



PEOPLE'S PLATFORM

WE CAN
DO BETTER
YOURLIBERALS.CA



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**TRUE LEADERSHIP
IS MORE THAN JUST
A TITLE – IT HAS TO
BE EARNED**



Kevin Aylward
Liberal Leader

**WE CAN
DO BETTER**
YOURLIBERALS.CA

My fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians:

The Liberal Party has listened to people like you, and is ready to tackle the issues that matter to this province, both big & small.

Through offshore oil deals signed by previous Liberal governments, our province is collecting more revenue than ever before. But while we're technically a 'have' province, many of us are being left behind by the Dunderdale government. Put simply, *we can do better*.

This fall, your vote will help determine the future of Newfoundland and Labrador. Where do you want to go?

The Liberal Party has a passionate, strong and committed team of men and women with new ideas to govern this wonderful province and help us secure our bright future.

The People's Platform has new policy ideas that outline a strategy to reinvest in our people, our communities and in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. It's about treating people with the respect they deserve and using common sense approaches to bring the greatest benefit to our people and province.

Our seniors deserve to live with dignity and stay in their communities, close to their family and friends, for as long as possible. We must nurture our communities with vital supports and services. We must ensure that electricity prices remain affordable to our people and we receive the greatest benefit from our resources. Our fishery and other renewable resources need to be rediscovered and their true potential given an opportunity to flourish. New services, greater opportunities, happier families, closer to home.

I invite you to read the people's platform and carefully consider the Liberal Party's new ideas for a brighter future. On October 11, 2011 I respectfully ask for your vote because *we can do better*.

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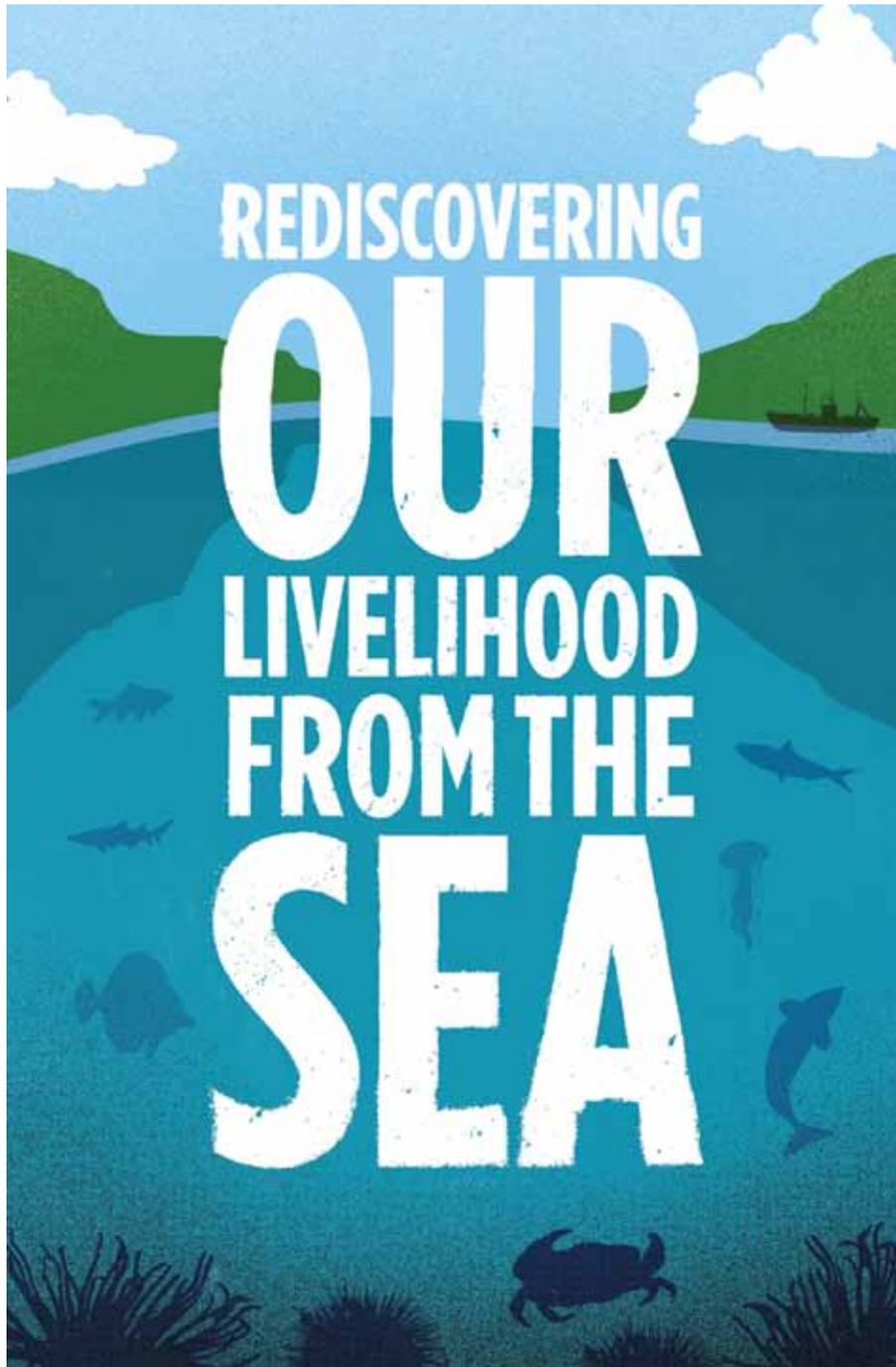
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1

REDISCOVERING OUR LIVELIHOOD FROM THE SEA

THE FISHERY IS OUR PROVINCE'S DEFINING NARRATIVE

Like many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, the Liberal Party believes the fishery can continue to create economic, social, cultural and environmental value, both in rural and urban Newfoundland and Labrador. We are confident that with our vision and new ideas we can implement long sought-after reforms through proper consultation and strong political leadership. We will again have a great fishery. Our fishery has been our past and the Liberal Party believes it will be our future.

We need a bold new vision for the fishing industry and rural Newfoundland and Labrador. It is time to recapture our resource.

A New Liberal Government will provide the leadership to achieve consensus and unity on how we must move forward to sustain, rebuild and re-shape a new fishery.

The Liberal Party and its passionate team of candidates believe in the fishery and the Liberal Party believes in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Liberal Party believes that the principal beneficiaries should be the coastal communities adjacent to the resource. The Liberal Party believes we must continue to recommend adjacency to the resource as a primary consideration in the setting of quotas.

The objective of a New Liberal Government's policy on fisheries is to sustain rural Newfoundland and Labrador and keep our communities strong in the long term. We believe that we can do this by focusing on several problematic areas including the need to reshape our industry with a significant investment and the need to pursue changes in how our fisheries is governed.

INCOME AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

Stakeholders agree that our fishing industry needs fundamental investment in order for it to survive and prosper. This will allow the industry to improve its financial position and bolster community-building initiatives.

A New Liberal Government will establish a 10-year, \$250-Million Fisheries Investment & Diversification Fund. We will work with the appropriate stakeholders and set up a working committee.

EMPLOYMENT REBATE FOR VALUE-ADDED PROCESSING

The global market is moving toward value-added products. In order to reach our full potential the processing sector must become commercially viable and capable of providing good income for its employees.

A New Liberal Government will create an Employment Rebate for value-added fish plants creating employment and value-added seafood products. Forty (40) per cent of certified seafood processing costs, including marketing costs, will be returned to the seafood processing company in a refundable tax credit, up to a maximum of \$5-Million. The cost of the program will be offset by the income tax generated through increased employment.

FISHERIES LOAN BOARD

A fisheries loan board provides long-term stable development funds to a

variety of fishers and companies to purchase fishing vessels, equipment, electronics or make technical modifications to enable them to be more competitive.

A New Liberal Government will reinstate an arms-length fisheries loan board.

FISHERIES SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

No longer will we rely exclusively upon the research of others to guide the fishery into the future. We will invest in our own fisheries research and development. In order to chart our direction we need the proper knowledge, capacity and expertise.

A New Liberal Government will revamp the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture and establish a Marine and Science Division within the Department. We will invest \$20-Million into a two-year marine research project that will study and complete a full science inventory of all fish species and stocks in our waters. These findings will be made public and used to create better fisheries management.

A New Liberal Government will expand the Centre for Fisheries Ecosystem Research at the Marine Institute and work cooperatively with this centre to carry out research, gain knowledge and expertise for the future of our fisheries and marine ecosystem.

JOINT MANAGEMENT

The importance of the province having a greater say in the management of one of its most important resources – the fishery – has been made clear. Newfoundland and Labrador needs a say in the management of all aspects of its inshore and offshore fishery.

A New Liberal Government will aggressively seek joint management of the fishery with the federal government and will introduce legislation for a Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Joint Fish Management Board.

A New Liberal Government will strongly support the integration of federal and provincial fisheries management functions through the creation of a Joint Fisheries Management Board which derives its regulatory authority from both levels of government. The concept of joint management has been supported in the past by both the Harris Report and the Maloney Commission as a means of improving the efficiency and management effectiveness within the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery. Joint management would ensure that federal and provincial energies are focused on industry development and profitability rather than on intergovernmental conflict.

CO-MANAGEMENT

Co-management brings together local fishery stakeholders, government agencies, and communities to share management responsibility for the fishery resource. The crisis in the fisheries and our coastal communities requires a less conventional style of fisheries management and a New Liberal Government intends to lead the way towards recapturing our resource and doing it right.

A New Liberal Government will call upon the federal government to evaluate an expanded co-management approach to fishery management.

CUSTODIAL MANAGEMENT

In our efforts to rebuild our stocks, we are also committed to pursuing custodial management to the nose and tail of the Grand Bank and the Flemish Cap where our groundfish stocks remain unprotected from foreign fishers.

A New Liberal Government will initiate a campaign for the protection of trans-boundary fish stocks. This is no longer a Newfoundland and Labrador issue, but a critical national and international issue.

JUDICIAL INQUIRY

A New Liberal Government will initiate a judicial inquiry dealing with management of the fishery. It will address four areas: management of the fishery; science and conservation; public engagement, provincial and community participation, and transparency; and maximizing the benefit of the resources to present and future generations.

SEAFOOD MARKETING STRATEGY

Marketing of our fishery resources is vital to a new fishery.

A New Liberal Government will accept all the recommendations of the seafood marketing strategy as outlined in the MOU Steering Committee's report, including the establishment of a seafood marketing council. A New Liberal Government will develop and implement this strategy by working closely with industry.

INCREASING TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH

The present total allowable catch for Northern Cod (2J3KL) per license holder is 3,750 pounds. Inshore fishermen are identifying a major return of the cod stock in the Labrador Straits and on the Northern Peninsula.

Based on the outcome of our inventory review of fish species, a New Liberal Government will make a recommendation to the federal government to increase the total allowable catch to 10,000 pounds per license holder.

RECREATIONAL COD FISHERY

The federal government is responsible for establishing the time and guidelines surrounding the recreational cod fishery in all provinces of Canada. The rules surrounding this fishery are very different among the Atlantic provinces. Our season was open for a month this summer, which was much less time than our Atlantic counterparts.

A New Liberal Government will actively lobby the federal government to ensure that Newfoundland and Labrador is granted the same recreational fishery opportunities as the other Atlantic provinces.

LOBSTER FISHERY

As a part of the long-term strategy for the fishery, a New Liberal Government is committed to creating stability in the lobster fishery.

A New Liberal Government will complete and support the Lobster Fishery Conservation and Sustainability Plan. This will provide the opportunity for lobster fishers, who chose to do so, to exit the industry. The lobster fishers that remain can improve their incomes in the months and years ahead.

AQUACULTURE

The total export value of the aquaculture industry is currently worth over \$120-Million and employs nearly 700 people in our province. Employment and product volumes are steadily increasing.

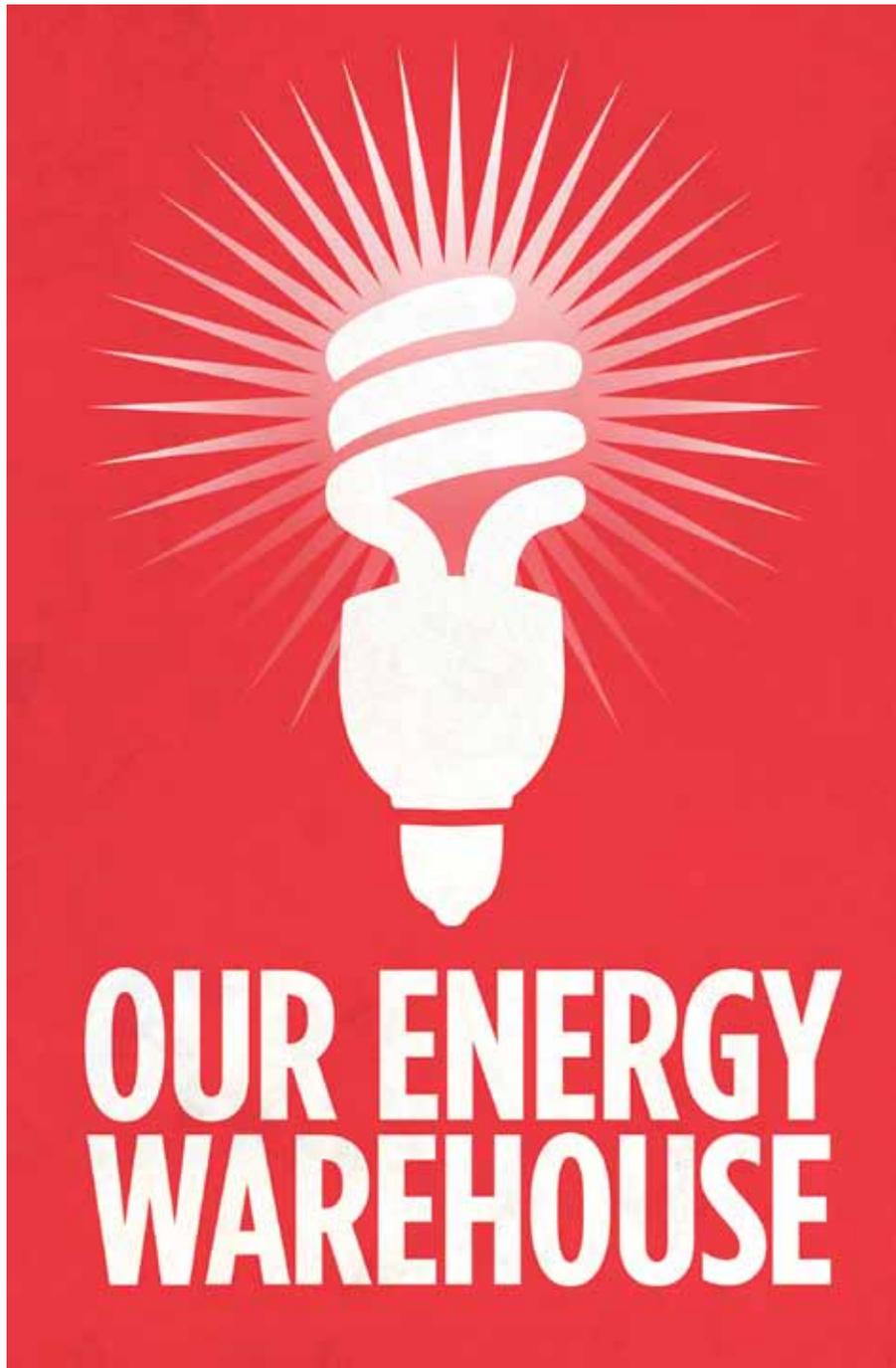
A New Liberal Government recognizes the potential that exists to increase the value of the industry and will work with investors, employees and municipal governments to ensure the financial and technical support is there to support this industry.

