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September 8, 2025

**BY E-MAIL**

marjorie.michel@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Marjorie Michel, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Health  
House of Commons  
OTTAWA, ON  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

I am writing to applaud your commitment to protecting the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP). The program is widely popular and has made a real difference in the lives of people who could not previously afford this fundamental service. As you know, the number of approved applicants has grown from just over 3 million in 2024, to nearly 5 million as of July 31, 2025. This remarkable growth reflects real impact as over 1.7 million Canadians have already received care, with many accessing dental services for the first time in years due to the removal of financial barriers.

We are concerned that there is a core demographic group being excluded from this life-changing program. Families where one spouse is non-resident and has not filed a Canadian tax return are automatically excluded from being considered. This rule will disproportionately affect workers who have temporary work permits and recent immigrants who are still in the process of family reunification.

This rule has been justified on the basis of the income-tested nature of the program. However, this standard is not consistently applied across income-tested federal government benefits. For example, the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) has an additional form for reporting the world-wide income of a non-resident spouse or common-law partner. (<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/cra-arc/formspubs/pbg/ctb9/ctb9-25e.pdf>). This form supplements the information that is already entered on the first page of a worker's tax return, which asks for a spouse's name, SIN, and net income, whether or not that spouse has filed a tax return.

This inconsistent approach extends beyond the CCB. For example, eligibility for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) also considers non-resident spouse income but it does not depend on whether a non-resident spouse has filed a tax return. Federal programs such as the CCB and GIS demonstrate that federal programs can maintain income-testing standards while accommodating mixed-status families.

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**MARK HANCOCK**

National President/Président national

**CANDACE RENNICK**

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

**PATRICK GLOUTNEY, FRED HAHN, SHERRY HILLIER, GINA MCKAY, KAREN RANALLETTA**

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

CUPE urges you to reconsider this exclusionary rule and move to a model where workers are allowed to attest to their spouse's income and / or financial contributions to the household. Aligning CDCP eligibility criteria with established federal benefits practices would uphold the program's income-testing criteria while ensuring that a large group of vulnerable workers are not excluded from the benefits of Universal Health Care.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MH' followed by a stylized flourish.

MARK HANCOCK  
National President

GS:tj/cope491

cc: C. Rennick; F.-P. Champagne, Minister of Finance; G. Johns, MP, NDP Health Critic