



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

Jenica Atwin

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
FREDERICTON

January 13th, 2021

**Hon. Filomena Tassi**  
**Minister of Labour**

**Cc : Hon. Maryam Monsef**  
**Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development**

**House of Commons**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**  
**Canada**  
**K1A 0A6**

**Re: Maternity Leave Benefits**

Dear Minister Tassi,

It is with great concern and urgency that I'm writing to you today regarding the changes made to EI maternity and parental benefits on September 27th. As you are aware these changes aim to make access to EI maternity and parental benefits easier for people that would otherwise not qualify as well as improve the protection of Canadians in these difficult times. I welcomed these changes made by the government at the time, I believe however, that their structure is still making it difficult for a number of Canadians to access the totality of the benefits in place.

This main issue that was brought up to me regards the retroactivity of the application. In the current situation, any mother applying after the 27th of September would receive the \$500/week benefit if they applied for standard maternity benefits, however in a situation where the person applied before the said date they are only eligible for a portion of that benefit even if they comply with every other criterion of the demand.

In the context of a pandemic like we are facing this year, parents have had to deal with difficult situations such as having to take care of their children through the closing of schools and child care centers, while working at the same time. It is often not feasible, especially for single mothers, mothers of young children and people that can't work from home. These Canadians are the demographic in need of the most help, but are struggling because they are unable to access the current benefits if they applied before September 27th.

This arbitrary deadline is leaving many people without the help needed. This is why I urge you to make the changes applied to these benefits available retroactively to help as many parents as possible through the difficult times that Canadians are facing.

Thank you for your consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenica Atwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J".

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