A New Liberal Government will work with both the traditional and aquaculture industries and other stakeholders to ensure there is greater cooperation and sustainable reform that protects our natural environment from any ecological impacts of farmed fish.

SAFETY IN OUR OFFSHORE

Over 70% of search and rescue cases in this province are in the fishing industry. Fishing vessel activity is the most dangerous occupation in Canada and worldwide. We have the highest level of transatlantic shipping compared to anywhere else in Canada and have significant offshore oil drilling activity which will continue.

A New Liberal Government is committed to safety of workers in our offshore and in recognition of this we are committed to the continuing operation of a Marine Rescue Subcentre in our province.



2

OUR ENERGY WAREHOUSE

OUR ENERGY WAREHOUSE:
AFFORDABILITY. CONSERVATION.
COMMON SENSE.

While the Dunderdale Government is trying to increase your light bill, the Liberal approach is based on the fundamental principles of affordability, conservation and common sense.

A New Liberal Government will follow the Electrical Power Control Act which requires that all sources of power for the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador must be delivered at the lowest possible cost.

AFFORDABILITY

The Dunderdale Government has announced that electricity rates to the consumers of Newfoundland and Labrador must be increased by a minimum of 45% between now and 2017 and that there are no alternatives. There are critical questions about the current Muskrat Falls project and answers must be given before we proceed further.

The Joint Review Panel (JRP) for the Lower Churchill Hydro Electric Generation Project released their report in August 2011. The JRP report supported the provincial Liberal Party position and stated:

“...Nalcor had not demonstrated the justification of the Project as a whole in energy and economic terms, and that there are outstanding questions related to both Muskrat Falls and Gull Island regarding their ability to deliver the projected long term financial benefits to the Province...”

“...Nalcor’s analysis, showing Muskrat Falls to be the best and least-cost way to meet domestic demand requirements, was inadequate and recommended a new, independent analysis based on economic, energy and environmental considerations.”

Following the recommendations of the JRP, a New Liberal Government will immediately implement:

- a formal review to determine the long term financial returns to government for the benefit of the people of the province; and
- completing an independent analysis of all possible alternatives to meet our provincial power demands.

The Dunderdale Government is misleading the public by saying that they are using the Public Utilities Board (PUB) to review all independent power options available to the province. The table below shows the PUB mandate and compares it to what an independent review, according to the JRP, should include:

Table 1 (opposite): Comparison of the areas of review recommended by the Joint Review Panel (JRP), the areas reviewed by Navigant and what is currently being reviewed by the Public Utilities Board (PUB).

| AREA OF REVIEW | JRP RECOMMENDATION | PUB MANDATE | NAVIGANT REVIEW |
|--|--------------------|---|----------------------|
| Domestic demand projections | Included | Included | Included |
| Cost estimates and assumptions with respect to no-Project thermal options | Included | Included | Included but cursory |
| Implications for the province’s rate payers | Included | Included | Included |
| System Planning | Included | Included | Not Included |
| Process for developing and estimating costs | Included | Included | Not Included |
| Conservation | Included | Not Included | Included but cursory |
| Demand management | Included | Not Included | Included but cursory |
| Use of offshore gas as a fuel for the Holyrood thermal generating facility | Included | Not Included | Included but cursory |
| Cash flow projections for Muskrat Falls | Included | Not Included | Not Included |
| Implications for the province’s regulatory systems | Included | Not Included | Not Included |
| Alternate on-Island energy sources | Included | Not specifically included; left to board discretion | Included |
| Options for monetization of surplus power | Included | Specifically excluded | Not Included |

A New Liberal Government will appoint an independent panel of experts who will oversee the independent analysis of the possible energy alternatives, as outlined by the JRP. This independent panel will include experts in energy, finance and environment.

A New Liberal Government will adopt all the recommendations of the JRP.

A New Liberal Government will immediately halt spending, contracts and any further development of the Muskrat Falls project, pending review.

The Liberal Party recognizes the importance of affordable electricity rates and rates which are competitive with other jurisdictions. Businesses, fish plants, churches, recreational facilities, municipalities and households are entitled to nothing less.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **direct Nalcor to work with Newfoundland Power to ensure that any electricity rate increases are no higher than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) during the term of a New Liberal Government; and**
- **direct Nalcor to open an office of a Consumer Advocate to vet any project brought forward so as to ensure it is affordable to all residents of the province.**

CONSERVATION

Energy conservation has not been adequately addressed by the Dunderdale Government. We can all consume less energy, but need to be shown leadership from Nalcor on comfortable ways to do so.

A New Liberal Government will direct Nalcor to:

- **work with Newfoundland Power to adopt strict conservation measures for the purpose of reducing electricity consumption in the province; and**
- **adopt conservation targets of 5 per cent this year with a goal of 10 per cent by year four. Programs and practices will be developed and employed accordingly.**

COMMON SENSE

A common sense approach is needed for provincial energy policy. Common sense means using our energy warehouse for the primary benefit of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. It means lifting the moratorium on wind energy and small hydro developments. It means thinking outside the box.

WIND POWER DEVELOPMENT

A New Liberal Government will direct Nalcor to enter into power purchase agreements with the private sector for continuous wind power development. Such developments would create jobs and economic activity throughout the province and provide green energy at an affordable cost.

PROVINCIAL HYDRO DEVELOPMENT

A New Liberal Government will direct Nalcor to submit a plan for the hydro development over time and as required of Island Pond, Portland Creek and Round Pond. To ensure affordability, Nalcor will be directed to enter into a private/public partnership, utilizing power purchase agreements to minimize financial exposure and risk while stabilizing rates.

HOLYROOD GENERATING STATION

A New Liberal Government recognizes the necessity of maintaining the Holyrood Generating Station as the only viable generating station to supply the Avalon Peninsula in an emergency. Holyrood has a useful projected life of another 25 years until 2035 without major investment. A New Liberal Government will utilize Holyrood for its maximum useful life while introducing strict energy conservation measures to offset the use of fuel over that period.

A New Liberal Government will evaluate, as part of its energy options, natural gas conversion at Holyrood.

THE LOWER CHURCHILL DEVELOPMENT

A New Liberal Government will direct Nalcor to recommence negotiations with Quebec, Ontario and the federal government to develop the entire Lower Churchill. It is not financially feasible to develop only part of the Lower Churchill.

A New Liberal Government will not be party to any agreement which has this province's electricity consumers subsidize the electricity rates for Nova Scotia or any other province or state.

A New Liberal Government will not be party to any agreement which has this province's taxpayers incurring debt to produce electricity to subsidize the rates for electricity users in Nova Scotia or any other province or state.

A New Liberal Government will act responsibly and always use

common sense to ensure this province's electricity consumers and taxpayers are the primary beneficiaries of any development.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS/RATIFICATION

A New Liberal Government will consult with the public prior to entering into Term Sheets/MOUs/Agreements – consumer affordability will be critical to any decisions.

The current practice of imposing agreements on the public and informing them after the fact that their electricity rates and the public debt will increase will come to an end. Full public disclosure and the need for public ratification of any project will be required.

The PUB will not be used by a New Liberal Government as a replacement to public consultation and public ratification.

Additional policy objectives of a comprehensive New Liberal Government energy policy will also include the following:

A New Liberal Government will evaluate the power needs, both domestic and industrial, for Labrador.

A New Liberal Government will immediately decrease the return on equity (ROE) to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador from Nalcor from the current 9% to the previous 4.5%.

A New Liberal Government will ensure that electricity rate increases will be to a maximum of CPI for the next four years by redirecting the revenue from the recall power on the Upper Churchill to a Rate Stabilization Fund.

SECTION 92A

Section 92A (2) of the Canadian constitution provides a province with the authority to legislate the export of electrical energy to other parts of Canada. This authority gives Newfoundland and Labrador the right to legislate a minimum price for electricity produced in the province including that exported from the Upper Churchill through CFLCo. This provision also gives Newfoundland and Labrador the right to reserve power from the Upper Churchill for its future domestic needs.

A New Liberal Government will direct the Department of Justice to immediately begin exploring options for what is commonly referred to as Section 92A litigation.

A New Liberal Government will amend the Electrical Power Control Act requiring the approval of the PUB for future contracts for the export of electrical energy from the province or renewal of existing contracts. The amendment will include the following provisions:

- all contracts for export of electrical energy from the province, including renewal of existing contracts, require the prior approval of the PUB;
- the PUB shall not approve any contracts for export of electrical energy from the province unless it is satisfied that the price charged for such electrical energy is reasonable given the existing price of electrical energy and has appropriate escalators;
- the PUB shall not approve any contracts for export of electrical energy from the province unless it is satisfied that such exported energy is surplus to anticipated needs in the province;
- any contract for the export of electrical energy shall contain a clause allowing for additional recall to meet future provincial needs in three (3) years notice; and
- a person or corporation intending to export electrical energy from the province shall apply for approval from the PUB at least three (3) years prior to the effective date of such contract or the effective date of the renewal of an existing contract.



3

WEALTH FROM OUR RESOURCES

OIL AND GAS

The oil and gas industry is a major driver of our province's economy. Offshore royalties account for a full one-third of provincial revenues, and the industry continues to act as a key employer throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. It is imperative that this non-renewable resource be developed in a manner that derives maximum benefit for our people, yet simultaneously is carried out in a way that respects the safety of our offshore workers and makes a firm commitment to environmental stewardship.

EXPLORATION

The current boon to the provincial economy through oil revenues is due to the groundwork set by previous governments more than a decade ago. In addition to spending wisely now, it is important to ensure that exploration is promoted so that future generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians continue to benefit from our offshore oil and gas resources.

A New Liberal Government will continue to aggressively promote exploration and drilling in the offshore oil sector, including off western Newfoundland and in the Labrador Sea. A New Liberal Government will work to issue exploration rights for new exploration, and continue to work with established companies to facilitate their operations in our province.

INDEPENDENT SAFETY REGULATOR

Recommendation 29 of Phase 1 of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Helicopter Safety Inquiry identified an urgent need for an independent safety regulator to protect the interests of our men and women who work offshore. This need was reaffirmed in the findings of Phase 2.

A New Liberal Government will immediately take action to establish an independent safety regulator as recommended by the Wells Inquiry.

A New Liberal Government will work aggressively with federal administrators to alter the regulatory regime providing oversight in the offshore. The safety regime for our offshore workers has been deemed inadequate.

A New Liberal Government will ensure that rectifying this shortcoming becomes a foremost priority.

ENVIRONMENT

Offshore oil and gas operations must be carried out in unison with sound environmental stewardship. The Liberal Party believes in development that accounts for the environment and our coastline communities in addition to the interests of operators.

A New Liberal Government will ensure the presence of independent environmental observers on oil platforms and during exploratory drilling.

TRANSPARENCY

To-date, an effective audit of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) has been hindered by a regulatory regime that prevents access to information deemed proprietary.

A New Liberal Government will work with its federal counterpart to amend section 119 of the Atlantic Accord Act in order to allow independent auditing of the C-NLOPB such that information currently shielded as proprietary may be reviewed.

DIVERSITY

Women continue to be underrepresented in our province's oil and gas industry. With Hibernia, Terra Nova, and White Rose online, and Hebron, Hibernia South and other projects moving forward, there is already a shortage of qualified workers in the offshore oil and gas industry. The opportunities for women in this industry are apparent, and it is important that gender diversity be a goal for government policy.

A New Liberal Government will continue to promote women in the oil and gas industry by mandating gender diversity plans for new developments, as well as requiring that these plans be developed and implemented in a timely manner.

TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Promoting partnerships between industry and our province's colleges and universities is an important means by which to encourage research and development, as well as foster expertise and promote our centres of higher learning on the national and international stage.

A New Liberal Government will promote and support operator partnerships with local educational institutions to forward industry research and development.

MINING & EXPLORATION

Mining has been one of the strongest performing sectors in the Newfoundland and Labrador economy, and is forecasted to experience continued growth in coming years. The Liberal Party believes in the continued development through industry partnerships and innovation, while simultaneously working to ensure that benefits are maximized for local economic regions where mining operations are taking place. Capitalizing on secondary processing opportunities, continuing to provide attractive incentive programs, and promoting youth entering the industry will be ways by which a New Liberal Government seeks to take full advantage of this burgeoning sector of the economy.

MINERAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Mineral Incentive Program has been of central importance in attracting exploration companies to this province as well as supporting junior companies headquartered here. This program has increased direct investment in our province, and is a major component in contributing to

the continued growth of the mining industry throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Despite its success, increased exploration costs continue to place a heavy burden on exploratory ventures.

A New Liberal Government recognizes this burden, and commits to doubling the investment in the Mineral Incentive Program.

MINING

The potential for mining developments in Labrador is enormous. Iron ore development in Labrador West is progressing at a tremendous pace with the expansion of the Iron Ore Company of Canada, the acquisition of Consolidated Thompson by Cliffs, and the development of direct - shipping ore operations by both Labrador Iron Mines and New Millenium Corporation. Vale Inco's nickel facility at Voisey's Bay continues as a robust operation as they prepare for their inevitable underground mining operations. Exploration in both the central and southern regions of Labrador has reached record levels, as companies continue to seek out prospective mining opportunities.

Investments by steelmakers from China and India show the increased importance of the mineral resources of Labrador to the world. We must prepare to attract and benefit from these investments. We must also ensure that apprenticeship opportunities are available to the people who want them.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **recognize Labrador's enormous mining potential, and will work with all stakeholders to ensure that any new development would be to the benefit of the people and communities of Labrador;**
- **ensure that any new mining development maximizes secondary processing opportunities in the province where possible, which would in turn, maximize employment levels for our residents;**
- **create, in partnership with the mining industry, an International Mining Research Institute at the College of the North Atlantic in Labrador West. As a "Mining Centre of Excellence", the Institute will focus on research and development in mining technology that promotes the industry through sound environmental practices;**
- **market the Labrador mining industry to the world in an effort to attract further mining investments; and**
- **evaluate all secondary processing opportunities resulting from Labrador's mining operations.**

FORESTRY: A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO FOREST INDUSTRY GROWTH

Our forestry industry, like our fishery, is not being optimized for its value. Since 2003, the industry's output has declined by more than \$500-Million. Market downturns in housing and the lumber markets, together with industry rationalization (the loss of two paper mills and a downsizing of the third) have left our industry struggling without clear and innovative leadership required to move it forward.

A New Liberal Government believes this resource must be allocated on the principle of best-end use and optimal benefit to the province through economic development, employment, recreation, wildlife and the environment. We are the owners of the Crown forest and all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians must be meaningfully engaged in decisions that affect our common resource.

A New Liberal Government will bring renewed efforts to reviving this very important industry for rural communities and to the provincial economy. We believe that by investing in rural communities, a stronger forest industry and stronger communities will emerge. Our vision to sustain our forest sector into the future is just the beginning.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **expand the original co-generation power policy, developed by the former Liberal administration in 1999, and seek proposals for further power development in partnership with the forest industry;**
- **update and implement the Provincial Sustainable Forest Management Strategy (2003) with particular emphasis on old growth forests and species at risks; work collaboratively with investors, communities, and industry associations to develop a bio-energy market for sawmill waste and low-grade, smaller diameter trees no longer required by the pulp and paper industry; and**
- **expand the Newfoundland Model Forest Program to all areas of the province including the Northern Peninsula to broaden the approach to future forest development activities.**

AGRICULTURE: A GROWING INDUSTRY

Agriculture is important and we need to ensure that the industry is strong. We have the capability to benefit from its economic potential. In addition, food security exists when all citizens have access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food produced in a sustainable manner. As a province, we do not produce enough of our own food. In fact, we import over ninety (90) per cent of the food that we eat. We have enough food in our province to last us five short days.

A New Liberal Government will enhance food security through investments in local producers and implement a food security strategy. We will host a provincial food security summit during the first year of our mandate. Subsequently we will establish, in cooperation with stakeholders, a Food Security Strategy that sets benchmarks that we must achieve within identified time frames.

Life sciences have an important role to play in our agriculture and agri-food industries. It's another way we will help reduce our dependence on non-renewable resources. As a province we must focus our efforts on life sciences with a goal of building our functional foods and nutraceuticals industry.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **invest in a Life Sciences Strategy that is driven by stakeholders;**
- **create a division and have a director of Life Sciences within the Department of Natural Resources to drive life sciences research capacity and excellence in the agriculture industry;**
- **establish a Northern Berry Centre of Excellence in Wooddale, NL; and**
- **work in partnership with the College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University of Newfoundland and other experts to develop and share knowledge on cold climate crop expertise.**

Meat inspection assures the consumer that the meat products are clean, safe, and wholesome for human consumption at the time of purchase. We import about 99% of red meats to our province. The potential is there to increase our own production.

A New Liberal Government will implement a meat inspection regime that is consistent with national and international standards.

The agriculture industry suffers from labour shortages and makes it difficult to have a sustainable farming business. The average age of farmers in Newfoundland and Labrador is 54 and there is a need to encourage and promote young people to join the farming community. There is a need to recruit and retain young farmers into the industry and assist them in overcoming the barriers that exist in trying to start a new farm business or assuming control of an existing business.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **reinstate a farm loan board;**
- **provide access to capital investment which is important to a**

sustainable agriculture industry;

- **initiate special programs and provisions for young farmers; and**
- **complete a human resource strategy for the agriculture sector.**

Timely access to farm land is crucial to the agriculture sector. We must also protect agricultural land resources for the future.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **implement a Land Use Advisory Council including stakeholders from the municipalities, industry and government to increase access to land in a more efficient and timely manner;**
- **complete an inventory of all crown land in the province; and**
- **develop a strategy to deal with farmland access and preservation.**

THE GROWING FORWARD II AGREEMENT

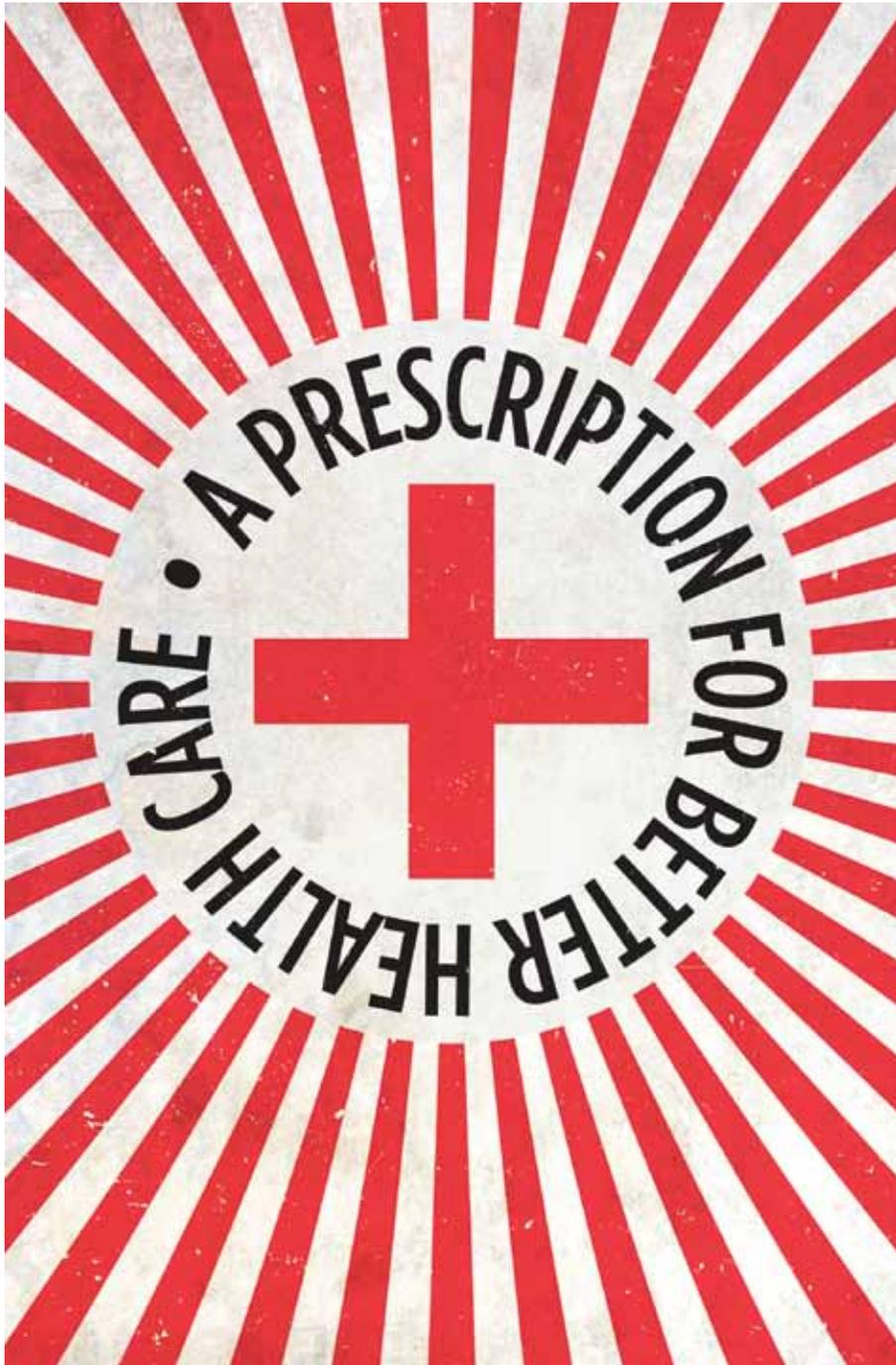
We understand the current and future federal and provincial agreement, the Growing Forward Agreement II, is currently being negotiated. The Liberal Party is in support of the principles contained within this framework.

A New Liberal Government is fully committed to this federal/provincial agreement and we will work in cooperation with the federal government and continue our financial commitment toward the agreement.

NON-EDIBLE AGRICULTURE

The non-edible agriculture industry is a developing industry within our province and has the potential to grow significantly. This has the ability to impact both the rural and urban areas of the province.

A New Liberal Government will work with the non-edible agriculture commodities, including the full scope of landscaping and the fur industry, to support its development needs and increase its importance to the province.



4

A PRESCRIPTION FOR BETTER HEALTH CARE

HEALTH

Health care spending has reached an all-time high of \$2.9-Billion in 2010/11. That's \$4,472 per minute, compared to \$2,470 per minute in 2000/01. It is essential to get value for our money through smarter spending in health care. Despite the current level of spending, there is little true accountability and too much waste. While we are doubling our health care expenses, health outcomes still do not reflect it. We still have some of the highest rates of diabetes, heart disease and cancer in the country.

Patients in our province are travelling farther and more often to receive medical services. Many are waiting months and sometimes even years just to see a doctor or receive medical treatment. This is not acceptable.

The Regional Health Authorities merged in 2004. Since then, patients as well as medical professionals feel that the system is bureaucratic, impersonal and confusing. We can do better.

There are some significant gaps in our system that must be addressed. Our health care system is focused on illness but we need to refocus on prevention. The Liberal Party believes we must invest money now to prevent sickness, disease and increased health care costs later. The Liberal Party also believes that our health care system can be run effectively and efficiently. We must reduce wait times for our patients. We must move medical services with multidisciplinary teams back to our communities, closer to our people.

A New Liberal Government will improve efficiency, service, and accountability in our health care system.

ACCOUNTABILITY

A New Liberal Government will introduce a Health Care Charter to improve accountability and patient health services to the people of this province.

A New Liberal Government will establish a Health Care Advocacy Council to make recommendations on how to cost-effectively provide timely access to high quality care in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A New Liberal Government will review the structure of the Regional Health Authorities to determine their effectiveness since the merger of the boards.

A New Liberal Government will review the governance of Regional Health Authorities and implement reforms to clarify and improve the roles of these boards.

A New Liberal Government will commit to reduce waste, inefficiency and unnecessary cancellations of tests, procedures and surgeries.

A New Liberal Government will implement all remaining recommendations from the Cameron Inquiry.

MENTAL HEALTH

Good mental health is the foundation for individual well-being and effective functioning of a community. 1 in 5 Newfoundlanders and

Labradorians will experience mental illness. Children are at a greater risk of developing the illness and 70% of adults living with mental health issues have symptoms develop during childhood or adolescence. We need to start with a focus on early intervention and support to protect our children.

A New Liberal Government will develop and implement a provincial mental health strategy.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Primary health care focuses on health promotion and prevention and promotes the adoption of collaborative teams. A New Liberal Government is committed to primary health care services and reducing the reliance on emergency room services. We are committed to transform primary health care and provide timely services close to where people live.

A New Liberal Government will assess the status of primary health care in the province, develop a primary health care strategy and invest in multi-disciplinary sites with locations to be identified.

CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Chronic disease is the leading cause of death in Newfoundland and Labrador. Diseases of the circulatory system, cancer, and respiratory disease account for approximately 75 percent of all deaths in this province. Our population is aging, rates of chronic disease are rising, and the health care system needs to respond to these changing circumstances.

A New Liberal Government will develop and implement a chronic disease management and prevention strategy. Priority will be given to diabetes.

HEALTHY EATING, ACTIVE LIVING

Newfoundland & Labrador has the highest prevalence of overweight and obesity for adults and children in Canada. A study conducted by Memorial University of Newfoundland shows that 1 in 4 preschool children in our province are already overweight or obese.

A New Liberal Government will create a Healthy Eating and Active Living strategy for our children and youth to give them the best possible start in life. We will:

- **work with schools to:**
 - **decrease availability of foods and beverages with little nutritional value and promote physical fitness that emphasizes activities for personal daily fitness; and**

- **improve school health and fitness curriculum and infrastructure, with a mandated 30-minute minimum daily physical activity requirement;**
- **promote physical activity, including unstructured play at home, in school, in child care settings, and throughout the community;**
- **investigate opportunities to reduce the costs of nutritious foods to rural and remote areas of the province support research into childhood obesity; and**
- **incorporate monitoring and prevention measures into existing prenatal and child health programs.**

SECURING OUR PHARMACIES

A New Liberal Government will work with all pharmacy stakeholders in Newfoundland and Labrador to develop and implement policy that protects and enhances the practice of pharmacy in our province. We also recognize the unique situations and differences in certain areas of the province such as rural communities and inner city independent community pharmacies. We will work with pharmacy owners and operators to recognize the collective education, experience and investments of these groups. By doing so, we will maximize the health and wellness of the people of the province while reducing costs.

