

Newfoundland and Labrador Defense League (NLDL)

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*Newfoundland and Labrador – Make it Yours*

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**NLDL Supporting Province on Equalization Issue**

When the people of this province united to force Ottawa into recognizing the spirit and intent of the Atlantic Accord there were those who suspected we would eventually pay a heavy price for our efforts. The **NLDL** believes that this time is fast approaching and will soon be here unless we are all willing once again to stand up and work as one. Our members intend to make their sentiments clear to the federal government in the coming days and **NLDL** is asking the public to do the same.

The federal equalization program is fundamental to the fabric of the Canadian federation. The system is designed to ensure that all provinces can provide similar levels of service at a similar level of taxation. The **NLDL** firmly believes that equalization, as it exists today, is not working as intended. We believe that it must be amended to ensure that it fulfills its true intent however we do not believe this will result from changes now being contemplated by the federal Conservative government.

During the last election campaign Stephen Harper said he would remove non-renewable resources from the equalization formula and that no province would be worse off as a result of any amendments. Both of these promises are now off the table and the potential exists for our province to lose hundreds of millions of dollars while wealthier provinces receive more than they do today. If implemented, these amendments would fly in the face of the intent of equalization and would be viewed by the **NLDL** as a clear indication of how insignificant and unimportant Newfoundland and Labrador is seen by the Canadian government.

The **NLDL** does not support any political party. Instead we stand behind the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Our organization tackles issues and concerns on an individual basis and while this may mean the **NLDL** is sometimes at odds with our provincial leaders, we would like to inform the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that we fully support the Premier and his government in their position on equalization.

It is clear to the **NLDL**, as it is for many people, that our province has never had a voice in Canada. We have less than 2% of the seats in Parliament and once elected many of our politicians simply represent Ottawa back to Newfoundland and Labrador rather than fighting for their people. The time has come when we must all work together to fight for what is right. If we don't, our federal representatives certainly won't.

The **NLDL** intends to publicly stand up for our people on this and other issues at every available opportunity. We will be contacting various media outlets, members of Parliament regardless of political stripe, and partnering with other Newfoundland and Labrador groups or individuals in applying pressure on decision makers. The **NLDL** urges everyone in our province to make their voice heard today by phone, email or by otherwise contacting their members of Parliament. We also ask the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to take a stand during the next federal election through the choices they make.

The time for silence is over Newfoundland and Labrador. It is time for our so called federal representatives to realize that there are no more free rides. They must recognize that they have to do what they were elected to do or get out of the way so we can elect someone who will. It's time for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to have a real voice. That voice is yours. Don't remain silent any longer.

### **Newfoundland and Labrador Defense League (NLDL)**

Leadership Team

[Nldl\\_nl@yahoo.ca](mailto:Nldl_nl@yahoo.ca)

Media Contact: Myles Higgins

[higginsmyles@yahoo.ca](mailto:higginsmyles@yahoo.ca)

*The **NLDL** was formed in 2006 and is a non-profit advocacy organization made up of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians from across Canada and around the world. The **NLDL** is dedicated to the planning, development and promotion of initiatives for the empowerment of the Newfoundland and Labrador people. The **NLDL** is not affiliated with, or funded by, any political party.*

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