

For Immediate Release  
January 20, 2009

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## **Economic stimulus must include long term investment in public services**

Union of Public Sector Employees President, Shelley Ward, traveled to the Nation's Capital last week joining other front-line workers from across Canada. They were there representing workers in health, community based social services, and the justice system to deliver a message to the first ministers who were there discussing the economic crisis facing Canadians.

President Ward, a Licensed Practical Nurse, has spent the majority of her nursing career providing essential care to persons with mental health issues. She has witnessed first-hand the detrimental effects of funding cuts which have taken place over the past 15 years. "Social services such as health care, mental health programs, community based social services and correctional services have been negatively impacted by these cuts. The most vulnerable members of our society have been neglected for far too long," says Ward.

"Canadians are united behind the idea that the next federal budget must include a stimulus package. This package must include money for infrastructure and increased funding for public services. It must provide adequate funding for social services with sustainable jobs to provide the services, while at the same time ensuring those in need are able to access the services they require."

"When governments spend money on infrastructure and social services, it stimulates the GDP. For every dollar invested into an infrastructure project the GDP will see a benefit of one dollar and fifty-nine cents. When government cuts corporate taxes, the resulting increase in spending amounts to only thirty-cents for every dollar that is lost in tax revenue. No government wants to run a deficit, but drastic times call for drastic measures. Canadians can no longer afford band-aid solutions to address our economic problems. We need a comprehensive economic stimulus that will provide us with the ability to sustain ourselves for the long term. We need a government that is willing to make an economic investment in the future of our country," concludes Ward.

The PEI Union of Public Sector Employees is the largest labour union in the province. It represents over 5000 members in both the public and private sectors.