

*Newfoundland & Labrador*

**proudstrong**  
**determined**

*The Future is Ours*



**PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER



In the 2003 general election, our team introduced an eight-year Blueprint for Prosperity – a plan for the social and economic development of Newfoundland and Labrador. We did not make irresponsible promises of overnight miracles. We pledged to focus realistically on the fundamentals and lay a solid foundation on which Newfoundlanders and Labradorians would be able to build a bright and secure future – progressively, step by bold step.

Today, our plan is well underway.

Despite enormous challenges at the outset, we have worked effectively together to set in motion a battery of strategic action plans to guide the way forward past the obstacles toward opportunity. Hand-in-hand with the people of our province, our team has taken important steps in building a Newfoundland and Labrador that is increasingly strong politically, financially, economically, culturally and environmentally; healthier; better educated; more secure; and more supportive of strong families, individuals and communities.

The fundamentals are more sound today than they were when we set to work together four years ago. We, as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, are well on our way to a vibrant future.

Our struggle for fairness in Confederation has not been without its opponents. Prior to the last federal election, Stephen Harper made a solemn written promise to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to remove nonrenewable resource revenues from equalization calculations. He also promised to honour the Atlantic Accord. Had he honoured his promises, the positive impact on Newfoundland and Labrador would have been enormous. However, he did not honour those commitments. Although the additional revenues would have made an immense difference to our bottom line, no federal leader or government will deter us in our march toward self-reliance and prosperity.

The lesson in all of this is that we cannot count on others to improve our lot in the federation of Canada. We must take it upon ourselves to control our own future, to become self-reliant.

We are doing just that. We are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. **Proud. Strong. Determined.** We know what it means to stand up on our own. We are ready and able to seize the opportunities before us and exercise a greater degree of autonomy to achieve our rightful place in Confederation.

**The Future is Ours.** Building on our eight-year plan with the policies we are announcing in this platform, let us move forward boldly with pride and confidence to achieve the great promise of prosperity that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians richly deserve.

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## **STRONG GOVERNANCE**

*Nothing has defined our government's first four years in office more than our province's bold new attitude of confidence in our ability to capitalize on our magnificent opportunities to build a brighter future for our people and our communities. In our approach to intergovernmental relations and our hunt for investment opportunities, we are no longer shy to boast about our strengths and our fierce determination to put those strengths to work effectively to generate opportunity and prosperity here at home. With an entrepreneurial spirit and a can-do attitude, we are ready to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with partners throughout the world, to compete with the best and to prove our strengths on each and every frontier. Building on our proud heritage, we will be masters of our own house.*

*When Newfoundlanders and Labradorians entrusted the government of their province to our team in 2003, we discovered a public treasury in serious fiscal trouble. We made it our goal to chart a far more responsible course: to stop overburdening future generations with an ever-increasing burden of debt that was siphoning more and more public money away from programs in order to pay for debt servicing. In cooperation with the people of our province and a dedicated public service, we set to work restoring the government's fiscal integrity and repairing its reputation progressively and responsibly. We found ways to focus government spending away from inefficiencies in order to free up resources and personnel to give new life to vital and effective public programs. We invested considerable revenues from the Atlantic Accord to address unfunded pension plan liabilities to free the province from debt responsibilities that hold us back from investing properly in infrastructure and programs for sustainable growth. By bringing accountability to public sector management, we restored the confidence of the world's financial marketplace and earned valuable credit-rating upgrades from three international bond-rating agencies. Responsible management of the people's precious fiscal resources will continue to be the hallmark of our administration as we work to leave our children a legacy, not of greater debt, but of greater heights of opportunity.*

*We remain committed to making our government more responsible, transparent and accountable than any other in our province's history. We brought in the Auditor General to thoroughly examine the books of the House of Assembly and subsequently commissioned a comprehensive overhaul of constituency allowances and related matters. As we proceed to implement our detailed strategic planning and reporting provisions across all government departments and agencies, people will continue to see a new and improved approach to governance that is open and responsive to input and interaction.*

### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- continue to implement the recommendations of the Report on the Review Commission on **Constituency Allowances** and Related Matters, authored by Chief Justice J. Derek Green, which included legislation that was enacted in 2007

- develop **whistleblower legislation**

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- recognize the fiscal sacrifices public sector workers have made over the last four years in upcoming **collective bargaining with public sector workers**
- achieve **self-reliance** within the federation of Canada
- continue to strive for fairness on the **Atlantic Accord and equalization**, including the removal of nonrenewable resource revenues from equalization calculations
- demand that the Government of Canada situate more **federal offices and jobs** in Newfoundland and Labrador, which has fewer per capita than any other province
- work with the Royal Canadian Legion and military families to establish an appropriate memorial in Newfoundland and Labrador to honour our soldiers who have served and sacrificed their lives in the **Afghanistan mission**
- work to have a **Supreme Court of Canada judge** appointed from Newfoundland and Labrador
- through the Government Purchasing Agency, implement revisions to reform **procurement and capital works tendering** policies
- continue to strengthen Newfoundland and Labrador's **fiscal autonomy** and fiscal capacity to meet our own obligations by diversifying and growing our own economy
- further develop our **debt management strategy** to continue to eliminate the debt and refinance existing debt with competitive rates
- allocate **budget surpluses** to pay down the public debt and thereby relieve the fiscal burden of interest payments and free fiscal resources for other initiatives, including tax relief
- survey all **Crown agencies with debt and investment portfolios** to enforce sound management practices in accordance with the Transparency and Accountability Act
- put in place a plan to enable Newfoundland and Labrador to develop the **capacity to manage our own wealth** within a decade, in coordination with Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic and the Newfoundland and Labrador investment management community

## **STRONG COMMUNITIES**

*Rural and regional economic development will remain among our government's highest priorities. The key elements for building strong, sustainable rural and regional economies are strong policies promoting infrastructure, natural resource development, value-added production, diversification, education, innovation, investment, entrepreneurial initiative, business success, family growth and a reliable social support network. In short, everything we do is geared to promoting the growth, prosperity and sustainability of our rural and regional economies. We have made tremendous strides in each of these areas, and we have started to see results. Together, in cooperation with municipalities, community leaders, investors, business leaders and our province's workers, we will continue to build on the gains we have already made in order to provide the bright future that Newfoundland and Labrador's resource-rich and idea-rich regions and communities are capable of sustaining.*

*We are especially proud of the exceptionally strong investments we have made in infrastructure to promote economic growth. We understand that it is through solid infrastructure – highways and roads, ferries, seaports and airports, water and sewer, waste management systems, broadband networks, schools, health care centres and so forth – that we are able to attract investment and promote growth in our rural communities. The infrastructure deficit our government inherited was massive – too massive to correct all at once – but we set forth developing a long-term strategy to get the work done. In the meantime, we immediately and significantly increased the funding for infrastructure repair and construction throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, and we have much progress to report. The provincial roads program has grown substantially to enable numerous projects throughout the province to proceed, creating jobs, safer driving conditions, confidence among investors, public optimism about the future and tangible evidence of our government's commitment to rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Much remains to be done and we will remain focused on spurring growth in ways that will attract new investment, new expansion and new jobs in communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.*

*We believe our success as a province is tied intrinsically to the success of the businesses that operate in our province, because these are the enterprises that elicit value from our resources and provide jobs for our people. We are determined to ensure that our government fully understands and responds to the concerns of businesses in all sectors and regions throughout Newfoundland and Labrador and serves, through its operations and programs, to advance business growth and success. We believe achieving a strong economy for today and tomorrow requires establishing sound industry structures, a highly skilled workforce, a culture of innovation, effective regulatory systems and a reputation for determination and success. Building on our strengths, we will utilize our well-developed sector profiles to identify opportunities to introduce new investments that will further increase business in our province and complement the efforts of local entrepreneurs, attracting new investment that strengthens our business clusters and benefits companies, workers, communities and our economy overall.*

