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Funding for the 1992 program was no different. After extensive lobbying by housing groups and Liberal MPs, the Minister of Public Works announced on December 15, 1991 that funding for the co-op housing program would be renewed with a budget of \$6.1 million.

As recently as February 19, less than a week before the budget was introduced in the House of Commons, the same minister confirmed in writing that the co-op housing budget was secure. Based on his assurances, co-op groups across the country proceeded with the development of co-operative housing proposals. In an attempt to justify this broken promise the government is claiming that the co-op housing program is not targeted to those in need of affordable housing.

On March 11, 1992 the Minister of Finance criticized the co-op housing program during Question Period when he said:

How is it that it is well targeted when 50 per cent of those who occupy these units are not in effect qualified under the provisions of social housing?

The minister is revealing his ignorance of the co-op housing program. He is correct when he states that 50 per cent of those who occupy co-op housing units are not qualified for social housing. What he failed to acknowledge is that this same 50 per cent of occupants really pays market rent for their co-ops. These units are not subsidized by the government. It is the other 50 per cent that is targeted by the funding.

This statement by the Minister of Finance also contradicts his own colleague, the minister responsible for housing who said in his December press release that the co-op program was targeted. Again I quote:

The revised program will make more effective use of scarce tax dollars, ensuring federal subsidies are fully directed toward a mix of low and moderate income families.

These statements show that the government praised the co-op housing program a few months ago, and now the Minister of Finance is making excuses for eliminating a successful and cost effective program.

It appears that this government is willing to alter its conclusions of a program in order to justify its decisions.

In his March 11 comments the Minister of Finance also stated that the government had done enough to stimulate housing through its introduction to the use of RRSPs for down payments on homes and by allowing 5 per cent down payments for first-time home buyers.

While I applaud the government for introducing these two programs that I personally promoted for a year, along with my party, I note that these programs help those Canadians who have the savings to purchase a home.

Canadians who cannot afford to purchase homes have access to secure tenure if they live in a co-op housing unit. This program meets the needs of a different segment of Canadians: those who want to live in secure accommodations but cannot buy their own homes.

The \$6.1 million savings that the government will obtain by cutting the co-op housing program may appear to be well worth while, but the consequences of the cuts is the elimination of 4,000 construction jobs and manufacturing jobs in 1992. In these tough economic times, adding to welfare and unemployment expenditures will do nothing to reduce the deficit.

The termination of the co-op housing program is really an abdication by this government of its responsibilities to provide adequate and affordable shelter to Canadians in a healthy community environment. The program is cost efficient and offers affordable housing and mixed income communities to low income earners, seniors, single parents, natives and the disabled, most of whom are women. Many of these groups would be unable to find adequate shelter in the private marketplace.

There are 164,000 Canadians who are on a waiting list for co-op housing units. The private market is not serving all these Canadians. This government must keep its promise to housing groups and provide \$6.1 million for new co-op housing commitments to help those women and children.

Shelter is one of the basic needs of all humans and the private sector has failed a large group of poor Canadians.

Social housing and co-operative housing were developed to meet the special needs of various groups: single parent mothers and their children, elderly women living alone, native women and disabled women. All are looking to break the cycle of poverty.

Stability of tenure and adequate shelter are necessary to meet these goals. This is why the co-op housing program and social housing program are essential to many Canadians, particularly women and children. The recent budget cuts to these programs will seriously