



For Immediate Release

## Do we need a Basic Income Guarantee in Canada?

***The answer is 'yes' according to a new report that explores details behind the emerging policy***

**May 30, 2017** – As provinces across Canada continue to debate and discuss basic income guarantee (B.I.G.), the second report of Northern Policy Institute's *B.I.G. series* reflects back on Manitoba's Mincome experiment to argue that, if well designed, a B.I.G. can deliver a range of benefits at a feasible cost to Canadians.

*Do We Still Need a Basic Income Guarantee in Canada?*, by Evelyn Forget cites shifts in the economy leading to income insecurity and outdated social policies, as reasons why basic income is a much needed policy in Canada for people finding themselves falling between the gaps

In the 1970s, Canada tested Basic Income Guarantee in a field experiment in Manitoba called Mincome. Almost forty years later, Ontario is preparing for a three year basic income guarantee pilot based on the model proposed in [Hugh Segal's recent discussion paper](#). It is through both of these lenses that Forget explores both key design principles for consideration, and estimated costs associated with such a policy at the federal level.

According to the report, key considerations should include:

- 1) B.I.G should be targeted and support should be gradually withdrawn as income increases
- 2) B.I.G should be targeted to adults (18-64 years of age)
- 3) B.I.G should make no one who depends on existing income support programs worse off
- 4) Costs of a B.I.G should be allocated to those with the greatest capacity to bear the burden
- 5) B.I.G should not be seen as a replacement for all other social programs

"The key is to find the right way to integrate the B.I.G into all of the existing social programs that exist in the country," states Forget. "Now is the time to address, head-on, the challenges and trade-offs that are necessary to create a universal B.I.G. that can meet the needs of Canadians in the 21st century. The challenges are real, but so too are the costs of doing nothing."

This paper is the second of a series that explores the various topics presented at NPI's Basic Income Guarantee conference in October, 2016. Report topics include food security issues, potential models for a B.I.G. pilot, tax implications, and the potential impact on social innovators and First Nations communities.



To view presentations from the NPI's BIG conference and explore comments and feedback from participants, visit [www.northernpolicy.ca/big](http://www.northernpolicy.ca/big)

**Media Interviews:** Author Evelyn Forget, and NPI President & CEO, Charles Cirtwill are both available for comment.

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### **About Northern Policy Institute:**

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

### **About the author:**

**Evelyn L Forget** is Professor in Community Health Sciences at the University of Manitoba and Adjunct Professor of Economics at McMaster University and the University of Manitoba. She is Director of the Manitoba Research Data Centre and Adjunct Scientist at the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy. The overarching question that guides her research is this: "How can we best ensure that everyone has access to the tools and resources they need to live a full life?" Her most recent work examines the relationships between poverty, inequality, health and social outcomes. She has evaluated the health and social impact of the Mincome Basic Income Experiment conducted in Canada in the mid-1970s. Dr. Forget has received a number of grants and awards for her research, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012) and the McCracken Award in Economic Statistics from the Canadian Economics Association. She has consulted with federal, provincial and First Nations governments, as well as national and international NGOs.

### **About the Basic Income Guarantee (B.I.G.) Series:**

Northern Policy Institute's B.I.G. Series explores various policy topics related to the implementation, and potential economic and social impacts of a basic income guarantee in Ontario. Research and analysis offered in the reports were first presented at NPI's Basic Income Guarantee conference in October, 2016. Report topics explored by multidisciplinary researchers and authors recognized in their field include food security, potential models for a B.I.G. pilot, tax implications, and the potential impact on social innovators and First Nations.

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