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### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- follow through on the recommendations of the **Skills Task Force**, in particular the establishment of an Industry Coordinating Committee, to ensure Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are prepared and ready with the information and skills they need to fulfil skilled-labour requirements on large and small industrial ventures in the years ahead
- increase **apprenticeship opportunities** to facilitate the entry of Newfoundland and Labrador graduates into specialized trades
- continue to implement our **Infrastructure Strategy** to lay a strong foundation for rural and regional economic growth and stimulate job growth
- continue to implement our **Island and Labrador transportation strategies** to interconnect municipalities and regions
- continue to allocate at least \$60 million a year for **road improvements**
- through our Rural Secretariat and its partners throughout the province, follow through on the **Comprehensive Regional Diversification Strategy** and the wide range of other initiatives targeting opportunity development in sectors and regions throughout Newfoundland and Labrador
- work cooperatively with regional and zonal economic development boards on the development and implementation of **economic diversification strategies** to give each region a broadly-based foundation for commercial growth
- complete an **inventory of locally manufactured products and materials** to determine the availability of local resources that might be used in future construction projects
- review the province's **municipal financing and debt management policies** in consultation with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador
- improve our province's **drinking water policies** for our communities
- continue to implement a province-wide **solid waste management strategy** in consultation with municipalities
- maintain the commitment that there will be **no forced amalgamation** of municipalities but continue to work with municipalities on initiatives to share services regionally
- continue to work cooperatively and effectively with the representatives of **Aboriginal groups** in Newfoundland and Labrador: the Nunatsiavut Government, the Innu Nation, the Miawpukek First Nation, the Federation of Newfoundland Indians, and the Labrador Métis Nation
- press the Government of Canada to follow through on supporting the maintenance and

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upgrading of all portions of the **national highway system** in Newfoundland and Labrador, including the Trans-Labrador Highway

- complete the remaining 155 kilometres of the **Trans-Labrador Highway Phase III**
- continue to press the Government of Canada to designate the **Gulf ferry service**, which is constitutionally guaranteed under Term 32(1) of the Terms of Union, as an essential service
- carry forward with the implementation of the **vessel replacement strategy**
- maintain **provincial ferry rates** at a level equivalent to highway travel costs
- continue to lobby the federal government for a “built in Canada” **national shipbuilding strategy**, particularly focusing on the need to strengthen federal policies encouraging the local building and refitting of vessels such as frigates and submarines and the provision of export credit funding for the buyers of Canadian-made vessels
- continue to work strategically on all fronts to secure a significant role for Newfoundland and Labrador ports in **national marine trade and transportation policy**
- continue to work cooperatively with the Canadian North Atlantic Marine Partnership (CANMAP) bidding team, which includes Marystown’s Peter Kiewit and Sons, in a concerted effort to win the federal **Joint Support Ship (JSS) contract** for the Burin Peninsula
- explore the possibilities of further **developing international aviation linkages**
- continue to benefit from the input of the **Business Advisory Board**, established in May 2005 to provide expert advice about economic trends and conditions and about the future possibilities for our economy, including innovative initiatives and opportunities
- annually review our **business tax environment** to ensure Newfoundland and Labrador remains competitive
- continue to implement and monitor the **Red Tape Reduction Initiative**, which has already reduced the province’s regulatory burden by about 10%, in order to decrease the regulatory burden by more than 25%
- continue to ensure our province’s **regulatory regime** is efficient, flexible and transparent while maintaining high regulatory standards on a go-forward basis
- maintain support for the **Strategic Partnership Initiative**, which provides the means for improving communications and identifying opportunities for collaboration among business, labour and government on critical issues related to the competitiveness of the province, the importance of the post-secondary system for the future social and economic development of the province, and for building stronger institutional links to innovation and economic development

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- implement the new **Export Development Strategy**, which will include a suite of services including counseling on effective export development approaches, commercial export strategy development, and the identification of new opportunities
- in association with the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Technology Industries (NATI), establish a process to provide guidance to enable Newfoundland and Labrador enterprises to become successful **internet-based e-shopping vendors and marketers**
- implement the **Provincial Investment Attraction Strategy** to promote further business attraction, growth and diversification
- consult with the province's **industry associations and chambers of commerce** to fully explore business development and investment attraction interests
- investigate emerging new **niche markets** that match our unique skills, products and services, and position Newfoundland and Labrador businesses at the forefront of new opportunities
- continue to **promote supplier development** so local firms have greater opportunities, both on their own and in cooperative networks, to participate in supply development opportunities in the public and private sectors, both locally and abroad
- continue to work to secure **national defence shipbuilding, aerospace and fabrication contracts** for Newfoundland and Labrador operations with an added emphasis on maintaining and enhancing our companies' technology and the infrastructure required to be competitive in world markets, and facilitating the transfer of technology from established global leaders to our local companies
- establish, in partnership with industry associations, an **International Registry of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians**, a voluntary registry which includes a statement of their qualifications, applicable to those living inside as well as those living and working outside the province; and this registry will help to identify and recruit Newfoundland and Labrador residents and match them with job opportunities in the province
- **promote entrepreneurship** by providing information, education and support for young people interested in starting their own businesses
- maintain support for the **Ireland Business Partnerships**, as expanded and refocused in 2005 with a mandate to identify, foster and promote trade and partnership opportunities in business, education and culture with the Republic of Ireland
- pursue the development of a Memorandum of Understanding linking **Iceland** and Newfoundland and Labrador more closely for our mutual economic benefit

- maintain support for the **New England Trade and Investment Initiative**, which uses an innovative business-to-business approach to trade development, enabling the trade team to work one-on-one with Newfoundland and Labrador companies over an extended period to ensure their market entry strategy for New England is a success

- continue to promote trade opportunities through **trade missions** and communications linking Newfoundland and Labrador enterprises and institutions with others around the world

## STRONG ECONOMY

*Newfoundland and Labrador is blessed with natural resource wealth. Resource riches of this magnitude give us the confidence to believe in a brighter future for our communities. We possess an abundance of wild fish, farmed fish, fresh water, forests, crops, livestock, wildlife, minerals, oil and gas, hydro and wind potential, and so many other resources, many just waiting to be properly utilized. The days of resource giveaways are gone. Sound public sector strategies can and will enhance the attractiveness of these resources to developers and help to nurture and grow both primary and value-added industries. Most of these industries predominate in our rural areas where new opportunities can create a brand new foundation for local economies. Our fisheries – long a vital sector in Newfoundland and Labrador – will continue to receive our focused attention as we work for self-reliance. Already there are numerous success stories in aquaculture, agrifoods, mining and other key sectors, and with the new strategies that we have been busy developing, we intend to produce many more successes and place rural Newfoundland and Labrador on a firm footing for the decades ahead. What our rural towns sincerely want to see is tangible results in industries that promise jobs their residents can rely on. We are busy building solid successes, town by town, sector by sector, in regions throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, because we understand that constant effort is the key to real growth, and real growth is the key to a brighter future in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Our energy sector is particularly impressive. We are determined, from this day forward, to harness our vast arsenal of energy resources for the principal benefit and long-term self-reliance of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Our Energy Plan balances two objectives – economic self-reliance and environmental sustainability. Under the direction of a new Energy Corporation, wholly owned by the province, we will exploit our energy resources more effectively and creatively to build strong, thriving regions throughout our province. We stand ready to make the most of every development opportunity so that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians today and our children tomorrow will at last enjoy the full benefits of living in a land so rich in resources.*

### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

#### **for fisheries...**

- ensure the fishing industry remains a **key pillar of sustainable economic development** throughout Newfoundland and Labrador
- provide \$2.5 million for **Fishing Industry Workforce Adjustment**
- continue to press the federal government on the principles of **early retirement and licence buyout** that would be cost-shared on a 70/30 federal-provincial basis
- continue to pursue opportunities to develop an **aquaculture demonstration farm** project in collaboration with an industry partner and the Government of Canada
- continue to facilitate growth of the province's growing aquaculture industry through a wide

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range of programs and collaborative efforts that jointly will make Newfoundland and Labrador a national and international **leader in aquaculture** and create substantial employment and economic spinoff benefits

