

March 4, 2010

Maurine Karagianis, Opposition Critic for Children and Family Development and Child Care, calls on B.C. Legislature to designate March as Community Social Service Awareness Month:

Today I'd like to recognize the enormous contributions of British Columbia's exceptionally dedicated 15,000-strong community social service workers. These workers provide a myriad of services to women, children and families, youth, people with physical and developmental disabilities, and First Nations.

They make sure that people don't fall through the cracks when they have a special need or when they are facing a crisis in their lives. They look after some of the most vulnerable people with compassionate care. They are truly unsung heroes.

Municipal councils across B.C. have joined with community social service workers to ask that March be made community social services awareness month. I support that call and encourage members to join me.

B.C.'s community social service workers are people like Rosemary Menendez, a personal development plan worker who provides support for homeless women at the Salvation Army's Belkin House. Roy Scafe works with five at-risk youth in a group home. Roy helps them in all aspects of their lives while providing a safe, stable environment for them.

Stephanie Seaman is an early childhood educator at Shaughnessy Heights Day Care in Vancouver. Stephanie helps children aged three to five explore, socialize, play and develop day-to-day skills. Larry Jandu works for Western Human Resources in Langley, working to — as he puts it — bring the people from the inside out. Larry even started a program for residents of the home to raise chickens so they could have free-range eggs, and now they have a small vegetable garden.

In my time with the community social service sector, I've had the pleasure of meeting some of these workers. They are a most passionate, dedicated and giving group of people, the best you will ever encounter. I'm so very grateful and proud of the work that they do. I hope that all members will join me in saluting the exceptional contribution of B.C.'s community social service workers and join together in the spirit of designating March as community social services month.