A New Liberal Government shall engage in discussions and negotiations with all pharmacy groups in a manner that reflects best practices in the health insurance sector. This may result in different contracts being reached with various pharmacy chains and with the Council of Independent Community Pharmacy Owners (CICPO). A New Liberal Government shall distinguish between business interests as represented by appropriate trade groups designated by business and the Pharmacists Association of Newfoundland and Labrador as an advocacy body for the profession that does not engage in commercial contract negotiations.

Objectives of the negotiations will be to:

- deliver medication and disease management programs for chronic diseases, particularly in areas where the prevalence is high in Newfoundland and Labrador, and will include, but is not limited to diabetes, cardiac care, asthma, and hypotension/hypertension;
- find efficiencies within the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP) that will effect savings in the program, reduce unnecessary duplication for pharmacies, and develop a working

committee with all groups to ensure that the NLPDP is operating in a manner to maximize positive health outcomes, ensure continued viability of rural and inner-city pharmacies, and guarantee that health care dollars relative to pharmaceuticals are spent to achieve a superior result;

- guarantee that Newfoundland and Labrador gains maximum benefit through the use of generic pharmaceuticals by streamlining the process for submission and acceptance of those generic drugs that have achieved approval by Health Canada;
- recognize and address the differences and unique situations that pharmacies face among areas of the province and implement solutions to address these differences in service delivery;
- ensure that pharmacists are available for rural areas of Newfoundland and Labrador by providing incentives to both students of pharmacy intending to practice in these communities and by offering a salary stipend to rural pharmacies in order that they may compete for human resources that otherwise would remain in urban centres;
- provide for the most accessible and equitable pharmacy network in Canada thereby ensuring that the most vulnerable in our society continue to receive necessary front-line healthcare services and that rural communities maintain their pharmacies – necessary to attract and keep families in the area;
- recognize the different models of pharmacy practice to ensure that policy is developed for Newfoundland and Labrador;
- achieve stability for pharmacies through an enforceable agreement that is not subject to government regulatory authority being used to break the agreement without joint agreement between the parties; and
- achieve renewed respect between the parties to ensure that best practices are achieved through dialogue and collaboration.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM (NLPDP)

The Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP) helps provide financial assistance to residents of the province for the purchase of prescription medications. Enhancements are required to make this program work more effectively for the people of this province.

A New Liberal Government will enhance the NLPDP by reducing the significant administrative burden and time delay for health

care professionals and patients to allow for reasonable access to prescription drugs.

A New Liberal Government will accept the recommendations of the Common Drug Review and Oncology Drug Review in a more timely manner and add these prescription drugs to the formulary within 3 months of the recommendations.

A New Liberal Government will increase the number of medications which are eligible under the NLPDP.

A New Liberal Government will work with the federal government to increase access to prescription drugs for rare diseases.

ADDICTIONS

Newfoundland and Labrador is facing growing concerns regarding substance abuse. There has been a growth in illicit drug use and there are high rates of problematic alcohol consumption and prescription drug abuse amongst the population. While progress has been made in decreasing tobacco use, our efforts must continue as smoking rates among some groups – young adults in particular – remain high. A comprehensive approach is required to influence and sustain real change.

A New Liberal Government will establish an Addictions Help Line and enhanced telecounselling province wide, based on the successful Smokers Helpline model.

A New Liberal Government will strengthen youth substance abuse prevention efforts.

A New Liberal Government will engage parents and communities in programs to support knowledge and prevention of addictions within their families.

TOBACCO

Smoking has a huge impact on the health, wellness and wealth of our society. Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the highest rates of smoking of all Canadian provinces. Last year government revenue from tobacco taxes was \$135-Million. Meanwhile, in the same year, tobacco cost our health care system between \$300 – \$400-Million.

A New Liberal Government will fund smoking cessation, drug and nicotine replacement therapies.

A New Liberal Government will integrate tobacco within the

mandate of Mental Health and Addictions services with the Regional Health Authorities.

ALCOHOL

Without exception, after tobacco, alcohol is consistently recognized across the country as the substance that causes the greatest harm. Alcohol consumption can result in fatalities and serious injury through motor vehicle collisions, suicide, violence, health effects, mental illness and FASD.

A New Liberal Government will implement a full provincial alcohol strategy by working cooperatively with the National Alcohol Strategy to provide a comprehensive and coordinated approach.

A New Liberal Government will implement routine screening and brief interventions by health care professionals for hazardous drinkers or those at risk.

A New Liberal Government will develop and promote low-risk drinking guidelines to address the high rates of binge drinking in Newfoundland and Labrador, for both youth and adults.

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MTAP)

The Medical Transportation Assistance Program (MTAP) was introduced by the Liberal Government in 1998. MTAP assists residents who incur substantial costs when travelling to access insured health services which are not available within their health region and/or within the province.

A New Liberal Government will enhance the MTAP in order to reduce the financial burden of patients and their families who travel for medical services.

DIALYSIS

The demand for dialysis services is increasing in this province. Rural and remote populations find themselves at a distinct disadvantage in terms of easy access to life-sustaining treatments.

A New Liberal Government will enhance the provincial kidney program.

A New Liberal Government will invest in additional dialysis services and sites for the province, including home based treatment.

A New Liberal Government will increase investment into awareness of kidney disease and prevention.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Primary care services, such as wellness and prevention services, diagnosis and management of many common uncomplicated acute illnesses, and management of chronic diseases can be safely and effectively provided by nurse practitioners. This would greatly help address wait times and improve primary care services.

A New Liberal Government will develop s strategy to increase the number of nurse practitioners working in our province and enhance their scope of practice.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE & THE HEALTH CARE SECTOR

The sad truth is that health care professionals are at the highest risk for being attacked at work. Even when compared to prison guards, police officers or transport workers. Addressing this issue is extremely important.

A New Liberal Government will develop, in conjunction with appropriate stakeholders, a comprehensive strategy to deal with Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention in the health care sector.

PATIENT NAVIGATORS AND EDUCATION

People often feel lost in our health care system. Often, they are not sure who to call, where to go to get help or what steps to follow to get the best care. People must be educated to make the best decisions and often they need help and advice about what their next step should be. Patient navigators are specially trained health care providers who ease and expedite patient access to care and services. They provide patients with a single point of contact when they have questions and problems and work one-on-one with patients. They act as liaisons between patients and doctors. We currently have patient navigators for cancer patients, but we need to expand this program throughout our health care system.

A New Liberal Government will invest in an education and awareness campaign to help people know who to call and the best treatment options available to receive the most appropriate care.

A New Liberal Government will invest in patient navigators for each of the provincial health authorities to help patients navigate through the health care system and help prevent them from falling through the cracks.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Palliative care can be provided in any number of settings ranging from homes and hospitals to long term care institutions. It should be recognized as an integral component of care across acute care, long-term care, and the community.

A New Liberal Government will fund a Provincial Palliative Care Program.

ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS (EMR)

EMRs help provide medical services which are patient-centred, evidence-based, and with measurable outcomes. EMRs will enhance the quality of patient care, co-ordination of care and prevent the duplication of services. They will help ensure seamless transition of information.

A New Liberal Government supports the development of EMR and will work with all appropriate stakeholders to implement EMR for our province. A New Liberal Government will invest in and support the expansion of the EMR.

BREAST CANCER DETECTION

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Newfoundland and Labrador women, excluding non-melanoma skin cancer. Women aged 40 to 49 are not eligible to participate in Newfoundland and Labrador's breast screening program, although they would be eligible in many other provinces.

A New Liberal Government will allow women to be eligible for breast screening at age 40.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

The province's ambulance system is not working to the best of its ability.

A New Liberal Government will complete a funding review and an operational review of ambulance services in the first year of our mandate.

A New Liberal Government will develop and implement an Ambulance Act.

AIR AMBULANCE

In March of 2010 government made the announcement to move the air ambulance system from St Anthony to Goose Bay. This move was based on a highly inadequate review of the air ambulance services and did not consider servicing the needs of the province as a whole.

A New Liberal Government will commit to undertake a truly comprehensive review of air ambulance services to improve response time and service for air ambulance emergency medical transportation.

PROVINCE WIDE 911 EMERGENCY SERVICE

The 911 emergency services has proven to be a significant health and safety benefit that has prevented the loss of life in many circumstances.

A New Liberal Government will work towards the establishment of a province wide emergency 911 services for every region of Newfoundland and Labrador.



SENIORS & AGING

5

SENIORS AND AGING: AGING AT HOME

Newfoundland and Labrador has a changing population that will challenge our ability to provide health care for decades to come.

By 2025, more than 1 in 4 people in our province will be seniors.

Priority must be given to dealing with opportunities and challenges related to aging and seniors.

A New Liberal Government will offer more choices to our aging and seniors and allow them to live with dignity and independence for as long as possible, in supportive communities close to their families and friends.

DEPARTMENT & INDEPENDENT OFFICE

The opportunities and challenges facing an aging population are not only related to their health and well-being. There are a host of issues that need to be addressed including age friendly communities, diversity, income and finances, secure housing, active living, life long learning, safety, and violence prevention.

A New Liberal Government will establish a new department dedicated to dealing with opportunities and challenges related to aging and seniors.

A New Liberal Government will establish an independent office of the House of Assembly called the Office of the Seniors' Advocate (OSA).

AGING AND SENIORS STRATEGY

More than a framework for action, the strategy will be a guide for helping all sectors create senior-friendly communities to support our citizens as they age at home. A key component of this will be a long-term care strategy.

A New Liberal government will develop a healthy aging and seniors' strategy.

GERIATRIC FOCUS: ACUTE CARE

In some communities, seniors make up more than half the population. Attachment is very strong to communities, especially in rural and remote areas. Seniors want to remain home and in their communities for as long as possible. Aging at Home allows our seniors to have a better quality of life, to live in dignity and preserve their independence

A New Liberal Government will implement a geriatric focus to our health care system that is now solely focused on acute care. This will be implemented initially as a pilot project. Our priority will be getting our seniors back in their homes and communities with the appropriate supports.

A New Liberal Government will implement a home care strategy that will allow seniors to live in their homes longer. We will introduce legislation to recognize and support caregivers and their contributions, and allow family members to be paid caregivers when there is difficulty in recruitment and retention of a homecare worker.

PERSONAL CARE HOMES

Long term care in a nursing home, while an important service option for most dependent, fragile and ill seniors, is seldom a first choice of seniors and their families.

A New Liberal Government will strengthen our community-based personal care homes through investments that will provide an increase in the resident allowance from \$150.00 to \$300.00 per month, a wage guarantee for personal home care workers, a new assessment tool that will allow some seniors with Level II plus care to be cared for in certain personal care homes, a monthly rental increase to assist owners to pay appropriate wages and meet all government requirements. A New Liberal Government will also strengthen the industry by providing, fixed bed subsidy buy-out, funding for modernization of personal care homes, and a loan insurance program.

HOME OXYGEN

Oxygen therapy services are vital in supporting people with breathing difficulties, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema, and cystic fibrosis. Many of these people are seniors.

A New Liberal Government will implement a provincial home oxygen program, including standards and quality assurance.



6

EDUCATION: INVESTING FOR OUR FUTURE

Education is the key to the future of our province. The quality of education at all levels, including early childhood, is of great importance to all of us.

PRIMARY, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province in Canada that does not have a full-day kindergarten program. Full-day kindergarten would improve our children's education.

A New Liberal Government will establish a task force, representing all partners, to develop a strategic action plan for the implementation of full-day kindergarten. The task force will undertake an extensive process of public consultation. The strategic action plan will include a vision statement, a suggested curriculum, and up-to-date projections of the need for additional facilities, equipment, teachers, and other support personnel.

FOCUSING MORE ON TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS

As a province, we must continue to address teacher workload issues, and provide more support services for teachers. While some progress has been made, there are still too many schools, urban as well as rural, where classes are too large; that do not have adequate teaching resources; adequate secretarial, maintenance and computer-technician staff; adequate washroom and lunch facilities for teachers; or a comfortable and healthy place where teachers can relax when they are not in the classroom. Too many teachers who work with children with special learning needs, including the gifted and the talented, lack the necessary supports. Much more must be done to support teachers who work with our Aboriginal children. Poor working conditions and inadequate facilities and supports undermine the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers, and, therefore, negatively impact student learning.

A New Liberal Government will revisit the class size issue, and move towards the allocation of teachers to schools based on program and service needs, rather than the number of students. We cannot continue to reduce the number of teachers in our schools, particularly our smaller schools.

A New Liberal Government will commit to no further reduction in teacher allocation; the needs in schools are greater than they have ever been.

A New Liberal Government will increase funding for the maintenance of schools and the hiring of more maintenance staff. It will also ensure that summer maintenance programs are completed in a timely fashion.

PROMOTING GREATER PARENTAL AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The meaningful involvement of the public, particularly parents, is another area where reform is necessary. Greater parental involvement can be

justified on the basis of efficiency and effectiveness, as well as democracy. Parents, who often feel powerless and marginalized, can have a huge impact in working with and motivating their children, reinforcing their school-time experiences. School districts are now too geographically large for effective parental input using the current model. We will increase the involvement of parents and the public generally in school board elections and educational decision-making. Effective school boards and school councils can help decentralize more educational decision-making. School councils can also contribute significantly to the improvement of student achievement and performance.

A New Liberal Government will ensure that the Department of Education makes the development of a comprehensive parent involvement policy a major priority. It will also introduce legislation that gives school councils more authority and greater involvement in the operation of schools.

EDUCATING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs must be welcome in our schools and receive necessary supports to enable true participation and belonging. Children deserve to be educated with their peers; however, it is not the place of government to determine who these peers are.

A New Liberal Government will be supportive of inclusion as a philosophy. It will work closely with parents, teachers and administrators to ensure that all children receive the best possible education, balancing individual needs with school and professional capacity.