- maintain and, if necessary, expand the **Aquaculture Working Capital Fund**
- enhance the provincial government's **expertise in aquaculture science, technology, development and marketing** to ensure we fully understand the experiences of other jurisdictions and are ready to take maximum advantage of opportunities in this sector throughout Newfoundland and Labrador
- continue to work aggressively to promote Newfoundland and Labrador's **sealing industry** and strenuously challenge the efforts of those who work against its success
- invest \$5 million a year in the province's research and development Crown corporation and dedicate \$1 million of this funding exclusively for **oceans research**
- pursue a Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Fisheries Agreement for a decision-making process in which the federal and provincial governments work in **partnership for the sustainable management of the fisheries**
- continue to campaign to impose Canadian **custodial management** of the fisheries resources of the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks and the Flemish Cap, pressing the Government of Canada to follow through on its commitment in this regard
- press to ensure the federal government, in revising the Fisheries Act, continues to recognize the primacy of **adjacency** in licensing and allocation decisions and ensures Newfoundland and Labrador provincial representation on organizational structures for fisheries management and any co-management agreements with harvesters
- closely monitor the proposed reforms to the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization and be vocal and assertive in **protecting Canada's jurisdiction inside the 200 mile area**
- build on our progress to date in continuing to work with the European Union and other trading bodies to facilitate the fair entry of Newfoundland and Labrador fish products into **foreign markets**
- continue to implement the Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador **Cod Recovery Strategy** in conjunction with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Memorial University
- continue to implement and adjust as required the **Fish Processing Policy Framework** in an effort to promote local value-added processing and employment generation in consultation with industry stakeholders
- establish an enhanced **fisheries loan guarantee program** to facilitate bank financing for those fishers wishing to take advantage of federal licensing policy changes; and increase the

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maximum loan guarantee from \$1.3 million to \$2 million

- provide \$6 million for **fishing industry research and developmental work** over the next three years, which will include work associated with the development of new species, new products, new markets and new techniques to harvest, handle, process and market our marine fish resources
- provide \$1.5 million for a **voluntary fish auction** over three years
- provide \$750,000 for **Occupational Health and Safety** initiatives over the next three years
- in coordination with seafood processors and unions, continue to ensure seafood processors have access to appropriate **seafood processing training** programs with an emphasis on product quality
- through a Newfoundland and Labrador **seafood marketing strategy**, provide \$3 million to enhance market research and promotion efforts over the next three years, including the creation of a Newfoundland and Labrador Seafood Marketing Council, and continue to pursue investment and diversification opportunities in collaboration with the province's fishing industry to expand the range of products we create

#### **for agrifoods...**

- continue to implement the province's **Agrifoods Strategy**
- establish a **farm loan guarantee program** to provide farming enterprises with access to capital they need to grow
- promote continuing growth and diversification through continued strong investments in the **Agriculture and Agrifoods Development Fund**
- continue to work with the Government of Canada through the Atlantic Innovation Fund and with outside investors to leverage additional funds to move agrifoods projects forward to **commercialization**
- cooperate with our agricultural industry to **aggressively market** the full gamut of homegrown products both locally and in markets beyond Newfoundland and Labrador
- maintain the provincial **Agrifoods Assistance Program**
- maintain support for the **Fruit and Vegetable Storage Program**
- continue to provide off-farm **access roads and electrical services** for agricultural operations
- support **research and development** initiatives focused on the development of new or improved crops

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- explore new **value-added opportunities** in agriculture and agrifoods production

- continue to support the province's **fur industry**

#### **for forestry...**

- continue to implement the **Provincial Sustainable Forest Management Strategy**

- complete the **Forest Industry Competitiveness and Strategy Study**, which is part of a comprehensive review of the province's entire forest industry

- increase the province's capacity to manage the forest resource, to develop forest sector opportunities and to implement the **forest sector strategies** for Labrador and the island

- in cooperation with our forestry companies, maintain our increased support for **silviculture** initiatives to replenish our forest resources and secure supply

- implement the **Strategic Plan to Develop Labrador Secondary Manufacturing and Value-Added Wood Products Industry**

- explore opportunities to **attract new industries** to the province that can establish synergistic partnerships with local forest industry companies for mutual economic benefit and stability

- maintain our increased support for **fire suppression** by modernizing the waterbomber fleet

- encourage and support the development of a graduate science program, a policy centre, a **sustainable forestry cluster** and related project administration at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in association with the Centre of Excellence for Environmental Science, Research and Technology (CEE)

#### **for mining...**

- continue to discharge our responsibilities to ensure mineral exploration, mining and mineral processing operations in our province return **full and fair benefits** to Newfoundland and Labrador

- work to attract secondary and tertiary mineral-based **processing and manufacturing** operations to Newfoundland and Labrador communities

- maintain our strong investment in the **Mineral Incentive Program**, cognizant of the fact that every dollar spent under the junior exploration assistance component of the program leverages \$3 in private sector investment for grassroots exploration

- continue to invest in improving the collection of **geoscience data**, which benefits the mineral exploration and onshore petroleum exploration sectors

- in view of the Skills Task Force report, work to strengthen post-secondary programs to **train trades and management professionals** for the mining industry
- work with the project developers and Aboriginal communities to accelerate the development of underground mining at the **Voisey's Bay** site
- continue to negotiate a new power rate with the **Iron Ore Company of Canada and Wabush Mines** in anticipation of the expiry of their current power contract in 2014
- work with developers to promote further **local processing of imported mineral resources**, building on the success of the gold processing operation at Nugget Pond
- explore opportunities to develop the province's **uranium** resources
- work with mining industry communities to understand and address **environmental issues** associated with industry activities

#### **for energy...**

- implement Newfoundland and Labrador's first-ever comprehensive **Energy Plan** under the direction of a new Energy Corporation, establishing our province as an energy warehouse in eastern North America and taking maximum advantage of all opportunities including those associated with Churchill power development, wind power development, Hebron development, offshore and onshore exploration and development, and value-added activities
- continue to seek **jurisdictional ownership and effective control** of petroleum and other resources in waters adjacent to Newfoundland and Labrador
- continue to press the Government of Canada to enact **fallow field-type legislation** to require offshore lease holders to proceed to development within an established time frame or relinquish the holding so other developers may bid
- work with communities on the **west, south and north coasts and the regions of Labrador** to ensure they are prepared to take maximum advantage of opportunities and reap economic and employment benefits associated with the exploration and development of petroleum resources in the Laurentian, Orphan and Labrador basins in ways that eastern regions have benefitted from ongoing projects, particularly in supply and services

## STRONG LABRADOR

*Labradorians are understandably proud of the matchless beauty, the vast economic opportunities and the rich cultural heritage of Labrador. Citizens throughout Labrador look to the future with tremendous optimism and a strong desire to play a lead role in shaping Labrador's future. Our government is determined to ensure Labradorians have a strong voice and a meaningful role in all decisions about Labrador's future. This is particularly true for Labrador's Aboriginal peoples, for whom the land and its prospects hold special significance, both historically and constitutionally. Labradorians of all backgrounds have worked hard to nurture a spirit of cooperation and to build bridges uniting communities across the immense spaces of the Big Land. Labradorians have long aspired to take a place of prominence and priority from a province-wide perspective. The day for which Labradorians have long worked has now arrived. Our government unveiled and implemented the comprehensive Northern Strategic Plan for Labrador, a top-priority provincial initiative to work collaboratively with Labradorians to advance the dream of a new future of promise for all of Labrador – from the east to the west, from the north to the south. This is Labrador's time to shine, to flourish and to reap the benefits of growth as our province moves forward – united in vision – into a brand new era of promise, prosperity and self-reliance.*

*We have already made tremendous investments in Labrador to demonstrate our unwavering determination to ensure Labrador achieves its full promise. We have invested in Trans-Labrador Highway construction, the Red Bay-Lodge Bay depot, Labrador Marine Service improvements including ferry dock upgrades, Straits ferry service extension, the 5 Wing Goose Bay business / marketing plan, new health care facilities, kidney dialysis services, new education facilities including the College of the North Atlantic, new social work positions, additional policing services, a new Supreme Court building, improved justice services, and many, many other initiatives. We will continue to build on these initiatives with major investments in the years ahead.*

### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- follow through in implementing the five-year, \$250-million **Northern Strategic Plan for Labrador**, including many initiatives specified here
- provide an **energy rebate** to address one of the most pressing issues for rural isolated communities in Labrador, reducing the cost of basic electricity consumption needs of Labrador rural isolated residential customers to a level on par with the Labrador Interconnected Rates
- review Labrador isolated commercial customer **electricity rates**, with a view to introducing a comparable rebate when the Lower Churchill project is sanctioned for development
- continue to demand that the Government of Canada follow through on its commitment to establish a Rapid Reaction Force and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Squadron at **5 Wing Goose Bay**, to continue to market 5 Wing for foreign flight training, to ensure 5 Wing is an operational

