

CUPE Charlottetown Area Office, 100 Capital Drive, Charlottetown, PE C1E 1E7

MEDIA ADVISORY

March 8, 2011

Coalition of Unions will Meet with both the Premier & Minister Sherry this Thursday to discuss Public, Private, Partnerships (P3s) regarding Affordable Housing Units for our Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Charlottetown - "The Canadian Union of Public Employees' (CUPE) Provincial Health Council, along with; the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (UPSE), the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), and the PEI Nurses' Union (PEINU), are meeting with both Premier Ghiz and the Honourable Janice Sherry, Minister of Community Services,, Seniors and Labour, on **Thursday, March 10th at 1:30 p.m.** to discuss the Request For Information (RFI) to create a Public, Private, Partnership (P3) for the private sector to build, own and operate new affordable housing units for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities on PEI," says Bill McKinnon, National Representative for CUPE.

The Coalition of Unions represents all unionized employees in the Health Sector and Provincial Civil Service on Prince Edward Island.

"We are quite concerned that even though the Ghiz Government has rejected P3s in the recent past for our new Manors (indicating that upon further review, P3s were not the best way to go for our Manors), that they have now taken the position that a P3 for our new affordable housing for seniors and persons with disabilities on PEI is somehow appropriate.

In fact, the P3 proposal for new affordable housing will not guarantee affordable housing for seniors and persons with disabilities in the long term. What this RFI proposes, is that the for-profit owner of these units will only have to guarantee subsidized units for these vulnerable members of our society for a maximum of ten (10) short years. After that, the rents for these financially challenged residents, living in these private for-profit units, will be subject to the same market forces as everyone else.

That is hardly a sustainable and long-term affordable housing strategy for this, or any government," concluded McKinnon.

Immediately following this meeting, (at approx. 2:30 p.m.), the Coalition of Unions' members and staff representatives will be available outside of the Premier's office, for interviews/comments.

For more information, please contact:

Bill McKinnon at (902) 439-1055 or (902) 566-4006.