

Letters to the editor; Co-ops can fix housing crisis

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Thanks for your Feb. 17 editorial, pointing out the need for more mixed- income community housing options to help reduce poverty in New Brunswick. Our province's 22 non-profit housing co-ops currently provide the benefits of mixed- income communities for nearly 2,100 low and middle-income New Brunswickers in more than 800 homes.

My organization, the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada), believes that part of the solution lies in developing more co-op homes across New Brunswick. In this regard, CHF Canada and our local association, Brunswick Co-op Housing, have called on the government to help build more co-op homes for New Brunswickers in housing need.

In November 2009, CHF Canada released a comprehensive report (based on housing data from the 2006 Census) documenting the number of Canadians and New Brunswickers in core housing need. According to the report's author Will Dunning, more than 29,000 households (or 10.3 per cent of New Brunswick households) are paying more than they can afford or are living in inadequate or unsuitable housing.

CHF Canada is ready to form a long-term partnership with the government to help increase New Brunswick's supply of affordable housing.

Co-op housing, an effective and proven housing model, can help fill the void for the province's most vulnerable citizens.

KEN ELLIOTT

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Woodstock