skilled and unskilled;
- many farmers;
- people with disabilities, whether those are physical, intellectual or related to mental health issues;

- youth aging out of foster care;
- the unpaid raisers of children;
- the unpaid caregivers of senior adults;
- recovering trauma victims;
- individuals with addictions;
- anyone who falls on hard times.

All of these individuals, in the estimation of those MPs and other Basic Income opponents, do not deserve to be lifted from the horrors of housing and food insecurity or loss.

They do not deserve to know the minimal but profound peace and security that a guaranteed income allowing them to pay rent and the means to live each month would give.

And since the means to shelter and feed oneself properly is a necessary basis from which to avail oneself successfully of training, higher education, job acquisition and continuity in any of these areas, you must believe they are not deserving of a meaningful life – where one can blossom, direct their life, thrive, earn and reach their potential.

You are content to let a large segment of the population languish at the very least, suffer regularly and deeply in many cases, among those who must live near or below the poverty line.

Studies of pilot projects nationally and internationally which range from six months to five years and counting show an increase in high-school graduates. Some show an overall increase in number of hours worked.

WHAT ABOUT TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION?

There is a student loan system you counter. But a successful course of study or training for specialized work requires stable housing and the regular ingesting of nutrients among other things, as well as the freedom from the threat of having these things taken away.

Housing and food security are also needed for the successful application of this higher education or training for work in a job following their completion.

Success is what we're after here. Not languishing, not cyclical or perpetual insecurity. Not a life of despair or hopelessness.

A contented, healthy, flourishing, engaged population and workforce. A country that has many diverse and burgeoning institutions, think tanks, innovators, healers, and diverse companies large and small, as well as a skilled and varied workforce to call on at a moment's notice over any problem or challenge facing the country.

TOO EXPENSIVE, YOU SAY

Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income is too expensive, you say. We can't afford to fund it. It would drive up the debt and inflation.

The wealthy, ultra-rich and corporations have a myriad of ways to get out of paying the taxes that the rest of us pay yearly, through tax breaks and loopholes in the tax system that reduce, or in some cases eliminate, taxes altogether paid on wealth from assets, investments, property and more.

In 2023, the top 100 CEOs made 210 times more than the average worker.⁴

Since 1994, the trend to make the taxation and transfer of wealth system more equitable has actually reversed. The system has been made less and less equitable and more advantageous to the wealthy, ultra-wealthy and large corporations.

According to the Broadbent Institute and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the tax system as it exists today rewards those who have already “made it” while penalizing everyone who relies on wages or salaries for their income, typically middle and low-income Canadians.⁵

According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives a “wealth tax of one per cent on net worth over \$10 million, two per cent over \$50 million and three per cent over \$100 million could raise an estimated \$32 billion in its first year.”⁶

We could do even better to close certain loopholes in the tax system to make it more progressive and equitable and ensure the ultra-rich paid their fair share.

So a progressive tax system would be part of how Basic Income could be funded.

There are other avenues without borrowing money and adding to the country's debt, nor raising inflation or personal income tax.

UBI Works, a national research group, has written an article, “Eight Ways to Pay for a Recovery Universal Basic Income” and cites \$874 billion worth of tax reform ideas which could pay for a monthly \$2,000 Basic Income program three times over.⁷ These ideas are not exhaustive.

MAJOR BENEFITS FOR CANADIANS AND CANADIAN SOCIETY FROM GUARANTEED BASIC INCOME

⁴ policyalternatives.ca/news-research/canadas-richest-100-ceos-make-210-times-more-than-average-worker/

⁵ policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/canadas-shift-more-regressive-tax-system-2004-2022

⁶ policynote.ca/wealth-tax-2/

⁷ ubiworks.ca/howtopay-recovery-ubi

Basic Income pilot projects have been proven in studies nationally and internationally to lead to:

- ** Decreases in crime
- ** Higher rates of high-school graduation
- ** Improved health and nutrition among children and families in general
- ** Higher birth weights of newborns
- ** Fewer doctor's visits and hospital stays
- ** Increased personal savings
- ** Decrease in family violence
- ** Lowered alcohol consumption
- ** An increase in small business start-ups
- ** Increase in overall hours worked
- ** An increase in economic spending mostly on food, basic needs and transportation
- ** A giant step toward the eradication of poverty and child poverty, in some cases up to 50 per cent

Many pilot projects, even the short-term ones, report the highest incidence of these positive measures occurring in the lowest-income sectors.

We're already paying the very high costs of poverty through elevated healthcare costs, costs associated with increased criminalization, family disruptions and elsewhere. How much could we save if people had access to a Guaranteed Liveable Income?

A detailed list and dive into these and other Basic Income pilot projects in the U.S. and Canada and around the world can be found online at Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income Pilot Projects in Wikipedia⁸

The pilot projects demonstrate that should the country embrace Basic Income, we would, as a country, be on our way to stability and economic prosperity.

BOOTSTRAP THEORY VS. LEG-UP THEORY

⁸ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_basic_income_pilots

See also the Stanford Basic Income Lab <https://basicincome.stanford.edu/experiments-map/>

Yet, many of you who are Basic Income opponents still support the “bootstrap” theory vs the “leg-up” theory.

Pull yourself up by the bootstraps to get ahead.

Believe me, there would still be plenty of that if Basic Income were implemented, enough to satisfy your appetites there, I’m sure.

Life and the attainment of goals and potential is not easy, even under Basic Income.

Time for an understatement: Canada as a have-country should dignify itself and its citizens by adopting Basic Income.

