



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-01116**

BY: **MR. STEWART (BURNABY SOUTH)**

DATE: **FEBRUARY 7, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **JOËL LIGHTBOUND**

Response by the Minister of Health

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Health Care Services

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

Although the federal government plays a role in supporting health care by providing funding to the Provinces and Territories, provincial and territorial governments have primary jurisdiction for the administration and delivery of health care services, which includes managing their health care budgets.

Canadians contribute to the financing of medically necessary hospital and physician services primarily, but not exclusively, through their federal and provincial income taxes. The Provinces and Territories also finance health care services through payroll taxes, sales taxes, health care premiums, other provincial or territorial revenues, or a combination of these methods.

Under the *Canada Health Act*, health insurance premiums are permitted as long as residents are not denied coverage for, and thus access to, medically necessary hospital and physician services due to the inability to pay such premiums.

While British Columbia is the only province that requires the direct payment of premiums from its residents, failure to pay premiums is not a barrier to coverage since residents with limited incomes are eligible for relief of some or all of their premium payments, in accordance with requirements set out in British Columbia legislation and regulations.

On February 21, 2017 the British Columbia Government announced that Medical Services Plan (MSP) premium rates will be reduced by 50%, effective January 1, 2018, with the objective of eliminating MSP premiums over time.