

Ministerial Statement – Provincial Government Supports Joining Optional Protocol to UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Children, Seniors and Social Development

April 19, 2018

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The following statement was given today in the House of Assembly by the Honourable Lisa Dempster, Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express our government's formal support for Canada to join the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This UN Convention places existing rights and freedoms in a disability context. It was ratified by the Government of Canada, with support from all provinces and territories in 2010.

The Federal Government has now officially requested Newfoundland and Labrador's formal support to join the Optional Protocol, which commits Canada to co-operating with an individual complaints procedure and an inquiry procedure for grave or systemic violations of the UN Convention.

Mr. Speaker, this province's Policy Framework for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities is closely aligned with the convention.

Through our collaboration with the community of persons with disabilities, our government is creating change. We have increased accessible transportation and removed barriers from our electoral processes. We have made amendments to the buildings accessibility and wildlife regulations and we are promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities on agencies, boards and commissions.

Joining the Optional Protocol further strengthens our commitments to equality, inclusion and full participation in Canadian society for persons with disabilities and reaffirms our support for the UN Convention.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador values the contributions of persons with disabilities in this province and we remain committed to ensuring that their human rights and fundamental freedoms are protected.

I call on all my colleagues in this Honourable House to also express their support for the Optional Protocol.

Thank You, Mr. Speaker.

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1:50 pm