A New Liberal Government will also:

- commission the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland to complete a thorough review of the current inclusion policy and make recommendations to improve the current system;
- review the arrangements for children with special needs, involving parents, principals, education experts and (where appropriate) the children themselves;
- work with families, community groups and professionals to improve or create supports within school systems for children with autism, ADHD, cerebral palsy, and other disabilities and challenges; and
- require all school boards to establish programming and services designed to assist students with disabilities with career development and the pursuit of meaningful employment opportunities.

ADVISORY COUNCIL AND INCLUSION COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

Children with disabilities have diverse needs. There is a need to improve access to education by linking and integrating education resources, setting standards for special education programs, and expanding support for these children.

A New Liberal Government will establish an advisory council in special education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to the establishment and provision of special education programs and services for students with special needs.

A New Liberal Government will create special education inclusion committees to work in partnership with the staff and resources of each school board to assure quality educational services for all students. This committee will be made up of parents, trustees, and representatives recommended by local associations and community organizations for each school board across the province.

TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Students not only need good schools, they also need well-equipped classrooms, including the latest in educational technology. They must have access to the latest technologies in schools in order to be competitive in their future careers. As we move towards routine use of computers and hand-held digital information devices, programs will be needed to ensure access to these technologies by all children, including those in remote communities or from low income households and communities.

A New Liberal Government will develop a strategy to enable school children and their parents to have improved access to technology.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

A New Liberal Government is committed to providing accessible, high-quality education and training opportunities to Aboriginal peoples at all levels of learning.

A New Liberal Government will work with Aboriginal communities on initiatives to address educational challenges and enhance K-12 education, to improve the scope and quality of programs, and to monitor the effectiveness of these initiatives. A New Liberal Government will also support and expand Innu-based curriculum at schools in Natuashish and Sheshatshui so that children can learn about their own culture in their own language.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Our schools cannot function without substitute teachers, and yet these teachers are not treated fairly, often working for years without security or gaining seniority. Hiring must be based upon fairness, and new teachers should be given priority over rehiring retirees.

A New Liberal Government will implement fair treatment and greater security for substitute teachers. We will work with associations, school boards and substitute teachers to develop and implement a fair and transparent system for hiring substitute teachers.

SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

A New Liberal Government will re-open the School for the Deaf, over a two-year period, working closely with parents and related groups and organizations.

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND THE COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC

Memorial University of Newfoundland plays a vital role in the economic and social development of our province, preparing professionals for a whole range of careers, and serving as a centre for research and development. All students with the necessary background should have the opportunity to attend if they choose, without being burdened with debt for the rest of their lives. This principle applies to the College of the North Atlantic as well, responsible for providing an educated and skilled workforce so critical to our economic future. Liberals believe that affordable, accessible post-secondary education should be a right, not a privilege.

A New Liberal Government will ensure that Memorial University of Newfoundland and the College of the North Atlantic remain key elements of our educational system, contributing to the development of our people and the growth of our economy.

A New Liberal Government will support and continue the tuition freeze for students at Memorial University of Newfoundland and the College of the North Atlantic.

A New Liberal Government will incrementally expand the grant program for post secondary students annually by \$20 per week until the loan portion is completely eliminated.

A New Liberal Government will expand debt reduction grants to accommodate part time students.

A New Liberal Government will assist students in the trades by removing "tools and equipment" from "books" in the needs assessment formula, and increasing the total allotment for this purpose.

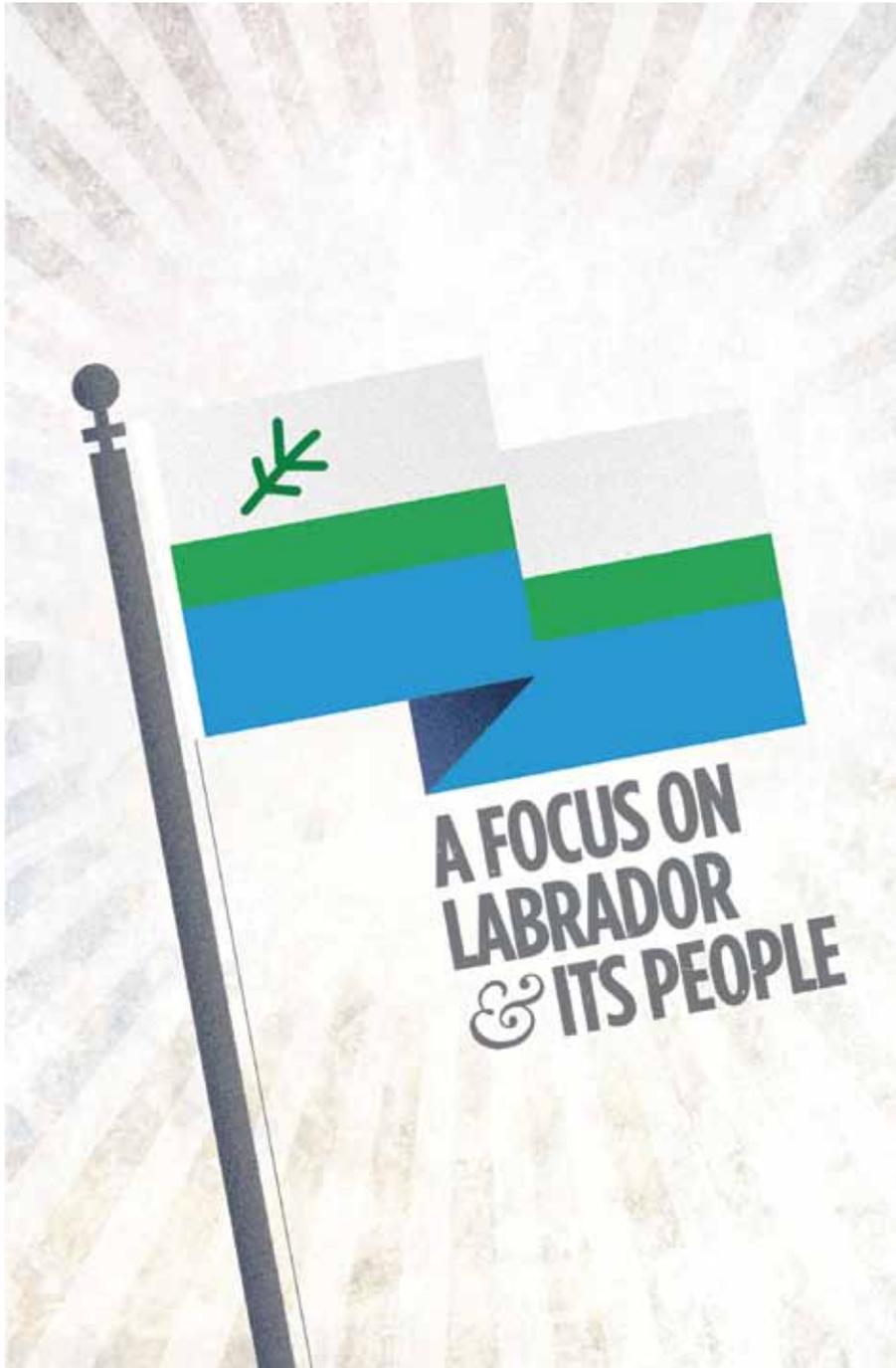
A New Liberal Government will carry through on its commitment to construct a new residence for post-secondary students in Labrador West.

A New Liberal Government will introduce legislation eliminating the role of government in the appointment of the presidents of Memorial University of Newfoundland and the College of the North Atlantic, leaving such appointments to the appropriate boards.

A New Liberal Government will work more closely with private business and federal agencies to increase summer job placements and salaries for students.

PRIVATE COLLEGES

A New Liberal Government will work with the private colleges to improve their programs and services. We will encourage accreditation of private college programs to ensure that they meet the changing needs of our economy.



7

A FOCUS ON LABRADOR AND ITS PEOPLE

LABRADOR – THE LAND OF OPTIMISM AND OPPORTUNITY

Never before in its history has Labrador provided as much optimism and opportunity to its people and the province than it does today. From the iron ore mines in the west, to the nickel mines in the north, from energy development in central, to exploration activity in the south, Labrador's resources are being exploited at a phenomenal pace, driven by demand from domestic and world markets. It is now more important than ever that Government ensures those resources are developed in the best interest of Labrador's people.

A New Liberal Government will support resource development in Labrador when it contributes to enhancing infrastructure for the people of Labrador. We will develop a mechanism whereby Labrador will financially benefit from any new resource development within Labrador. Those benefits will subsequently be used to fund infrastructure projects throughout Labrador.

GOVERNANCE

Past Liberal governments have recognized the uniqueness of Labrador and have seen the benefits of allocating government resources specifically to Labrador. Hence, we saw the creation of a Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Department, headquartered in Happy Valley – Goose Bay.

The creation of the Nunatsiavut Government, the formation of the Innu New Dawn Agreement, and the aspirations of NunatuKavut are all factors that have to be considered when providing a provincial governance model that embraces the interests of all Labrador people.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **maintain the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs in Happy Valley – Goose Bay. The department will be enhanced by providing dedicated resources that focus on each of the four regions of Labrador;**
- **provide, through the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, a liaison with the Nunatsiavut Government to ensure a seamless relationship between the provincial and Nunatsiavut government programs; and**
- **create a Natural Resources office in Labrador West with focus on mining and a mandate to monitor and support the growing mining industry. This office will be at an assistant deputy minister level.**

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

Over the past years, Labrador's Aboriginal groups have made tremendous progress in achieving land claims agreements and self-governance. However, much remains to be done. A New Liberal Government recognizes the challenges that lie ahead and is prepared to work closely with the Innu, Inuit, and the NunatuKavut Inuit as they work toward attaining their goals and objectives.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **commit to a strong relationship with the Nunatsiavut Government through the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs that will result in a permanent liaison mechanism agreed to by both parties;**

- **work closely with the Innu Nation to ensure a successful completion of the Lands Claim Agreement and will endorse the New Dawn Agreement; and**
- **work with NunatuKavut, as an Aboriginal people, and the Federal government to achieve settlement of land claims which would include Impact Benefits Agreements for resource developments.**

LABRADOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Labrador communities were the recipients of considerable infrastructure funding during the early 1990's under a federal/provincial funding agreement known as the Labrador Comprehensive Agreement. Administered under a joint management board, the fund provided much needed resources to Labrador communities for infrastructure development. As part of the Canada-Newfoundland Atlantic Accord, an Offshore Development Fund was created and funded by offshore revenues for development of infrastructure, mostly on the Avalon Peninsula. Labrador's time has come again to benefit from the development of its resources.

A New Liberal Government will implement a Labrador Development Plan, administered through the Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, that will be funded by federal/provincial and resource development revenues. The Plan will be the catalyst for community sustainability and infrastructure development.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

While we have made considerable progress in developing a comprehensive transportation system throughout Labrador, much remains to be done to bring Labrador's transportation network into the 21st century. Whether it's by road, water, or air, discrepancies remain within the system that present challenges both to the people of Labrador and to those visiting the "Big Land".

A New Liberal Government will:

- **commit to the completion of paving Phase 1 of the Trans Labrador Highway from Labrador West to Happy Valley – Goose Bay;**
- **immediately start the preparation work required to pave both Phase 2 and 3 of the Trans-Labrador Highway from Red Bay to Happy Valley – Goose Bay;**
- **immediately re-surface Route 510 from the Quebec-Labrador border to Red Bay;**
- **work closely with the Nunatsiavut Government to begin the**

planning of extending the Trans Labrador Highway into the Labrador North Coast;

- **develop a port authority in Happy Valley – Goose Bay in consultation with the appropriate stakeholders groups;**
- **develop a feasibility study on creating a trans-shipment port for mining products out of Labrador, including Labrador West;**
- **set out to establish the Strait of Belle Isle ferry as an essential service;**
- **mandate Newfoundland and Labrador Housing to assess the feasibility of an industrial park for Happy Valley-Goose Bay in support of a Lower Churchill development;**
- **work with all air line operators and stakeholders to develop a strategy to enhance air service in Labrador with a view of developing a central airport in southern Labrador; and**
- **work with the federal government to restore firefighting services at the Wabush airport, thereby allowing larger aircraft to land.**

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

With the energy resources that exist in Labrador, there is no doubt that it can become a “powerhouse” for energy development, both in hydro and wind development. While the Liberal Party supports the report of the Joint Review Panel on Muskrat Falls, this does not mean that we are against developing the Churchill River. Rather, it has to be done in a manner that encompasses the maximum potential of the river, and provides maximum benefits to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The residents of the north and south coasts of Labrador who are on diesel generated power, continue to pay the highest electricity rates in the province, both in residential and commercial rates. Not only are the rates extremely high under the present system, the communities have no capacity to grow in the commercial and industrial sector.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **work towards hydro development in Labrador that includes both Muskrat Falls and Gull Island;**
- **promote wind as a possible source of electrical power generation in Labrador;**

- **address the high cost of electricity on the north and south coasts of Labrador by either connecting to Churchill power generation, development of local rivers in the region, or co-generation; and**
- **immediately work with new mining companies to begin the process of developing new power purchase agreements that will be fair and consistent. A potential need of 800 mw has been identified for existing and new mining developments in Labrador.**

COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE

An effective and reliable communication network is very important to attaining economic growth in Labrador. Like the existing transportation system, the communication infrastructure is deficient in many areas of Labrador. Although Smart Labrador has been very effective in bringing high speed internet to many Labrador communities, there are still areas where upgrading is required.

