



**Multiple Births Canada /
Naissance multiples
Canada**

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**Supporting
Multiple Births
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A Step in the Right Direction Multiple Births Canada applauds Private Member's Bill

NEWS RELEASE

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OTTAWA, ONTARIO – Multiple Births Canada (MBC) supports a new Bill to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Employment Insurance (EI) Act, recognizing the need for additional parental leave for multiple births or adoptions.

This private member's bill, introduced earlier today in the House of Commons of Canada by MP Sana Hassainia, will validate the Call to Dialogue initiated by MBC seven years ago. The enactment will amend the Canada Labour Code and the Employment Insurance Act to increase the maximum number of weeks during which parental benefits can be paid from 35 weeks to 70 weeks in the case of multiple births or multiple adoptions for qualified EI recipients.

MBC first drew attention to this need in 2005, when it benchmarked the practices of other countries in the instance of multiple pregnancies. It was noted that several countries provided additional leave in the case of multiple births including Sweden, Iceland, and Italy. In 2010 MBC renewed its Call for Dialogue by using National Multiple Births Awareness Day to focus on the theme: **Canada's EI Parental Leave must reflect the needs of multiple-birth infants**. MBC sent letters to every federal Member of Parliament, providing each with documents to support the need. An advance letter was sent to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the Honourable Diane Finley, to advise her of this activity and to invite her to rally held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on May 28th. Ms. Finley did not attend the rally; however the parliamentary aides of other MPs were present.

MBC is a national volunteer-driven charitable organization that has been committed to improving the quality of life for multiple-birth individuals and their families in Canada since it was first formed in 1978. Its objectives include promoting the health of twins, triplets and other multiple-birth individuals and their families. MBC develops and distributes educational resources and programs for multiple-birth individuals, their families, health providers and health organizations in Canada.

QUOTE

"EI is an insurance benefit that employees have paid premiums for throughout their working careers. All new parents have earned the right to the same parental leave benefits. We are asking for multiple-birth families to receive equal benefits for each child; not to be penalized because they have had their babies at the same time, rather than in different years."

Gail Moore, MBC Advocacy & Awareness Coordinator

QUICK FACTS

- Parents of multiples must divide their time between their newborns, decreasing their time spent with each infant accordingly, which in turn delays bonding, even more so when they are released from hospital at different times.
- There are only about 5,000 multiple pregnancies annually in Canada (Stats Can).
- Multiple Births Canada is the only national organization focusing on the needs of multiple-birth children, their families, and the professionals who care for them.
- MBC recently launched a new website – www.multiplebirthscanada.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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