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In September 2003, the **PEI Working Group for a Livable Income** met for the first time and met again recently in October. The momentum for the creation of this Working Group came from the work being done by various organizations across the Island to address the issue of low wages and unacceptably low income levels on PEI. Last winter and spring, Cooper Institute had organized a series of workshop on Minimum Wage and how to influence Public policy. At the end of these sessions in Charlottetown, the participants suggested that this important work continue.

At the same time other organizations on PEI had interest and involvement in this issue. Members of Cooper Institute sent an invitation to other organizations to form a Working Group to keep the issue of low income on the public agenda. The following organizations responded and now are members of the Working Group: Association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'Î.-P.-É., Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin (SSTA), Federation of Labour, Women's Network PEI, PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women and West Prince Minimum Wage Interest Group.

The long term goals of the PEI Working Group for a Livable Income are to affect the culture that low wages are acceptable, that Islanders should be happy to have jobs and not complain about the low wages. Since the P.E.I. minimum wage is one of the lowest in Canada and is still below the poverty line the group will work towards ensuring a higher revenue that would be, at least, at or above the poverty line. In the short term, the group will explore ways to educate the population and government officials.

Any organizations or individuals interested in being involved can contact the Cooper Institute at 894-4573.