By doing so, Canadians would have the means to continue to shelter and feed themselves on their journeys toward autonomy and sustaining a meaningful contribution to themselves, their families and society.

The alternative is settling for the status quo: a country somewhat mired in lost potential, needless suffering, growing addiction, theft and crime.

Can’t afford Basic Income? Can’t afford not to, in my estimation.

Let’s examine this concept of a “leg-up” that many of you are so opposed to.

Basic Income: – You “succeeded” without it, so why not everyone else? Did you now?

Let’s go chronologically. If your great grandparents or great-great grandparents hailed from Europe, especially England, Scotland or France, most received a big leg-up upon arrival from Indigenous Peoples.

They showed and offered the colonists food sources and life-saving medicine. Their Chiefs sat with the newcomers’ representatives and agreed in sacred ceremonies to share the valuable land and resources for perpetuity.

Yes, there was conflict, but the solemn promises made in treaties were not dashed and violated by the Indigenous side.

Leg-up # 2: After the treaties were made, Europeans brought more and more settlers from Europe to what is now Canada illegally and in violation of the treaties. Their actions pre-supposed all of pre-Canada was theirs to own, while Indigenous peoples were forced from their homes and territories, and eventually onto an Apartheid-like reserve system with restrictions on mobility, economic activities and political participation.⁹

⁹ <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/pass-system-in-canada#>

The newcomers were given free land upon which to build homes and feed themselves, often around 100 acres. They received a big incentive to establish themselves in pre-Canada, carry out and make their living. Those of us whose ancestors received this land still benefit from this “leg-up” gift by inheriting and owning farmland, or having acquired money following the sale of it.

This brings us to the topic of Generational Wealth. If you are a hard-working farmer, putting food on all our tables, the land one farms on, or monies from the sale of it — for those people whose ancestors received the land grant — represents Generational Wealth and a “leg-up” that some people benefit from down the line.

Many “legs up” occur within families and sometimes outside of them, in the natural forms of food and lodging and money for other expenses in varying degrees.

Once youth “leave the nest” for work or education, often but not always making use of the country’s student loan program, a certain “Leg-up” assistance occurs in the form of “fallback” in many families.

Students or young workers come back under the family roof either between semesters to live and work, or in times of difficulty paying bills, between jobs or after the unforeseen termination of a job.

This form of fallback can continue to exist into adulthood for appropriate times, whether it goes used or unused in many families. This qualifies as a “leg-up” factor, useful and invaluable to the recipient.

Yet many Canadian citizens, due to a myriad of factors, do not have this fallback available to them. This can greatly impede their progress and success in life.

LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELD

Many Canadian citizens, for a myriad of reasons, do not have the fallback of supportive or would-be supportive family where young adult children could be housed, fed or helped out between school semesters, following a job termination or between jobs.

Many Canadians of all ages face periods of time in which they have difficulty paying their bills. They make one bill payment, but for that one, there are always two or three more, creating a cascading effect in which they can’t cover the bills and might lose their amenities or housing.

Basic Income would level the playing field for Canadians here and act to save people from all kinds of unnecessary strife, including homelessness. It would facilitate their progress, instead of throwing up insurmountable walls in the area of basic needs.

Did you pay or break your back to build and maintain the roads you travel on daily? *I pay for all this with my taxes, you counter. Exactly.*

Taxes should go to facilitating our endeavours to live, learn, pursue and carry out our livelihoods.

I bet it doesn't bother you if there are others who use the roads more than you do. Why would it? The roads are there to facilitate mobility for all, and be used whenever needed.

If any one of us has a fire in our home, we call on the fire department to come and put out the fire and carry out any rescue operations necessary to save and protect life and property. An invaluable service is paid for by the government with our taxes.

There might spring to mind more “leg-up” instances of modern life where people are given financial and other sustaining help over difficult periods or obstacles toward progress or success.

Then there is Nature, which never stops giving. Trees and plants breathe for us and with us all the time, cleaning the air of harmful CO₂ and giving us oxygen, the breath of life.

Animals and plants sacrifice their very lives to feed us.

Surely we humans can organize our governance to see to each other's basic needs.

One more number to throw out to you – 4.5. This is the recommendation number of the Calls for Justice stemming from the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls/2-Spirited Plus that calls for a Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income for all Canadians, including Indigenous Peoples.

It is worth noting that a Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income gives a person in an abusive relationship, with or without children, an option and the means to leave the abuser they would otherwise not have.

Indigenous people, still struggling with and making their recoveries from grave historic wrongdoings and disruptions to their economies, families and culture, are among the poorest of all Canadians.

More than 40 per cent of all First Nations children in Manitoba live in poverty, with the rate slightly higher for those living on reserve, according to *35 Years In: Manitoba Needs an AntiPoverty Strategy that Works*, a recent report by Campaign 2000.¹⁰

The many witnesses at the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls had the grace and good sense to call for a Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income for *all* Canadians knowing firsthand the strangling effects of poverty and what a “leg-up” in the form of a Basic Income could do to help their people and all Canadians.

As a country, a Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income would certainly be a true and fitting act of Reconciliation. Let's fix our country. Let's devise a Guaranteed Basic Income Plan and Canadians will do the rest.

¹⁰ <https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/35YearsInWebDec20.pdf> (p. 18)

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Stay tuned for Calls to Action appearing in the near future on the Basic Income Manitoba website basicincomemanitoba.ca. If the Senate's Basic Income bill (S-206) passes third reading in the Senate, the bill will be sent back to the House of Commons for three more cycles of discussion and voting. At that point, letters to MPs showing your support for the Basic Income bill and urging a yes vote will be invaluable.