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requirement of the Department of National Defence, and to identify and secure other opportunities for military and non-military use of the base, building on 5 Wing's strengths

- increase the **airlift subsidy**
- continue to implement the **Northern Agrifoods Development Strategy**
- implement the **Strategic Plan to Develop Labrador Secondary Manufacturing and Value-Added Wood Products Industry**
- work with Labradorians to achieve **increased benefits from resource developments** associated with mining operations in Labrador West and at Voisey's Bay and hydroelectricity development on the Lower Churchill River
- foster **mineral exploration and mining development** in northern Labrador
- work with the project developers and Aboriginal communities to accelerate the development of underground mining at the **Voisey's Bay** site
- provide flexibility with the **ferry service in the Labrador Straits** and consider extending the season as ice conditions permit
- complete **Phase III of the Trans-Labrador Highway**
- demand that the Government of Canada work with the province in completing the **hard surfacing of Phase I** of the Trans-Labrador Highway; and secure funding to hard surface the remainder of the Trans-Labrador Highway
- work with the Government of Canada to ensure the proper **maintenance of the Trans-Labrador Highway** portion of the national highway system
- present to the federal government options for a new **paved airstrip for Nain**
- present to the federal government options for paved airstrip improvements for **Port Hope Simpson regional airport**
- continue discussions on the concept and feasibility, including engineering and environmental-related work, of a **fibre optic link** throughout Labrador
- provide an annual operational grant to the new **Mealy Mountain Auditorium**
- proceed with the **Hopedale rink** project with a provincial contribution of \$300,000
- continue to advance work to achieve a **land claims settlement with the Innu Nation**
- continue to encourage the federal government to make a final decision on the **Labrador Metis**

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**Nation** land claim; until then, remain committed to work with the Labrador Metis Nation to access federal programs and services

- work with partners, Aboriginal governments and organizations to enhance K-12 initiatives to **prepare Aboriginal young people in Labrador for post-secondary education**
- complete the new **College of the North Atlantic** campus at Labrador West
- support a new satellite **kidney dialysis unit** in Happy Valley-Goose Bay for dialysis patients
- complete a new **health centre in Labrador West**
- proceed with the development of a new **long-term care facility in Happy Valley-Goose Bay**
- provide **picture archiving and communications systems** for the Labrador Health Centre and Captain William Jackman Memorial Hospital
- strengthen the **Tele-Health network and video conferencing** capacity in Labrador, to improve access to address chronic disease management in Labrador
- develop a program to address the issue of inadequate access to **dental services in northern Labrador**
- enhance **social work staffing** to address the needs of children and families, and persons with mental health and addictions issues
- provide **cultural awareness training** for prosecutors, educators and professionals who will work in Labrador to ensure they understand and appreciate the cultural uniqueness of the Innu and Inuit peoples
- expand **family justice services** in Labrador and to provide family court services in coastal communities to address needs in the region, particularly coastal and remote communities
- continue to improve access to **interpretation services in the justice system** through the establishment of an Aboriginal interpretation project including the creation of a justice liaison position
- increase funding to the **Labrador Travel Subsidy** program, including School Sports Newfoundland and Labrador funding
- increase funding for strategic development of the tourism product in Labrador through **Destination Labrador** in tandem with a campaign to promote the region's splendours, natural environment and rich cultures to provincial, national and international markets
- in consultation with the Nunatsiavut government, work to establish an appropriate **memorial monument at Hebron**

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- **meet with Combined Councils of Labrador Executive** once a year to review resolutions that pertain to the provincial government

## STRONG PEOPLE

*The family is the foundation of our communities. Over the decades, our communities have lost many families and many parents have opted to bear fewer children, leading to declining school enrolments, labour shortages, reduced consumer demand and other economic and social consequences. Promoting family growth can reverse these trends, bring new growth in schools, residential construction, consumer markets and business opportunities. With progressive family growth and immigration policies, we will begin the process of reversing the decline, rebuilding our population and strengthening our communities.*

*Many families are striving to achieve personal self-reliance, but barriers have kept many from achieving their potential and left them feeling helpless and miserable. Children are particularly vulnerable. Their inability to reach their full potential has repercussions throughout their lives and for generations to come. We as a society and through our government must always demonstrate a strong social conscience, a progressive vision of empowerment and a willingness to provide the tools and special assistance people may need to realize their potential. Our Poverty Reduction Strategy has earned the praise of anti-poverty leaders across the country, who say it is a model for others to follow. We are ready and determined to build on these major advances.*

*Women have consistently faced special barriers to equality in modern society. We have adopted a progressive approach to equality by investing in poverty reduction, education, apprenticeship and violence prevention, and we are ready to do more to build a more-inclusive society.*

*We are especially committed to improving the lives of our seniors, many of whom face significant barriers to enjoyment – concerns about health, housing, income, violence and crime. We as a society have a moral obligation to help our elders face such challenges with dignity, grace, compassion and the reassurance that they are secure. With our long-term care and community support strategy and our Healthy Aging Policy Framework to guide us, we are determined to ensure our people in their golden years can live self-fulfilling lives in a community of friends where they can pursue new opportunities with freedom and joy while appreciating the comfort of a strong social support network.*

*Strong communities are dynamic circles of citizens caring for one another and working cooperatively to build a society in which every person has the opportunity to apply his or her special talents in pursuit of dreams. The spirit of sharing and volunteering has been alive and well here for generations and is deeply ingrained in who we are. Approximately 23,000 people in our province are employed in the voluntary and non-profit sector. Approximately 187,000 people in our province volunteer, contributing a total of 35 million hours of valuable unpaid time to their communities and community organizations in a concerted effort to make our province stronger – the equivalent of 19,000 person-years of employment. It is through initiatives like volunteering that we strengthen one another and allow the ‘rising tide’ of economic self-reliance to ‘lift all boats’ and spread the opportunities throughout our communities.*

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**A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- develop and implement a **Progressive Family Growth Policy** to promote higher birth rates and population expansion by providing \$1,000 for each child born or adopted in Newfoundland and Labrador, at a cost of \$4.5 million
- review and improve the **process for adopting children** within the province, from other parts of Canada and from other countries with a goal of simplifying and accelerating adoption procedures without undermining measures to protect children
- add to the Employment Insurance **parental leave supplements** for the mothers and fathers of young children by \$100 a month, at a cost of \$5.4 million
- implement a 10-year **early learning and child care strategy**, which will include increasing the number of child care spaces by 30% and the number of low-income subsidies by 30% in the next four years, the provincial share of which will cost \$5 million
- enhance our **Early Learning and Child Care Plan** in terms of affordability, recruitment and retention of early childhood educators, increasing the numbers of child care spaces available particularly in rural areas, improving the quality of child care services and including children with disabilities; specifically, by increasing the family income threshold for access to the child care subsidy program, increasing the educational supplement paid to early childhood educators, providing an operating grant to non-profit groups in communities where the group is the only child care service provider and need has been demonstrated, providing funding for additional centre staff who care for children with special needs, and other measures
- provide additional opportunities for training in appropriate **pre- and post-natal care** to new parents
- enhance training and supports for **foster families**
- continue to implement our **Immigration Strategy** and work with the federal government to streamline the immigration process
- introduce **job protection legislation for Canadian Forces reservists**
- maintain the **lowest personal income tax rates** in Atlantic Canada to the extent that it is fiscally possible
- reduce the **fees for registering a motor vehicle** from \$180 to \$140 – passing \$10 million back to consumers
- continue the **home heating fuel rebate**, at an annual cost of \$12 million
- develop a comprehensive **strategy to encourage our youth to stay in our province**

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- continue to work to change Newfoundland and Labrador, over the ten-year period that began in 2004, from the jurisdiction with the highest poverty rates to one with the **lowest poverty rates in Canada**

- increase the current **poverty reduction budget** of \$92 million by at least 10%

- release a **guide to poverty reduction services** for individuals and families

- undertake a **measurement of poverty** midway through the term to determine the extent to which the poverty reduction initiatives are working

