

## Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Liberal changes to Employment Insurance benefits

Earlier this month, Families, Children, and Social Development Minister Jean-Yves Duclos announced that Budget 2017 changes to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits for parents and caregivers would come into effect in December 2017. We, the Conservative Official Opposition, understand that Canadians work hard for their money and that all families need flexibility to care for their loved ones.

The changes to the EI program announced by Minister Duclos will become effective Dec. 3. Caregivers who provide care to a critically ill or injured adult family member will have access to a new benefit of up to 15 weeks; immediate and extended family members of children who are critically ill will have access to a new benefit that was previously available only to parents, which will replace the Parents of Critically Ill Children benefit and continue to provide up to 35 weeks of benefits; both medical doctors and nurse practitioners will now be able to sign medical certificates for the existing and new family caregiving benefits; parents will be able to choose between standard parental benefits (taken over 12 months) or extended parental benefits (taken over 18 months); and eligible pregnant workers will be able to receive EI maternity benefits earlier, up to 12 weeks before their due date. For more information on these changes, please visit

[www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2017/11/backgrounder\\_informationforeicclaimants.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2017/11/backgrounder_informationforeicclaimants.html)

While we the Conservative Official Opposition understand that all Canadian families require flexibility to care for their loved ones, we also believe in lowering taxes for Canadian families. We will continue to fight for hardworking Canadians who now pay more tax under the current Liberal Prime Minister and his government. This is evidenced by a Fraser Institute report which found that 81 per cent of Canadian middle class families are paying more tax under the current Liberal government (on average families are paying \$840 more each year). The current government has hurt middle class families by taking away income splitting and eliminating tax credits, including the Children's Arts and Fitness Tax Credit and the Public Transit Tax Credit. It is clear why the Trudeau government is raising taxes ? to pay for the Prime Minister's deficits, which cost more than \$100 billion.

The current Liberal government is aiming to support parents and family caregivers through changes to the EI program. However, at the same time, they are making hardworking Canadians pay more tax. They are also hurting families by removing important measures that help them.

We, the Conservative Official Opposition, will continue to stand up for Canadian families by fighting Prime Minister Trudeau's tax hikes every step of the way.

