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Minister Solberg Says Federal Involvement in Housing Has Never Been Stronger

OTTAWA, Ontario, February 07, 2008 — The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) today commented on the federal government's commitment to helping Canadians who are seeking to break free from the cycles of homelessness and poverty.

“Addressing the issues of housing and homelessness is a shared challenge and requires the engagement of all levels of government, the private sector and community organizations, said Minister Solberg. “I look forward to my upcoming meetings with my provincial-territorial colleagues as we continue to work together to address important housing issues.”

Minister Solberg noted that the federal government is taking steps to meet the needs of low and moderate income people not only through housing programs, but through its emphasis on training and work, and effective management of the economy and government finances. All of these factors contribute to reducing poverty and homelessness and to helping more Canadians afford a home.

“The best social safety net is a combination of relevant skills, a good job and strong families,” he stated. “While we know that most Canadians are well served by Canada's housing market, making us one of the best-housed countries in the world, we also recognize there is work ahead. And, we are delivering results.”

The federal government will invest more on affordable and supportive housing this year than any government in history.

To date, the federal government has invested \$1.4 billion in three provincial and territorial housing trusts to address short term pressures on the supply of affordable housing, over three years. Through the federal-provincial Affordable Housing Initiative, the government is investing \$1 billion, which is matched by provinces, territories and others, including municipalities and community groups.

This is in addition to the \$1.7 billion Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) spends annually in support of some 630,000 lower income households across Canada and the two-year, \$526 million investment in two initiatives — the new Homelessness Partnering Strategy, aimed at combating homelessness in communities across Canada; and the extension of CMHC's renovation programs for low-income people, including Aboriginal peoples.

As well, in April 2007, the federal government created a \$300 million First Nations Market Housing Fund; this is in addition to the annual spending on social housing and renovation on-reserve. This innovative approach will improve housing on-reserve, increase the housing supply and provide First Nations families and individuals with a means to build equity and generate wealth.

As Canada's national housing agency, CMHC draws on more than 60 years of experience to help Canadians access a variety of quality, environmentally sustainable, and affordable homes — homes that will continue to create vibrant and

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healthy communities and cities across the country.

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