Cell phone coverage in Labrador is limited to only a few areas in Labrador, namely the larger centres of Labrador West, Happy Valley – Goose Bay, Churchill Falls, and limited areas along the Labrador Straits. The lack of coverage along the Trans Labrador Highway has been a concern for the traveling public since the opening of the highway. Attempts have been made by past governments to provide an emergency service through the use of satellite phones, but again, we need to bring the communication system into 21st century standards.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **in partnership with Smart Labrador, develop a plan to ensure that all Labrador communities have access to high-speed internet service; and**
- **in partnership with the private sector and Aboriginal groups, develop a plan for infrastructure that provides cell phone coverage along the total route of the Trans Labrador Highway.**

LABRADOR WEST

Labrador West is seeing unprecedented growth and prosperity as a result of world demand for iron ore products. A New Liberal Government recognizes that the exponential growth in Labrador West is similar to that seen in Fort McMurray, AB. This requires a specific action plan for Labrador West. While this growth is beneficial to the region, it has created some challenges for the communities of Labrador City and Wabush, especially in the housing and service sectors.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **work with all key stakeholders to develop a strategic plan to**

address the unprecedented growth currently underway in Labrador West. The mandate will include a development plan for housing, infrastructure, recreation, health, education, service industry and municipal expansion;

- mandate Newfoundland and Labrador Housing to finance the increase in capacity of available serviced industrial land in the Towns of Labrador City and Wabush;
- mandate Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, to finance the increase in availability of affordable housing in partnership with the Towns of Labrador City and Wabush;
- invest \$6-Million to construct a new student residence that complements the College of the North Atlantic in Labrador West; and
- develop an all trades apprenticeship program, in partnership with the College of the North Atlantic and the mining industry, in Labrador West whereby mining industry employees can complete all block training programs in Labrador West.



8

A STRONG SOCIAL AGENDA

Too many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians live in a poverty trap and do not have the necessary resources to break the cycle. Despite the boom in offshore oil revenues, the gap between the rich and the poor is getting wider. Too many people are struggling to make ends meet. The Liberal Party recognizes this issue and will help reduce poverty in our province. Liberals believe that people in poverty need a hand up, not a handout.

HOUSING ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

Many of our communities and people are urgently in need of affordable housing. Measures to address this serious issue will improve people's lives, including those who are homeless.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **establish a Premier's task force on housing & homelessness. The task force will engage in a social partnership with community leaders and community-based organizations to lead and prepare a collaborative and comprehensive response to homelessness and housing instability in all regions of the province;**
- **investigate new incentives to aid low-income home-buyers transition to home ownership; and**
- **double the Provincial Homelessness Fund over 2 years from \$2-Million to \$4-Million.**

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

One of the major steps in eliminating poverty is removing obstacles that provide people with an opportunity to find employment. This objective will only be realized if policies are developed that recognize the needs of the working poor. While many of these people have jobs, they face obstacles that force them to continue to live in poverty.

A New Liberal Government will review the effectiveness of programs to assist people living in poverty as they enter the workforce, and investigate new opportunities to assist the working poor.

CHILD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Child care and early childhood education programs are a highly cost effective means of strengthening society as a whole, and ensuring that children get a good start in developing to their fullest potential.

There are approximately 60,000 children between the ages of 0–12, and 49,000 of those have parents in the workforce. Meanwhile, there are fewer than 7,000 child care spaces available in the province. Clearly, there is a shortage of child care spaces. Another key issue is the lack of trained early childhood educators.

A New Liberal Government will increase the number of child care spaces available by investing in competitive wages for the Early Childhood Educators. We will:

- **increase the Early Childhood Education Supplement (ELCC) from a maximum of \$6,660/year to \$8,000/year;**

- **allow the supplement to be administered by the individual daycare centres and integrated as part of the early childhood educator's (ECE) weekly or biweekly paycheque;**
- **invest in recruiting and retaining early childhood educators; and**
- **creating new infant care spaces by providing a monthly supplement to licensed child care centres.**

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Removing barriers and providing the opportunities and skills to allow people to achieve their full potential is an integral part of reducing poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A New Liberal Government will reduce these barriers through some significant commitments in education, mentioned elsewhere in this document.

LITERACY

Literacy is a human right that allows everyone to become an active participant in our society and leads to economic well-being and healthier living. Without the ability to read and write, there are significant barriers that diminish quality of life. Illiteracy rates in this province are too high and immediate action is needed to address this problem.

A New Liberal Government will invest an additional \$1-Million to raise awareness and enhance literacy training programs. This will include strategies for learner recruitment and retention, adult literacy practitioner development, and increasing the numbers and range of effective adult literacy learning opportunities.

A New Liberal Government will strengthen partnerships to develop an effective adult literacy system.

A New Liberal Government will commit to providing continued support for library services to persons with print disabilities living in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

According to the Food Banks Usage Report released in November 2010, food bank use is higher in Newfoundland and Labrador than a decade ago.

A New Liberal Government will expand the school lunch program and work with community groups to identify other ways which nutrition and health needs of children in poverty can be addressed.

PENSIONS

Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the fastest aging and retiring populations of any province in Canada. In 2007, almost 15% of the population was over the age of 65. Within 10 years that proportion will increase to one in five. Meanwhile, unfunded public service pension liabilities top \$3B. Healthy pension plans for all seniors are a critical part of supporting the seniors in our province.

Most seniors avail of either the CPP or private pension systems. While pensions regulation is a federal responsibility, we have the responsibility to ensure that federal pension decisions take into account provincial seniors' concerns. We need to strike a balance between how much we take in pension contributions and how much we provide in benefits. The economic well-being of one generation of workers cannot be sacrificed to benefit another.

A New Liberal Government will work with the federal government to ensure that rules governing CPP and private sector pensions are adjusted to reflect demographic change in a manner that is fair to pensioners, business, unions and current workers.

PUBLIC SECTOR PENSIONS

There are 24,000 public sector pensioners in our province. To ensure that these pensioners live in dignity, we believe it's time to bring their issue to a close.

A New Liberal Government will provide a one-time 2.5% increase to Public Sector Pensioners and subsequently, annual increases equivalent to CPI, to a maximum of 2%. We will establish an arms-length Review Commission to examine long-term, just and equitable solutions following the principles of fairness and natural law.

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

There are approximately 75,000 persons with disabilities living in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A New Liberal Government is committed to supporting people with disabilities to maximize their potential and helping them participate as equal citizens in Newfoundland and Labrador. Our approach will seek to improve the lives of people with disabilities, their families and their caregivers.

Bold words are not enough. We need a real change that addresses the social, economic and physical landscape for persons with disabilities.

A New Liberal Government will commit to developing and implementing a comprehensive disability strategy for our province.

DISABILITY OUTREACH OFFICE

Gaining knowledge of and access to the variety of programs and services that are available to persons with disabilities can be intimidating, time-consuming, and confusing. It is a great source of frustration and often results in underutilization of programs.

A New Liberal Government will create a Disability Outreach Office, committed to supporting persons with disabilities, their families, and their caretakers. This Office will be a liaison between persons with disabilities and government, providing information on programs and services for both.

TIMELY INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There are about 3,000 children under the age of 14 who have been identified as having a physical and/or an intellectual disability. Parents and caretakers often feel frustrated with the red tape and bureaucracy they must encounter in trying to access programs and services for their children.

A New Liberal Government will implement a database for persons with disabilities that will allow the Outreach Office, proposed elsewhere in this document, to provide appropriate service information to parents as their children age, as well as information for various government departments trying to determine eligibility for various programs.

FUNCTIONAL ACCESS

We need to protect the basic rights of the disabled community. They need functional access to the services for which they pay taxes, the same as those who are not disabled.

A New Liberal Government will lead by example. We will commit to making government and public buildings functionally accessible, strengthen legislation to ensure that the disabled community has functional access as well and double fines for noncompliance to functional access for persons with disabilities.

A STRATEGIC WOMEN'S AGENDA

It is a priority of the Liberal Party to achieve social and economic equality for all girls and women in Newfoundland and Labrador. To achieve true equality, actions must be taken to adjust for the differences in experiences and situations between men and women, and among women, that

correct the systemic nature of inequality. This is achieved by the identification of issues and the development of policies, programs and legislation that advance the goals of fairness and equality.

A New Liberal Government is committed to a government wide strategic women's agenda and will undertake the following over the next four years:

- **promote special programs and activities to support and encourage the success of women and girls in all aspects of society;**
- **conduct outreach and dialogue to identify and raise awareness of current and emerging issues for women and girls;**
- **ensure secure and increased funding for women's centres and organizations;**
- **increase investment in crisis shelters;**
- **support increased education and awareness to end violence against women and vulnerable populations;**
- **fund programs to encourage gender equity, public awareness campaigns and gender sensitivity training to facilitate a more inclusive workforce, particularly in science, trades and technology;**
- **encourage female participation in elected positions at various levels of government;**
- **continue commitment to gender-inclusive analysis, ensuring that all policy, program and legislative development and analysis consider gender;**
- **promote the elimination of harassment in the workplace;**
- **sustain and enhance the work of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women; and**
- **listen to survivors and women's advocates who help to create and enhance women's policy.**

ENHANCING OUR VOLUNTEER SECTOR

The community sector, alongside the public and private sectors, is one of the three pillars of Newfoundland and Labrador society. Without the work and dedication of many community volunteer groups, life in our communities would be vastly different. In recent years, the volunteer

sector has had to deal with very important challenges, including the declining pool of volunteers and the difficulty of recruiting and retaining new leaders.

However, despite the challenges, the community sector is full of innovative ideas and experienced leaders who understand the needs of their communities, their clients, and their organizations. The Liberal Party believes that government should create a long-term and structured partnership between sector leaders and government officials that focuses on advancing the role of the sector and ensure that critical issues are addressed effectively, proactively, and in a timely manner.

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

The story of the community sector is vital – community groups are the backbone and often the lifeline of communities. The Liberal Party believes that increased research about the sector in Newfoundland and Labrador is required to build a comprehensive picture and to profile the contributions and value of the community sector.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **recognize the true importance of the community (voluntary and non-profit) sector in the social, economic, and cultural fabric of our communities; and**
- **work jointly with the sector to develop a strategic plan for the future.**

RESEARCH PLAN

To plan well, knowledge about the role of the community sector and volunteerism is essential. A comprehensive "snapshot" of the sector in Newfoundland and Labrador is fundamental to ensuring that the appropriate directions are taken. The research should include a census of the sector, labour market and human resource issues, the shifting needs of communities and organizations, and the significant role of community organizations in generating economic activity and employment.

Working with the sector, a New Liberal Government will develop and launch a research plan that studies all aspects of the sector.

HARNESSING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

The community sector wishes to be well-run and governed. There are increasing demands for accountability and other requirements to meet. For many people, contributing to their communities and serving on boards is becoming more daunting. The magnitude of the legal responsibility assumed by board members is often not fully appreciated. Assisting people to run organizations efficiently and providing tools for sound internal controls and practices should be a priority.

A New Liberal Government will work directly with the community sector to produce a training plan for boards, volunteers, organizations, and employees – delivered by the sector for the sector to build new leadership skills and support organizational standards and best practices.

SECURING THE FUTURE

The lack of funding for the community sector is a continuing issue that must be resolved. Groups are becoming more and more frustrated with excessive and repeated paperwork, especially for small amounts of funding and projects which are often not approved. The recent downloading of the Labour Market Development Agreement and Labour Market Partnerships from the Federal Government to provincial jurisdiction has caused many gaps and changes in funding allocation. With the transfer of those funds to the Provincial Government, an opportunity exists to create a good fit between local employment and community needs. Program planning, applications, and funding should be streamlined and approved in a manner that ensures more effective and productive use of funds.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **develop a strategy to provide multi-year funding for community sector organizations, finance Volunteer Resource Centres; and**
- **review the Labour Market Development Agreement and Labour Market Partnerships to better integrate the employment needs of individuals while providing important and timely support to community groups in meeting their missions.**
- **review the Labour Market Development Agreement and Labour Market Partnerships to better integrate the employment needs of individuals while providing important and timely support to community groups in meeting their missions.**

OUR PEOPLE, OUR CULTURE, OUR HERITAGE

Newfoundland and Labrador has a unique, diverse and vibrant culture. We need to support and promote this culture in all its forms, at every age, across this great province.

CELEBRATING OUR VIBRANT CULTURE

The Liberal Party recognizes the importance of our cultural and heritage industries and will work with those involved to ensure sufficient funding and programs are available to meet the tourism demand.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **establish a Premier's Council on Arts, Culture and Creative Cities and Towns to create a stronger link between government and creative communities;**
- **investigate programs to expand the audience for Newfoundland and Labrador culture, as well as make sensible, short-term investments to help attract key events and attractions.**

TOURISM

Newfoundland and Labrador has so much to offer the world. In order to make it a "top of mind" tourism destination, we need to continue investing in our tourism industry. A New Liberal Government will work collaboratively with industry partners toward the development of high-quality, competitive tourism products and programs.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **invest in Newfoundland and Labrador's tourism industry to support its competitiveness in a global market;**
- **work in partnership with tourism operators and Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador to open the door to smaller businesses and volunteer organizations, to improve training for tourism operators as well as help them develop a strong web based presence;**
- **work with the sector to identify tourism and accommodation infrastructure shortages and develop a plan to address these shortcomings;**
- **in partnership with Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, and other tourism groups, encourage and promote marine tourism, agri-tourism and eco-tourism activities that provide tourists with a unique and unforgettable adventure in Newfoundland and Labrador;**
- **work with communities and port authorities to promote Newfoundland and Labrador as a cruise ship destination;**
- **partner with regional festivals and events to ensure sponsorship funding is available and promotional activities take place throughout the province;**
- **continue to promote summer and winter tourism in Newfoundland and Labrador;**

- **implement and market “circle routes” aimed at drawing tourists to every region of the province; and**
- **work with the Newfoundland Snowmobile Federation and other snowmobile associations to maintain and enhance trails and winter tourism in all regions of the province.**

WORLD WAR I

When Great Britain declared war on Germany, it did so on behalf of the entire British Empire. Newfoundland and Labrador was part of that Empire. Nearly 12,000 men — more than one-fifth of Newfoundland and Labrador’s population — left to fight in the war between 1914 and 1918. That war had profound economic and social effects on the people of our province. In addition, on July 1, 1916, the opening day of the Battle of the Somme, 1st Newfoundland Regiment was virtually annihilated at the Battle of Beaumont Hamel.