- evaluating demographic trends throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, determine the relative need for **appropriate-size public housing units** that better accommodate smaller families, and ensure future construction and retrofitting projects are adjusted to reflect demographic realities

- continue to provide **rent supplement** for low income persons, including seniors, residing in Newfoundland Labrador Housing

- continue to work with income support clients, low-income earners and others to **promote labour force attachment** in effective and innovative ways

- establish a **Division for Disabilities**

- commission a **study of the barriers encountered by people with various disabilities** – such as mobility challenges, vision impairment, hearing impairment and many others – including barriers to public services, to education and to opportunity; and in consultation with persons with disabilities, develop recommendations and strategies to address these barriers

- having announced that the minimum wage (which was \$6.00 an hour in 2005) will rise to \$8.00 an hour on April 1, 2008, **plan for future increases in the minimum wage** in a predictable and incremental manner by undertaking consultations in 2008 to provide stakeholders with a meaningful opportunity for input and the time necessary to prepare for increases, with a view to achieving a minimum hourly wage of \$10 by 2010

- promote and **support women in standing for elected office**, and direct the Women's Policy Office to identify and address barriers to representation by women

- under the direction of the Women's Policy Office, work to **enhance equality for women** by developing and implementing a communications strategy to promote women in occupational areas including entrepreneurship where they are currently under-represented; by exploring with government departments and women's organizations strategies to enhance individual departments' participation in advancing the status of women; by developing and implementing a communication strategy to encourage women's participation in leadership and decision making positions; and by exploring innovative ways to ensure women share more equitably in social and economic benefits

- increase **Women's Centre funding** by 5% a year
- do our part, in cooperation with Aboriginal communities and other governments, to help curb violence affecting Aboriginal women and to **help Aboriginal women become empowered** to influence public policy, programs and legislation in ways that will improve the quality of their lives
- continue to work collaboratively to **increase the participation of women in skilled trades and professions** in Newfoundland and Labrador, enhancing women's work skills and preparedness for trades identified by the Skills Task Force
- remove barriers to **ensure women can more fully participate in the energy sector**
- increase opportunities for **women's apprenticeships** in various career disciplines using, as a model, the partnership with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), which developed a mentorship program for female apprentices and matched female students in their first year with appropriate employment
- ensure, through the meetings and initiatives of the Provincial Advisory Council, Ministerial Council and Division for Aging and Seniors, that the concerns and **priorities of seniors** are addressed in government policies, programs and legislation on an ongoing basis
- develop a strategy to prepare for the **health care realities and challenges associated with increased numbers of seniors**, and adjust the delivery of health care services to ensure seniors are able to access the care they need
- implement the **Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework**
- work to **eradicate elder abuse** by improving legislation, policies, programs and services that work toward older adults being free from violence and neglect
- implement **anti-crime and violence prevention initiatives** to ensure seniors can feel safe in their own homes
- launch a **chronic disease prevention and management strategy**, which incorporates chronic pain management; partner to reduce chronic diseases and conditions; and ensure that health promotion is age-inclusive
- commit to a **comprehensive long-term care policy** for the province, building on the initiatives already underway
- continue to redevelop and modernize the province's **long-term care homes**
- continue to improve **home care services** to enhance independence and quality of life
- review and redevelop **standards for long-term care homes, personal care homes and**

**home support services** to achieve greater accountability

- establish programs and **standards for end-of-life care** throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to improve the quality of life for seniors
- consult with seniors to develop innovative ways to identify **housing solutions for the elderly** to advance their autonomy; specifically by supporting affordable and accessible rental housing for seniors through the Affordable Housing Program; by continuing to provide rent supplements for low income persons, including seniors, residing in Newfoundland Labrador Housing; and by supporting and enhancing the Provincial Home Repair Program
- designate a **Minister Responsible for the Volunteer and Non-profit Sector** and establish in the government a Volunteer and Non-profit Sector Office
- formalize a **policy and program framework** to strengthen and support the community-based sector and to enhance the development of social economy enterprises, especially in rural regions, as means of improving services, providing additional employment
- recognize and celebrate the work of **community volunteers**
- through discussions with the Community Services Council and other community organizations in the volunteer sector, produce a scope of work document to set the terms for an initiative to **strengthen the relationship between the government and the volunteer sector**, to improve the grants process, and to identify opportunities for cooperation and collaboration
- increase **funding for the Community Services Council**
- continue to implement the recommendations of the **task force on the not-for-profit sector**
- work with volunteer and non-profit organizations on measures to enhance **employment stability for organizational staff**

## STRONG ON CRIME

*No one should live in fear – not a child, not a senior, not a woman, not a victim of crime and not a community. Yet, so many do. We must continue to build on our initiatives to protect one another as a society. Since 2003, we have invested heavily in additional policing resources, court resources, justice programs and violence prevention initiatives. But we have only just begun the work that must be done. We must also open up a broader dialogue among our people to ensure that we find new and more-effective ways of preventing and addressing violence and fear in our communities. We must ensure that all our actions work together to make people not only “feel” more secure, but also “be” more secure.*

*We will build on the many justice initiatives of our first term, including the hiring of many new police officers, the provision of new policing resources, the training of Royal Newfoundland Constabulary officers here in Newfoundland and Labrador, the expansion of court services and the expansion of family law services, among many other initiatives.*

### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- establish a formal province-wide **AMBER Alert** Protocol program to respond promptly to child abductions in coordination with other jurisdictions
- extend the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary recruitment** program for another three years, providing ten additional officers a year, investing approximately \$800,000 a year and \$2.2 million on an annualized basis
- increase funding for **Crime Stoppers**, which offers rewards for information leading to arrests and convictions in cases of unsolved crimes
- enhance the **anti-drug campaigns** for schools and neighbourhoods in consultation with police, schools and parents
- double the number of Royal Newfoundland Constabulary police officers dedicated to **drug enforcement** with an investment of approximately \$600,000
- provide an additional **canine unit to enhance the drug enforcement program** with an investment of approximately \$200,000 for set-up and \$100,000 for annual operations
- introduce provincial **legislation to prevent criminals from benefitting from their crimes** by seizing their proceeds, and directing the value of these seizures directly back into provincial law enforcement and crime prevention
- work with police to coordinate the development of a Newfoundland and Labrador **e-crime unit**; expand police resources dedicated to internet crimes such as stalking and cyber-bullying; establish a cyber-bullying coalition including law enforcement professionals, youth, parents and educators; provide literature to help parents understand and deal with cyber-bullying; and work

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with other jurisdictions in an effort to strengthen protections for consumers against web scams and e-theft

- continue to implement the **Violence Prevention Initiative** six-year plan, with its strategic priorities of increasing awareness and attitudinal change; increasing community participation; improving legislation, policy, programs, services, information and facilities; supporting aboriginal women and children and addressing elder abuse; enhancing research and development; and improving leadership, coordination and accountability

- expand and implement a province-wide **violence prevention public awareness and education campaign**

- continue to implement the recommendations of the **Turner Inquiry** Report, including measures to strengthen child protection

- establish a **police unit dedicated to combating the sexual exploitation of children**

- provide the resources and leadership to continue the effective implementation of the **Safe and Caring Schools Policy** in schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador and encourage students to cultivate a harmonious code of conduct to govern their behaviour at school

- work with schools and other appropriate stakeholders to develop a **zero-tolerance policy for bullying**

- work proactively to further restore confidence in the province's justice system by continuing to implement the recommendations of the **Lamer Inquiry** into wrongful convictions

- press the Government of Canada to restore funding for the **federal Court Challenges Program**, which has enabled minority groups such as Aboriginal and disabled communities to mount constitutional challenges of policies and actions that have compromised their rights

- maintain the provincial **Inland Fisheries Enforcement Program** that we successfully implemented – even though fishery protection is a federal responsibility – in order to protect our valuable salmon resources for future generations to enjoy, and continue to lobby for additional federal funding for the protection of inland fisheries

- press the federal government to develop an action plan to increase **port security** for both airports and seaports

- through the newly-created **Fire and Emergency Services (FES-NL)**, implement the strategy for improved emergency preparedness, including organizational renewal, comprehensive planning, policy and program development, legislative and regulatory reform, and communications and public education

