



# Summary of the joint submission on Bill C-22

November 2022



# Signatories

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- Société québécoise de la déficience intellectuelle
- Fédération québécoise de l'autisme
- Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec
- Alliance québécoise des regroupements régionaux pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées
- Réseau communautaire en santé mentale

# Summary

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The signatories of this brief, the Quebec Intellectual Disability Society, the Fédération québécoise de l'autisme, the Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec, and the Alliance québécoise des regroupements régionaux pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées and the Réseau Communautaire en santé mentale represent hundreds of thousands of persons with disabilities or mental health conditions in Quebec. We are uniting our voices today to make it clear that our organizations - and Quebec - are in favour of the rapid and unamended adoption of Bill C-22. We believe that the adoption of this bill could play a decisive role in strengthening the financial security of persons with disabilities or mental health conditions in Quebec and the rest of Canada. In this sense, we ask that parliamentarians move forward with Bill C-22 so that work on the regulatory aspects can begin as soon as possible.

Our organizations have experience with this type of exercise, as we have worked on implementing the Basic Income Program in Quebec in the last four years. Based on that experience, we know that organizations of persons with disabilities or mental health conditions, governments and legislators can work together to foster these individuals' social inclusion and economic participation. We hope to see such a dynamic at the federal level and will be available to participate and represent the interests of persons with disabilities in Quebec and Canada.

Furthermore, even if Bill C-22 were to be adopted quickly, in our view, the most crucial point would be the negotiations with the provinces and territories to ensure that they do not penalize individuals who will receive the Canadian Disability Benefit. Governments must work together to coordinate benefits while ensuring that the federal government's intervention does not lead to the disengagement of the provinces and territories regarding income security, social services and social protection in general. We are confident that the negotiations with Quebec will be successful and offer our cooperation to the federal and Quebec governments to assist in these discussions.

# Recommendations

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**Recommendation #1:** Do not amend bill C-22 and proceed with its expeditious adoption.

**Recommendation #2:** work with the provinces and territories to coordinate benefits.

**Recommendation #3:**

- Rapidly create workgroups on the regulatory aspects of the Benefit, made up of persons with disabilities and mental health conditions, their organizations and policy experts.
- Clarify the mandate and scope of the work of these workgroups and their composition.

**Recommendation #4:** in an initial implementation phase, provide access to the Benefit to recipients of provincial or territorial financial assistance programs for persons with disabilities or mental health conditions.

**Recommendation #5 :**

- Ensure the Benefit is not an excuse for provincial and territorial governments to scale down their financial assistance programs.
- Ensure the Benefit is complementary to provincial and territorial programs.
- Ensure the Benefit lifts out-of-poverty individuals who have difficulty accessing provincial and territorial financial security programs.

**Recommendation #6:** Update provincial and territorial legislation to ensure coordination of benefits and that recipients will not be penalized.

**Recommendation #7:** Ensure that the definition of disability follows the Accessible Canada Act and includes cyclical, periodic and invisible disabilities.

**Recommendation #8:** Consider granting access to the Canada Disability Benefit to caregivers who have left their jobs to care for a loved one.

**Recommendation #9:** Fully individualize the Benefit to prevent violence and financial abuse against persons with disabilities or mental health conditions.

**Recommendation #10:**

- Do not apply any reduction rate to the Benefit in relation to employment earnings.
- Tax the Benefit.
- Work with the provinces and territories to ensure that the reduction rates tied to employment earnings are phased out so that people can work and lead dignified lives.

**Recommendation #11:**

- Use the Market Basket Measure (MBM) as determined by Statistics Canada to regionalize the amount of the Benefit, achieve substantive equality and allow for a dignified life for all Canadians.
- Improve the Market Basket Measure by taking into account the additional costs associated with disability.