A New Liberal Government will acknowledge and pay tribute to those who sacrificed for our freedom. We will:

- **lead the way in commemoration of the First World War centenary including the Battle of Beaumont Hamel;**
- **work cooperatively with veteran, historical and other public and private groups across the province to plan and implement commemorative activities;**
- **establish new memorials; and**
- **initiate remembrance ceremonies and activities in schools and communities in and around the province.**

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Culture is a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group. It encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, values systems, traditions and beliefs. Cultural Diversity presupposes respect of fundamental freedoms, namely freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom to participate in the cultural life of one’s choice.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **preserve and promote our cultural diversity;**
- **enhance programs and services to help new immigrants overcome barriers to employment and living in Newfoundland and Labrador;**

- **partner with not-for-profit, community and religious groups to support them in their efforts in assisting new immigrants;**
- **work with immigrant organizations and communities to identify gaps in programs and services;**
- **hold annual Multicultural Dialogues between government and Newfoundland and Labrador’s ethnic community leaders; and**
- **increase support for English as a second language (ESL) programs and translation services.**

JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS

The Liberal Party recognizes that a firm and comprehensive approach to justice issues is necessary in order to bring about positive outcomes in our communities. The Liberal strategy towards justice will lay the foundation for a broad approach that addresses issues both within the system and in our neighbourhoods.

REPLACE HER MAJESTY’S PENITENTIARY

Her Majesty’s Penitentiary is overcrowded and houses inmates in appalling conditions. The overcapacity and poor physical condition of the facility increases the likelihood of violence and threatens the safety of staff and inmates alike. **A New Liberal Government will begin the planning of a new penitentiary, providing additional space and facilities. Aggressive lobbying to have the federal government assume its rightful share of the cost will begin immediately.**

STRENGTHEN FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

A New Liberal Government will take a strong stance against family violence by creating a forum where police, prosecutors, corrections representatives and victim’s services groups can come together to identify best practices for investigating, charging and prosecuting domestic violence offences. The Liberal Party believes that in order to effectively protect families and address domestic violence, the experiences of victims must be incorporated into the justice system. The approach must be collaborative and use restorative justice initiatives including – where appropriate – family justice conferencing.

A New Liberal Government will provide specialty training for justice personnel involved with cases of domestic violence, as well as commit to making permanent the Family Violence Intervention Court in Provincial Court.

SPECIALIZED DRUG COURT

Specialized courts and programming are already available within the Justice system for offenders who have committed crimes linked to family violence and mental health issues; however, the Justice system has not addressed an even more widespread underlying impetus to crime – drug abuse. Individuals suffering with substance abuse problems sometimes commit crimes in order to support their addiction. For these individuals the Justice system effectively serves as a revolving door where sentences are served for drug-related crimes.

A New Liberal Government will investigate the feasibility of a new drug treatment court and associated youth justice and diversion programming.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

Newfoundlanders & Labradorians have the right to peaceful enjoyment of their homes. A New Liberal Government will proclaim the legislation to increase community safety by acting as an effective tool to shut down illegal drug manufacturing operations and houses used for trading.

A New Liberal Government will proclaim the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, which will allow police to address public safety concerns surrounding properties that are used for illicit drug manufacturing and/or trading.

ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND CONSTABULARY (RNC)

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) is the oldest policing Agency in North America and the police play an important role in our society. A New Liberal Government will implement a number of initiatives to improve the safety of the public and improve standards for RNC officers.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **ensure a review of policing standards for the RNC; and**
- **allow police officers to make public complaints by amending Section 22 of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act.**

HUMAN RIGHTS MEDIATION

Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution mechanism that can streamline the justice process and bring about results that are more meaningful and effective for all parties than those obtained through a traditional court or tribunal setting.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **work with the Human Rights Commission to increase efficiencies in caseloads by providing necessary resources to implement**

mediation services and other forms of alternative dispute resolution; and

- **provide the resources necessary to implement this system on a formal basis for appropriate cases.**

STRENGTHEN THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

The Liberal Party believes in transparency and openness.

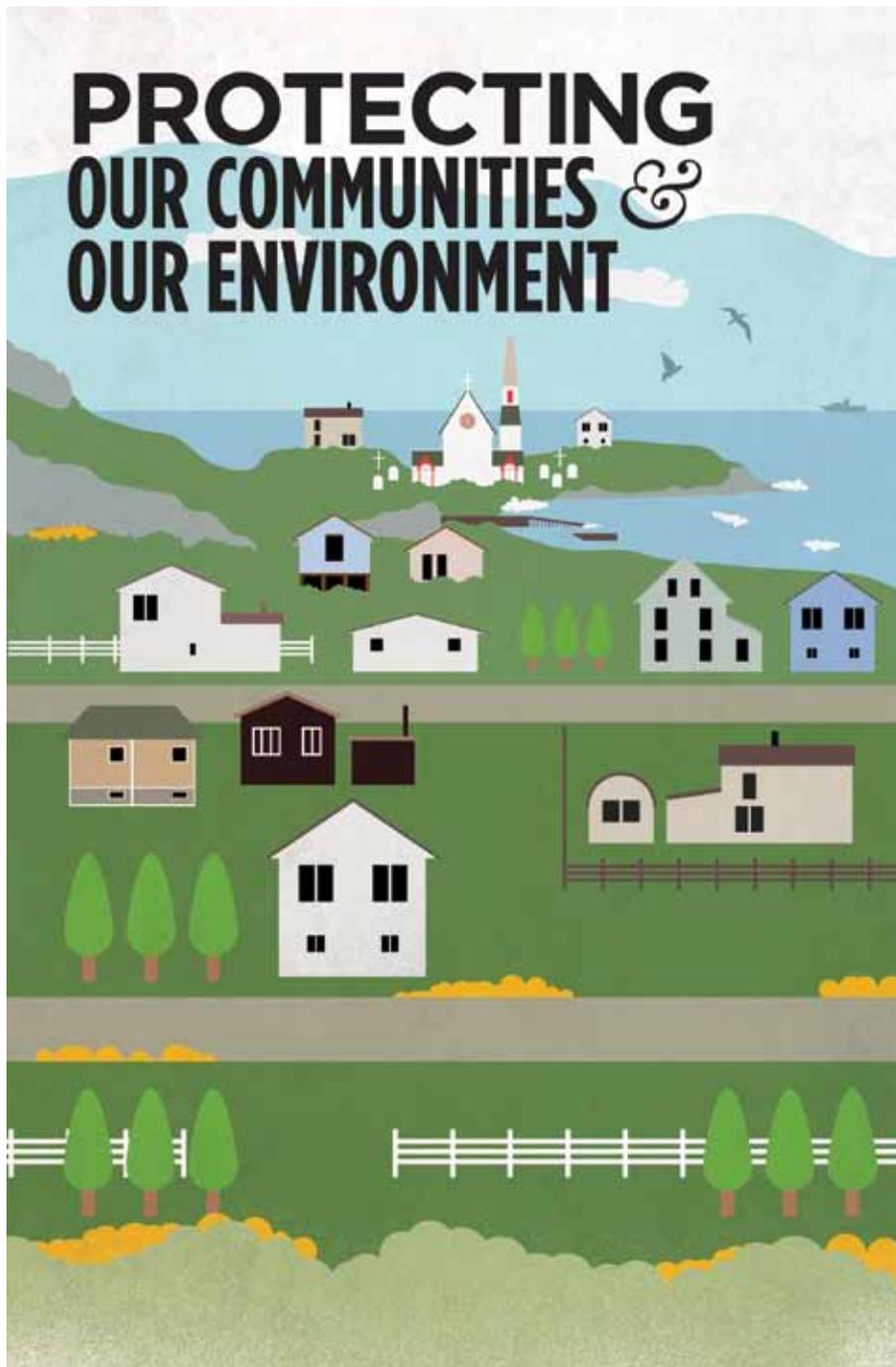
A New Liberal Government will work to strengthen ATIPPA by better enforcing timelines for access requests and expanding the scope of the Act to encompass entities carrying out public body objectives.

A New Liberal Government will introduce whistleblower legislation to allow all people to bring forward their concerns while at the same time respecting and ensuring confidentiality.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

In order for the delivery of justice to be meaningful and effective, the cultural backgrounds and sensitivities of offenders must be taken into consideration.

A New Liberal Government will work to provide specialized training to justice professionals operating in Labrador to manage Aboriginal offenders. An ethnocultural diversity committee, including Aboriginal representatives, will be responsible for identifying and developing best practices. The goal will be to use the increased cultural competency of staff and the judicial system to reduce recidivism rates.



9

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES AND OUR ENVIRONMENT

COMMUNITIES: PLACES WE CALL HOME

Sense of community has been around for centuries in Newfoundland and Labrador. In fact, it has become the social fabric that continues to instill pride in our people and make them proud to call their community home. This is most evident throughout the many rural communities that have existed along our rugged coastline since the discovery of this great province.

The survival of many of those communities has been threatened in recent years, especially since the cod moratorium in 1992. Many of the people who once lived there have moved to growth centres in our province, with the northeast Avalon being the largest recipient. While this has helped tremendously in the sustainability of our larger towns and cities, it has put the survival of our smaller municipalities at risk. The challenge for government is to find a balance to maintain the vibrancy of the larger towns, and at the same time support the economic viability of our smaller municipalities.

The provincial government is expected to play a major role in working with local community councils to ensure the sustainability of communities. Any revenue flowing to municipalities has to be channeled through the province. The Department of Municipal Affairs is responsible for the operation of municipal government and is required to cooperate with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to ensure we have sustainable and vibrant communities throughout the province.

FISCAL FRAMEWORK

Smaller municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador are struggling to find the necessary resources to provide the services expected of them from their residents without putting the burden on the residential tax payer in the community. Many feel they have reached the maximum taxation level that most of their residents can afford, as many of them are either on low or fixed incomes. Moreover, the tax base in many of those communities is limited and has very little potential for growth. The main source of revenue for municipalities today is derived from property tax, business tax, and poll tax. Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) has been lobbying the provincial government to introduce a new fiscal framework agreement between the province and municipalities that will allow municipalities to receive a portion of other provincial tax revenues, like income tax, sales tax, resource royalties, increased municipal operating grants (MOG's), and other sources.

A New Liberal Government will create a task force with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to review alternate revenue sources that may be used for municipal revenue.

MUNICIPAL OPERATING GRANTS (MOG'S)

During periods of fiscal restraint in the province, provincial operating grants were significantly reduced. Smaller municipalities in particular were negatively affected by this reduction and are lobbying hard to have the grants re-instated to 1990 levels. Many municipalities are struggling to provide services and upgrade infrastructure because of a declining tax base and cutbacks to these grants by government. Even though this may be part of any new fiscal framework arrangement, Municipalities

Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) have focused on other sources of revenue as potential new revenue to municipalities.

To ensure strong communities, a New Liberal Government will increase municipal operating grants to municipalities by 10% in each of the next four years, using the cost-sharing ratio as a guide to ensure that smaller municipalities receive the larger percentage of increase.

CROWN LANDS

Many municipalities have crown lands sitting vacant and idle within their municipal boundaries. They see this land as a valuable resource they could use for future residential or economic development. Smaller municipalities cannot afford the purchase of the land, but see it as an excellent opportunity to broaden their tax base and improve the sustainability of their community.

A New Liberal Government will do an inventory of Crown Lands in the province and work closely with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador and concerned municipalities to develop a mechanism that enables the transfer of crown land within municipal boundaries to the municipality at a minimal cost.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

If there is any one issue that municipalities have concern about today, then waste management is it! Even though government has committed to providing the capital costs for the development of the waste management sites, municipal leaders and residents are struggling with the increased operating costs to comply with the provincial waste management strategy. Residents are not accustomed to paying such high rates for garbage disposal and see this as another downloading of services to them.

A New Liberal Government will commit to the completion of the Provincial Waste Management Strategy for all regions of the province, and will ensure that any strategy will be effective and affordable for all residents.

DRINKING WATER SAFETY

There are in excess of 200 boil water advisories in effect in communities across Newfoundland and Labrador. The reasons for the advisories are varied, ranging from a high level of coliforms to a lack of chlorine. More disturbing is that some municipalities just lack the resources or expertise to operate a chlorination system to treat the drinking water source. The provision of safe and clean drinking water is the most important service they are expected to provide to their citizens. Some attempts have been

made by government to provide “band-aid” solutions to the problem, such as the Potable Water Dispensing Units (PWDU’s).

A New Liberal Government will introduce a Safe Drinking Water Strategy that addresses the high number of boil water advisories and will include, through Municipal Capital Works, the required resources to eliminate the problem.

SHOWING RESPECT

Municipal mayors and councilors are “front-line” politicians who often serve their communities for little or no remuneration. They are the politicians closest to the people whom their residents depend on for delivery of essential services like water and sewer, garbage collection, snow-clearing, fire protection, and recreation. Their contribution is often under appreciated and under compensated.

A New Liberal Government will collaborate with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to review the present Municipal Award program in Municipal Affairs and make improvements where deemed necessary.

CARING FOR OUR ENVIROMENT

There are a number of environmental issues in Newfoundland and Labrador which are affecting the sustainability and well-being of our communities and economy. These issues include, but are not limited to, rising greenhouse gas emissions, effects of climate change, pesticide control, wet land protection, and land use planning.

A New Liberal Government will enact policies and regulations that protect the environment for us, for our children, and for our children’s children. It is no longer sufficient to give this important issue lip service. Instead, it is time to act and demonstrate real action that demonstrates true stewardship and accountability.