## STRONG CULTURE

*No resource is of greater value to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians than our distinctive culture. Our artists provide the mirror through which we see ourselves as we really are: unique, irrepressible and unforgettable. To support our artists and enrich our people, our government unveiled our province's first Strategic Cultural Plan. We introduced a fine arts and culture strategy in our classrooms and a new Artists in Schools Program to benefit our students. We celebrated our province's Aboriginal cultures by working with Aboriginal communities to develop culturally-relevant curriculum beginning with social studies and art. We set our sights on opportunities abroad where our artists' distinctive voices and styles are capturing attention as never before. We will continue to move ahead progressively to recognize and advance our cultural sector, both to generate important economic opportunities and – of no less importance – to foster a strong sense of identity, pride and self-confidence.*

*We take great pride and joy in welcoming guests to our home. Travelers come here as strangers and leave as friends. We have rolled out the welcome mat time and again, yet it is only in recent years that we have begun to realize the tremendous economic potential we have here in Newfoundland and Labrador to establish a world-class tourism industry spanning all seasons and catering to a broad range of niche markets. Many of our own people have much to discover in coves and communities right here at home. Much has been done and much more can and will be done to ensure we are ready to market our strengths abroad and seize new and greater opportunities in a sector with open-ended economic growth potential.*

*Among our greatest sources of pride is our clean and beautiful natural environment. It defines us. It makes living here wonderful. It makes visiting here unforgettable. Our natural ecosystems are worth protecting for future generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. They have intrinsic value, but also immense economic value. Through our Centre of Excellence for Environmental Science, Research and Technology, we will pursue opportunities to harness our environmental strengths and ingenuity to generate valuable economic activity and research opportunities. Through our new Sustainable Development Act, we will ensure that development proceeds in harmony with our natural environment, securing our greatest natural strengths while promoting eco-friendly enterprise. Through our energy plan and sound investments in other environmentally-friendly policies, we will address our environmental challenges in ways that will preserve our natural treasures and promote a healthier planet for everyone.*

### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- continue to **foster pride** in Newfoundland and Labrador's diverse, dynamic and distinct cultural heritage
- continue to implement the province's new **Strategic Cultural Plan** to support our vibrant artistic community, recognize cultural and economic contributions, and offer stable working conditions to professional artists through public and private support
- continue to enhance **Newfoundland and Labrador history and cultural education** in our

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schools to help our people discover, celebrate and learn from our rich cultural heritage

- continue to support the **Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council** in their provision of programs and services to artists and cultural organizations

- increase the province's presence and visibility to the world in the cultural sphere by **supporting and investing in cultural industries**

- preserve our distinctive tangible and intangible cultural heritage through the establishment of a **Heritage Framework** which will define the principles, guidelines and priorities for heritage conservation and development in the province

- engage Aboriginal people in the development of an **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Strategy** to preserve, strengthen and celebrate their distinctive and intangible cultural heritage

- continue to support The Rooms Corporation in their mandate to acquire and preserve **historic artifacts, historic articles, museum treasures and cultural properties** as well as to make these accessible to the people through outreach services and education

- support local artists in seeking various federal targeted **grants**

- invest in **new acquisitions for public libraries**, literature and software acquisition, and internet access

- develop and implement a strategy to support a **New Media Industry** to allow this province to exploit a media environment that has been transformed by advancements in digital technology and computing, especially in products such as video games, electronic kiosks and podcast

- further **enhance the tourism web** site by creating a hyperlinked map-based portal connecting all municipalities in the province and providing extensive information on tourism opportunities, including local photos, accommodations, events, tourism operators, retailers and councils

- continue to **improve tourism resource materials** based on consultation with Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador and the advisory board, tourism operators and tourists, and implement measures to ensure the information is reviewed for maximum accuracy

- having nearly doubled the province's tourism marketing funding from \$6 million to \$11 million since 2003, continue to **increase tourism marketing investments** by at least \$1 million a year, ensuring they match or exceed the investments by the Maritime provinces

- continue to encourage Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to explore our own province by promoting diverse opportunities in communities and regions throughout the province, increasing our **"No Place Like Home"** resident tourism promotion budget

- continue to improve **provincial parks and campgrounds**, in consultation with Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador

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- proceed with preparations for a world-class celebration at **Cupids in 2010** of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the colony of Cupers Cove by John Guy, and the Captain Robert Bartlett celebration in 2009
- continue to work toward the development of a **year-round tourism industry** to provide sustainable employment opportunities, including a winter tourism strategy
- follow through in implementing a **cultural tourism strategy**
- having uncovered numerous sites of historic interest, continue to work with The Rooms and Memorial University to preserve and interpret the province's **archeological sites**
- continue to partner with the Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association in following up on consultations to advance and diversify the **outfitting industry**
- continue to work with the cruise ship industry to build **cruise ship opportunities**
- establish a \$2-million **Green Fund** to support initiatives promoting environmental sustainability
- enforce the provisions of the **Sustainable Development Act** regarding the responsible and sustainable development of our natural environment, ensuring that our resource development decisions address the full range of environmental, social and economic values and that workers, environmentalists, industry, communities, aboriginal peoples and others have a say in how our resources are managed
- support **environmentally-focused research and development**
- under the CEE initiative, encourage and support the development of a new **geomatics** advanced diploma program at the College of the North Atlantic campus at Corner Brook and support its existing geospatial research facility
- within the context of the province's new R&D Strategy, continue to expand the **Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Science** to ensure it will play a greater role in focusing international research capacity on issues of importance to Newfoundland and Labrador and promoting our province as a natural laboratory
- **address environmental concerns related to Holyrood** by either: (a) replacing Holyrood generation with electricity from the Lower Churchill through a transmission link to the Island; or (b) installing scrubbers and precipitators, and maximizing the use of wind, small hydro and energy efficiency programs, to reduce reliance on Holyrood
- in the context of the province's new Energy Plan, promote the development of **alternative green energy sources**, including hydro power, wind power and solar power
- establish an **Energy Conservation and Efficiency Partnership** with an initial \$5 million grant

to develop, by March 2008, a coordinated and prioritized five-year Energy Conservation and Efficiency Plan

- allocate \$500,000 to provide grants of up to \$250 to homeowners for pre and post **retrofit residential energy audits**
- allocate \$6.9 million over three years to the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation to fund an **energy efficiency and conservation program** for low-income homeowners
- support the updating of **Canada's Model National Energy Codes for Houses and Buildings** and working towards the legislation of these standards by 2011
- in the context of the province's new Energy Plan, ensure **provincial government buildings** are more environmentally friendly
- strive to implement a policy that starting in 2008, where appropriate, **all new buildings and major renovations** receiving funding from the provincial government or built by provincial government corporations or agencies exceed the current Model National Energy Code by 25% and, where possible, also qualify for a minimum Silver standard in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program
- ensure reduced energy costs from efficiency measures beyond the commitment on Energy Codes are considered against any increased **capital cost in new public sector buildings and major renovations**
- adopt a policy that 25% of all **new government car and SUV purchases** during 2008-2011 period will be energy efficient vehicles
- continue to implement other conservation initiatives as outlined in the **Climate Change Action Plan**
- expand the mandate of the **Multi-Materials Stewardship Board** to promote a wider range of environmentally-responsible behaviours by government, citizens and business
- **eliminate all teepee-style incinerators** and replace them with other waste management approaches in accordance with the provincial waste management strategy
- promote locally-based **environmental industries and services**
- maintain support for projects initiated under the November 2005 **Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund**, a federal-provincial agreement to invest in infrastructure in Newfoundland and Labrador communities, at least 60% of which are "green" projects that improve the quality of the environment and contribute to cleaner air, soil and water, including water, waste water, solid waste, public transit and environmental energy improvements
- develop a **Comprehensive Land Use Management Strategy** that takes into account

sustainable development, climate change adaptation, hazard prediction and preparedness, and economic development

- finalize a **Natural Areas System Plan** which identifies areas of the province that, following appropriate consultations, may be designated as protected natural areas and reserves
- enhance data collection, assessment and management of **wildlife resources**
- work to harmonize the federal and provincial **environmental assessment** processes
- develop a comprehensive **environmental protection strategy for Placentia Bay** and further enhance safeguards and early response measures to minimize damage to the region's valuable fish habitats and fishing economy of potential incidents associated with increased petroleum sector activity

## STRONG HEALTH CARE

*Healthy lifestyle choices promote a greatly enhanced quality of life. In our first term, we developed our Provincial Wellness Plan to promote healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control, injury prevention, mental health promotion, child and youth development, environmental health and health protection. Our Recreation and Sport Strategy promotes increased involvement and participation in recreation and sport, improved access for all, strengthened public sector support, reaching our potential through enhanced excellence, building human resource capacity, and building capacity through infrastructure. Together, these initiatives will give people the opportunities and the tools to make healthier choices and to live vibrant, active lives.*

*Still, all of us, at various points in our lives, find ourselves in need of health care services and the expertise of the many professionals who deliver these services. We as a province already devote nearly half of our annual spending to health care, so we must continually work to ensure we spend our limited resources as effectively as possible to ensure we are prepared to meet the needs. We have already reorganized health care administration to focus more spending on providing the best front-line health services we can. However, many nurses, doctors and other health care professionals are stretched to the limit, so much more must be done. We have invested heavily in new diagnostic and treatment equipment and services to enable our health system to treat patients' needs in a more timely and effective manner. We have worked to build teams of professionals to enable people in rural regions to get the care they need closer to home. We have pressured the federal government to start listening to public calls for national pharmacare, home care and child care funding programs within the context of national medicare. The bottom line is ensuring people have access to the high-quality care they need when they need it. We are listening to health care providers, patients and families and will use their feedback to make our system stronger, more responsive to needs, more timely in its responses, more understanding of our caregivers' concerns and more effective in providing first-class health care for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.*

### **A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

- actively **promote the health and well-being of all** citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador
- implement Phase II of the **Provincial Wellness Plan**, which will promote the priority objectives of healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control, injury prevention, mental health promotion, child and youth development, environmental health and health protection through four key directions: strengthening partnerships and collaboration, developing and expanding wellness initiatives, increasing public awareness and enhancing capacity for health promotion
- continue to work with the **Provincial Wellness Advisory Council** to address wellness priorities strategically and effectively
- using a comprehensive school health approach, develop policies and guidelines, enhance curriculum and expand programs to support the creation of a **healthy school environment**

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- proceed with a **Healthy Eating in School Program**, which involves implementing provincial guidelines for foods served and sold in school cafeterias, canteens, vending machines and events organized by or held in schools with the objective of encouraging healthy food choices in all school cafeterias and requiring the availability of healthy alternatives to junk food in school vending machines, eliminating junk food options
- **target obesity in children** as a critical public health concern, identifying and applying measures to address obesity
- expand the **Born a Non-smoker Program**, which effectively promotes the importance of a smokefree environment for newborns and their families
- review the current **youth smoking prevention programs** in schools to determine the additional supports and resources required for K-12 curriculum, school smoke-free policies and youth cessation programs
- develop **health and physical education curricula** to enhance and support healthy living in the K–12 school system and address the issues of physical inactivity and obesity among youth
- integrate the Strategic Action Plan for Recreation, Sport and Physical Activity with broader efforts focusing on **health promotion and disease prevention** across all age groups
- implement the **Recreation and Sport Strategy**, with its six key directions of increasing involvement and participation, improving access for all, strengthening public sector support of recreation and sport, reaching our potential through enhanced excellence, building human resource capacity, and building capacity through infrastructure
- engage the disability community in the development of an action plan to increase the **involvement of persons with a disability in recreation and sport**
- in cooperation with Sport Newfoundland and Labrador, assist Newfoundland and Labrador-based athletes for qualification and competition in provincial, national and international competitions, including the **Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games**, and invite these athletes to participate in programs to promote healthy living and sport to students throughout Newfoundland and Labrador
- ensure **access to health care** remains among the province's highest priorities
- develop a **wait time management plan** that is provincially coordinated and focused on wait time reduction, monitoring and improving timely access
- develop new strategies to address major diseases in Newfoundland and Labrador such as **diabetes, stroke, cancer and childhood obesity**, including provisions for research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment; for example, expand early detection programs for colorectal, cervical, breast and other cancers

- review the province's **inventory of medical equipment**, that would include diagnostic imaging, laboratory services, critical care, surgical/operating room and emergency services, to ensure the equipment meets current standards; and review the training of staff operating such equipment to ensure their skills meet current standards
- purchase a **positron emission tomography (PET) scanner**, a powerful medical diagnostic tool that, by enabling early diagnosis, can lead to early treatment and disease prevention
- commit to a **redevelopment of hospitals in St. John's** for enhanced acute care services
- commit to build a new **acute care hospital in Corner Brook** at a cost of \$150 million
- follow through on the **task force on the management of adverse health events** and the related dissemination of public information; and implement the pending recommendations of the judicial Commission of Inquiry on estrogen and progesterone receptor (ER/PR) testing for breast cancer
- target retention, recruitment and training initiatives more effectively to ensure every Newfoundlander and Labradorian has **timely access to a family physician**
- through a \$15-million expansion and \$11.75 million in new annual operational costs, expand the number of **spaces for Newfoundland and Labrador medical students** at the Memorial University Medical School by 10% in the coming year and 30% within the next five years, bringing enrolment from the current 60 up to 66 next year and to 78 within five years
- through a \$4-million investment, expand the number of **spaces for Newfoundland and Labrador nursing students** in the Bachelor of Nursing Program; and provide opportunities to enable Licensed Practical Nurses, if they so choose, to engage in additional training in pursuit of a Registered Nurse designation
- establish a **dental bursary program**, providing students with \$25,000 a year for up to three years on the condition that they provide a year of service in a rural area of need for each year of bursary received
- develop a **comprehensive human resource strategy** that reflects new models of service delivery and would have all health disciplines engaged to the full scope of practice
- in consultation with the physicians' licensing authority, review the certification requirements for **physicians** wishing to practise in Newfoundland and Labrador
- provide additional human resources to the province's hospitals to assist with the non-urgent visits to our **Emergency Departments**
- eliminate **ambulance fee charges for inter-facility transfers** at an estimated cost of \$750,000

- increase the **medical transportation program** over five years, to assist with reimbursement of claimable expenses under the Medical Transportation Assistance Program for residents that incur significant travel costs in order to receive medical treatment
- continue to implement the Mental Health Services Strategy and the **Mental Health and Addictions** Policy Framework
- enhance the provincial **gambling** strategy, incorporating prevention and treatment strategies based on research and consultation; and upon completion of the ongoing video lottery terminal reduction initiative, further reduce the number of VLTs in the province by at least 5%, resulting in a total reduction of 20%
- through consultation with the physician community, explore options to fully implement the electronic medical records in physicians' offices throughout the province in preparation for a system-wide "**Electronic Health Record**", subject to the availability of funding through the Canada Health Infoway and provincial funds
- be vigilant in ensuring the province's **preparedness for pandemics** and other public health emergencies

## STRONG MINDS

*Education is the key to our future because it provides the tools our people, young and old, will need to harness their potential and put their strengths to work for the greater success of Newfoundland and Labrador. Education begins at the earliest years and continues for a lifetime. At all stages, it must be well-focused and effective. With this goal in mind, we have proceeded to develop sweeping strategies stretching from early childhood through grade school to post-secondary education and beyond. We have remained focused on developing an early learning and child care plan for Newfoundland and Labrador that will give young children the foundation they need to grow. We have taken a hard look at all aspects of our grade school system, invested in smaller class sizes, and enhanced curriculum. We have also given parents new opportunities to get more involved to ensure the system meets their children's needs. We will continue listening to, and working more effectively with, our teachers, enabling them do what they do best as accomplished teaching professionals. At the post-secondary level, we have developed a comprehensive White Paper that ensures our approach and our actions are clearly focused on preparing students effectively according to their particular strengths in ways that will help us build a self-reliant Newfoundland and Labrador, rich in opportunity, diverse in potential, equipped to face challenges, and irresistibly attractive to investors. Our student aid package is the best in the country. Our commitment to keep it that way is unwavering. We believe our investments in students are sound investments in a bright future for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.*