PROTECTED AREAS

There are a number of ecological and environmentally sensitive areas throughout Newfoundland and Labrador that deserve to be adequately protected. Those areas may exist in the wilderness of our province or they may lie within municipal boundaries. Either way, they need to be properly identified and preserved.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **initiate a province-wide Land Use Planning process that identifies areas of the province requiring protected status;**

- **work with the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to encourage and promote the Wetlands Program;**
- **in partnership with the Mealey Mountain National Park Reserve, will establish the Eagle River Waterway Provincial Park in Labrador; and**
- **finalize the establishment of the Little Grand Lake and Lawn Islands Ecological Reserves.**

CLIMATE CHANGE

Many of our municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador have seen dramatic changes in the landscape of their communities, either through erosion, mudslides, flooding, or tidal surge. While some of this phenomenon may be attributed to climate change, community and provincial leaders realize that steps must be taken to mitigate the possibility and frequency of those events.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **use the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program as its guiding principles for construction of government financed infrastructure;**
- **expedite the implementation of the Provincial Waste Management Strategy, and will ensure the strategy is designed to minimize the carbon footprint;**
- **offer to establish, in partnership with interested municipalities, Regional Transit Authorities (RTA’s) in and around the province’s major population centres, including the Northeast Avalon, Grand Falls Windsor/Gander corridor, and the Corner Brook region. These RTAs will examine current transit patterns of use, assess future potential ridership demands, and adjust regional transit systems across the region; and**
- **support the Multi Material Stewardship Board (MMSB) in promoting all recycling programs, with special emphasis on education throughout the school system.**

OIL SPILL RESPONSE

Offshore oil production off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador has been the main contributor to the province’s wealth since it began production just a few years ago, and it will continue to be for many more years to come. We must ensure that all necessary steps are being taken to mitigate the impact this industry could potentially have on the

environment, especially to marine life and shorelines around our province through oil spills. We must learn from the disastrous aftermaths of the Prestige, the Exxon Valdez, and the Gulf of Mexico.

A New Liberal Government will establish, in partnership with the federal government, a comprehensive oil spill response regime for Placentia Bay.

WILDLIFE

Big game hunting has been, and continues to be, a way of life for residents and non-residents in Newfoundland and Labrador. There has to be a balance between harvesting and conservation so that the herds are not put at risk. Government has an important role to play to ensure that adequate controls are in place that achieves that delicate balance.

Caribou herds in both Labrador and on the Island portion of the province are at dangerously low levels, and require drastic measures from Government to protect the herd's sustainability.

The moose population continue to escalate, which has precipitated in safety concerns for motorists on our highways. While we do have an aggressive harvesting program for moose in place, there are many animals straying onto our roads that do present problems for motorists, especially at night.

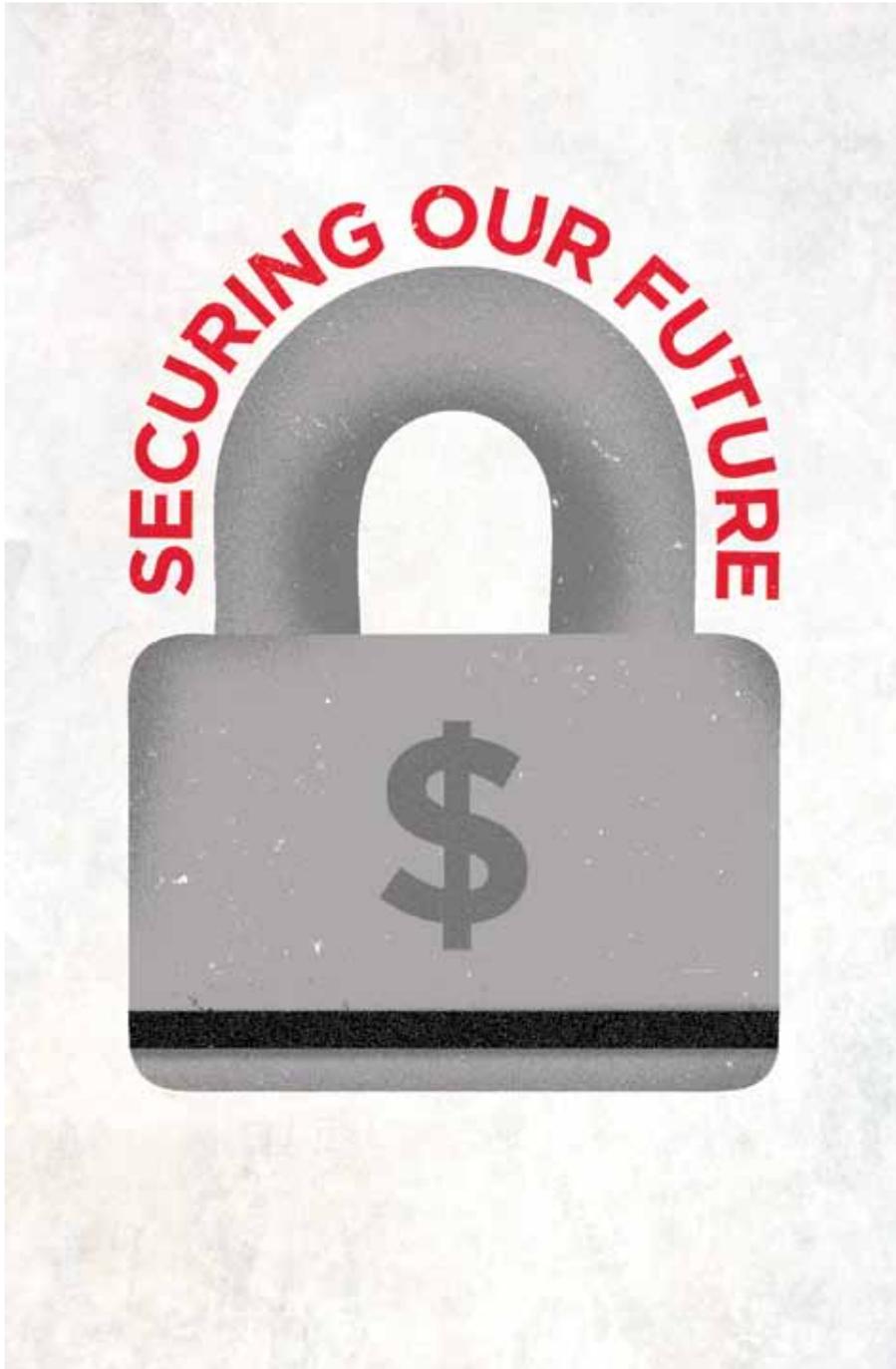
A New Liberal Government will:

- **work with organizations like Save Our People Action Committee (SOPAC) to identify "hot spots" on all our highways where moose frequently stray, posing a safety concern for motorists;**
- **initiate a mitigation program for the identified areas, including moose fencing, to alleviate the possibility of moose/vehicle accidents;**
- **collaborate with outfitters, Aboriginal groups, and the general public to implement a comprehensive study of the caribou populations in the province and will initiate regulations and controls that will protect the sustainability of the herds; and**
- **re-establish the wildlife enforcement division back to the Department of Natural Resources.**

PESTICIDE CONTROL

The commercial use of cosmetic pesticides has a detrimental effect on the environment and is a threat to the health of our residents. There has been a call from several concerned groups that it will not be totally effective unless there is a province-wide ban in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A New Liberal Government commits to the implementation of a province-wide ban for the commercial use of cosmetic pesticides in Newfoundland and Labrador.



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SECURING OUR FUTURE

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As confirmed by Wade Locke, starting next year, revenues will fall short of expenditures even if expenditures are held constant. For the next 5 years, Newfoundland and Labrador could be running annual deficits in the range of \$345-Million per year. Within 10 years, Newfoundland and Labrador could be running annual deficits in excess of \$1.9-Billion such that net debt could double reaching unprecedented levels within a decade. And this is before factoring in the expenses and debt associated with Muskrat Falls.

It does not have to be that way. We can change the future by implementing new fiscal policies now. Through a legacy fund combined with prudent attention to government revenues and expenses, we can assure a bright future for our children.

LEGACY FUND

Over the past ten years, Newfoundland and Labrador has gone from have-not to have status, all due to revenues from non-renewable natural resources, especially petroleum. The current resources and associated revenue belong to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and need to be shared appropriately with both current and future generations.

As a province we need to leverage our energy resources for future as well as present generations. A New Liberal Government will deal with this by creating a Legacy Fund built through contributions of a percentage of our oil revenues to ensure a better fiscal future.

A New Liberal Government will create and annually invest in a Legacy Fund. We will invest 10% of oil revenues, which equates to about \$250-Million/year, and this investment will grow over time once the fiscal situation of our province has been determined. Responsible management of the fund shall safeguard and build financial wealth for future generations.

DEBT REDUCTION

A New Liberal Government will make debt reduction a priority and will develop a debt reduction plan during the first year of our mandate.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Newfoundland and Labrador is a major player in the global economy. The presence of corporations like ExxonMobil, Vale Inco, Rio Tinto, Tata Steel, among others, shows that the province can successfully attract global corporations. Past Liberal governments insisted on value-added processing with the construction of the nickel smelter in Long Harbour, and the Liberal Party is committed to creating a business environment that attracts and encourages major corporations to further invest in Newfoundland and Labrador and its people.

A New Liberal Government will:

- **invest in efficiency by merging the Department of Business with the Department of Innovation, Trade, and Rural Development;**
- **invest in value-added processing by creating a Manufacturing Strategy for our natural resources in mining, forestry, fishing, oil, and agriculture;**

- **invest in improving access by creating a Provincial Airports Strategy Fund that allows provincial airports funding access for marketing and infrastructure, allowing them to become “gateways” to the global marketplace; and**
- **invest in our knowledge by creating the Premier’s Round Table on Business and the Economy.**

The key to business development in Newfoundland and Labrador is to ensure the minimum possible government impediments while maximizing supports. By dropping barriers to business, we can unleash the natural entrepreneurial instincts and energy of the people of the province to ensure the highest levels of productivity.

For existing business owners the operations of the Workplace Health, Safety & Compensation Commission (WHSCC) has been a constant source of frustration. While the composition of the workforce and business sector has seen dramatic changes, the WHSCC has failed to keep up with the times and the most recent business technologies. Also, while accidents rates have been in decline, WHSCC premiums are still the second-highest in the country.

A New Liberal Government will direct WHSCC to introduce a plan to enable businesses to pay assessments based on actual payroll.

This province maintains among the highest levels of labor burden (payroll taxes of all kinds) in the country. It is a disincentive for employers to employ more people if it’s going to cost them more money than it’s worth. More than 20 years ago, when government was short of funds to cover basic health care and education, the Health and Post-Secondary Tax (HAPSET) was introduced. Today, payroll taxes like these are broadly known among economists as “job killers” and can be replaced by other, more appropriate and less damaging forms of funding.

A New Liberal Government will decrease the HAPSET threshold from the current \$1.2-Million to \$3-Million.

A New Liberal Government will decrease the small business corporate tax rate to 3% in the first year of our mandate.

Almost every department of government has introduced their own business development support or attraction fund. This growth in government funds has gotten out of control with much duplication. There should be no political interference in the approval of funding applications yet ministerial approvals can override professional opinions and assessments. There is no longer any overall strategy to providing

public funds to private businesses, some funds are barely used at all and businesses are encouraged to wander from department to department in their attempts to access public money. Further, the Department of Business has shown to be a complete failure.

A New Liberal Government will consolidate and examine all business support, retention and attraction funds across government in detail for efficiency and effectiveness.

JOB MARKETS AND WORKER SHORTAGES

Making sure that our education system is reflective of industry needs, offering retraining programs for emerging sectors, improving apprenticeship programs, and bringing Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working living and working away back home are some of the approaches that a New Liberal Government will employ to fill the upcoming job crunch.

The Liberal Party recognizes that a stagnant or shrinking labour pool is a major constraint on economic growth. Newfoundland and Labrador must compete with other provinces who are trying to lure our skilled workers away in order to deal with their own labour shortages, as well as with other countries targeting the Canadian labour pool in general.

A New Liberal Government will commence a population growth secretariat to support organizations engaged in community-building, as well as attract new workers by engaging in settlement and retention programs. The secretariat will address issues such as a stagnant and aging population, out-migration among youth in particular, and a relatively small immigration intake. It will work collaboratively with government Departments to seek a multifaceted approach to addressing population issues and labour constraints. There is no one solution to attracting and retaining a skilled workforce in Newfoundland and Labrador; however, by taking a global approach to the issue a New Liberal Government will seek to ensure that we harness future employment opportunities.

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE **ROAD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT**

The most common means of transportation within the province is by road. Roads bring people to work, school and health centres. Roads transport food and other essential goods to urban and remote centres across the province. Recent governments have spent more funds on roads transportation than ever before with recent budgets approaching \$250M annually. At the same time our roads continue to deteriorate. They require more and more maintenance and upkeep because of increased traffic and

the desire to lay down the most road possible for the fewest dollars possible.

A New Liberal Government will commit to:

- **develop a rotating three year road development and maintenance strategy based on need and economic development considerations open to comment and input from municipalities and individuals. The era of secretive decision-making processes and politically motivated announcements must come to an end;**
- **create a publically accessible comprehensive geographic information system (GIS) database of all provincial roads in the province reflecting their state of repair and snow-clearing;**
- **revamp the tendering process to allow construction to start as early in the year as possible. We should take advantage of as much of the construction season as possible and not have to compress roadwork in the province to a brief period at the end of the summer; and**
- **establish a Road Engineering Research Program. Our province sees too many recently built roads with ruts and cracks and peeling asphalt long before they should. We need to develop made-in-Newfoundland and Labrador road construction standards and training for government road inspectors and road contractors.**

BROADBAND

The Liberal Party considers access to a high-speed broadband Internet connection essential infrastructure, just as the electricity grid and the telephone network were over a century ago. As jobs, education, and communication become more dependent on the internet, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians without access will be left behind. Broadband is critical to economic development.

A New Liberal Government will develop a strategic plan to expand broadband to every area of the province through the best and most appropriate technology that is available. This will open up a window of opportunity for all regions of the province in all sectors. We believe this to be possible through public/private partnerships.

CELL PHONES

An effective and reliable communication network is critical to attaining economic growth. The communication infrastructure is deficient in many areas of our province.

A New Liberal Government will, in partnership with the private sector, install infrastructure that provides expanded and improved cell phone coverage throughout our province.

FERRIES

A New Liberal Government will:

- **create a Provincial Ferry User Committee and support it to provide input into ferry service operations; and**
- **reduce ferry rates on the Inter-provincial ferry service by 50% in the first year of our mandate, with a further review of ferry user fees during the second year of our mandate.**

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