*Investing in brilliant minds and bright ideas makes good economic sense. Innovation is the highway to opportunity. Our innovation strategy is turning these ideas and opportunities into commercial successes and real jobs for our people. Just as the industries that did not exist here centuries ago are economic mainstays today, so too the industries that did not exist here decades ago are giving us a vision of economic opportunities for tomorrow. Defence and aerospace innovations have already created jobs and interest in Newfoundland and Labrador. Broadband technologies have opened up markets and career opportunities that did not exist even a few years ago. In our natural ecosystems whether on land or at sea, in our vast ocean teeming with untapped opportunities, in our resource sectors, in our health care and education sectors, and in so many other corners of our society, we are witnessing the power of innovation to create new business opportunities that we can build upon. We are taking the lead, investing in our post-secondary programs, engaging innovative entrepreneurs and working strategically to ensure that Newfoundland and Labrador can continue to nurture innovative successes right here in our communities. From inventive students of robotics to ingenious researchers of genomics, we are proving that we can be world-class leaders on the leading edge of technology without leaving our home on the edge of North America.*

**A Progressive Conservative government in its second term will:**

**for preschool and K-12 students...**

- through the collaborative work of the Ministerial Council and the Education department division for Early Childhood Learning, expand access to consistent **early childhood education** to all

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families, including those in remote regions, low-income families and others throughout Newfoundland and Labrador

- undertake **early learning and child care** initiatives, as described in the section on people
- with an investment of about \$25 million, **extend class size limits** of 25 students per classroom incrementally to higher grades: to Grade 4 in 2008, Grade 5 in 2009 and Grade 6 in 2010
- implement changes to the **teacher allocation formula**
- in consultation with educators, experts and parents, **improve the mathematics curriculum** and provide more opportunities for students to achieve advanced/academic math credits
- establish five-year **literacy and numeracy targets** in Newfoundland and Labrador schools; direct the Education Minister's Advisory Council to consult with educational stakeholders to make recommendations about increasing the performance of our students; and regularly evaluate students' literacy and numeracy levels according to recognized standards and provide intervention as needed to ensure acceptable literacy and numeracy levels at high school graduation
- revise the **Individual Support Services Plan**
- **provide school boards with multi-year capital forecasts** under the infrastructure strategy to enable boards to set priorities, establish goals and measure performance in accordance with the Transparency and Accountability Act
- expand **distance education** opportunities, increase distance education support to schools and enhance broadband connectivity to rural and remote schools
- **work with Aboriginal communities** on initiatives to address educational challenges, to improve the scope and quality of programs, and to monitor the effectiveness of these initiatives
- with a \$1 million annual investment, work collaboratively with operators and other stakeholders in continuing to promote safety as we follow through in finalizing and implementing policy recommendations under the **Comprehensive Approach to School Bus Safety**, which will include measures related to driving training and testing, computerized inspections, carrier safety ratings, self-inspection regimes, and additional regulatory changes to enforce such provisions where appropriate; and ensure safety violations are made known to parents
- fully implement the **Futures in Skilled Trades and Technology Program**, which focuses on skilled trades applications at the senior high level
- further expand the **Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT) project** to enable more students to apply the internet to learning in the classroom

- introduce to the high school curriculum an **entrepreneurship course**, using made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador instructional materials including local case studies that will be specially designed to give students a thorough understanding of the practicalities of establishing and operating businesses of various kinds in Newfoundland and Labrador
- encourage and enable high school students to explore a wide variety of career choices, and provide ample information and resources through **Career Counselors** to parents and students
- strengthen the capability of the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency – in collaboration with business, education practitioners and other partners – to provide schools, students and parents with accurate **labour market information** reflecting the province’s long-term economic goals and prospects; and strengthen the relationships between the public, private and academic sectors in planning to meet human resources needs
- promote among K-12 students the emerging needs in our economy for more post-secondary graduates in **information technology and other high-technology disciplines**
- engage in a **full review of all curriculum** taught to all our schoolchildren to ensure that they have the literacy, numeracy, and cultural literacy in their own cultures necessary to be informed, productive and fulfilled citizens of the province and to be able to prosper wherever in the world their ambitions take them; and, in particular, review the province’s social studies curriculum to ensure the cultural literacy of all our students in Newfoundland and Labrador culture, heritage and history and to build an understanding of Newfoundland and Labrador today

#### **for post-secondary students...**

- continue the **dialogue with the Canadian Federation of Students and other student leaders and stakeholders**, exploring opportunities to improve post-secondary education and its capacity to prepare students for productive careers in Newfoundland and Labrador
- extend the **tuition freeze** at Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic for four years, with an investment of \$56 million
- with an investment of \$48 million, proceed with – and maintain throughout the four-year term ahead – the two-component **Student Loan Debt Relief program** which, firstly, enables students to receive up-front needs-based grants to offset their borrowing costs and, secondly, reduces the interest on provincial student loan debts to prime making ours the lowest rate on student loans in the country, a measure that will benefit some 46,000 students and graduates in repayment
- continue to provide funding and leadership to implement the policy directives of the **White Paper on Public Post-secondary Education** and continually monitor progress while consulting with students, institutions and other stakeholders
- work with the Memorial University Board of Regents to implement the recommendation of the independent study on the **governance structure of Sir Wilfred Grenfell College** which grants

the College full university status with a separate executive, senate and budget while maintaining a common Board of Regents; and, to prepare for this natural evolution, the Department of Education will immediately request the Grenfell administration prepare a five-year strategic plan to outline its goals and objectives under its new governance structure

- pursue the implementation of **Applied Degrees at College of the North Atlantic**
- provide for **new student residences** at Memorial University's St. John's and Grenfell campuses, for which funding was allocated in the 2007-08 budget
- provide a **\$500 tax rebate to help apprentices purchase new equipment** through an investment of \$350,000
- continue to implement recommendations of the **Skills Task Force** report to better prepare Newfoundlanders and Labradorians for existing and emerging employment opportunities in skilled trades and professions in Newfoundland and Labrador
- continue to **foster open dialogue among industry employers and labour organizations** to ensure we understand changing needs and are well prepared to seize opportunities for skills development
- continue to work collaboratively to **increase the participation of women in skilled trades and professions** in Newfoundland and Labrador, enhancing women's work skills and preparedness for trades identified by the Skills Task Force
- establish a **journeyperson mentorship program**
- increase the number of **graduates employed in the province's public sector** with an investment of \$350,000
- complete **renovations of the College of the North Atlantic** Prince Phillip campus in St. John's
- continue to invest in **adult basic education and lifelong learning initiatives** to provide people with the tools they need to expand their opportunities for career advancement, income enhancement and greater self-reliance

#### **for innovation...**

- fully capitalize on opportunities to foster success stories in a broad range of high-technology sectors by continuing to implement the province's new **Innovation Strategy**
- commit \$5 million a year for the next three years to launch a **Newfoundland and Labrador Research and Development Strategy**, and establish a new Crown entity to oversee and direct its implementation

- establish a **Research and Development Advisory Council** to provide advice on future policy and priorities as they relate specifically to improving our culture of innovation
- establish a Newfoundland and Labrador Ocean Weather Observation and Prediction initiative, also known as the **Polaris Program**, to enable local institutions and industries to develop the capacity to gather ocean information at key sites around the province using leading edge technologies, to apply it to the forecasting of atmospheric conditions, and to engage these models to improve safety and security in marine environments while at the same time generating economic activity and R&D leadership opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador
- build on the province's participation with Rhode Island, Ireland and possibly Iceland in an action plan to deliver an **Ocean Observing System for the Northwest Atlantic** based in Newfoundland and Labrador
- maintain support for the **Marine Technology Development Strategy**
- continue to work with the Government of Canada through the Atlantic Innovation Fund and with outside investors to leverage additional funds to move agrifoods projects forward to **commercialization**
- maintain our investments in key innovation initiatives such as **the Commercialization Program, the Innovation Enhancement Program and the Industrial Research and Innovation Fund**
- proceed with the **Government Broadband Initiative**, extending high-speed internet access to public offices throughout the province, thereby opening up new access points through which private utilities, with federal CRTC approval, can extend broadband access to communities throughout most of Newfoundland and Labrador
- support youth innovation by incorporating the concepts of **innovation and entrepreneurship in the school curriculum** at the Grade 7-9 level to open students up to new ideas and strengthen concepts of innovation and collaborative problem solving in our society



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