

# Policies

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# 1 Agriculture

The Alberta Social Credit Party (ASCP) believes in the family farm.

The ASCP will scrap the market value land assessment and move back to an assessment based upon agricultural value of land. Farm families would only be taxed at 65 % of the total and all others would be at 100%. There would be no assessment based on buildings.

The ASCP would immediately allow farmers to apply for a full tax rebate on fuel, diesel, propane and lubricating products. Farmers would only be required to purchase a one time license for farm trucks over  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton that are used exclusively for farming. Farmers would no longer be required to obtain water licenses.

The ASCP government would allow farm families up to 100% depreciation of all capital purchases in the first year of operation.

The ASCP supports a move to a market driven system, thus lobbying the federal government to allow farmers the choice of how they market their product.

The ASCP supports an enhanced marketing program for Alberta agriculture products, nationally and internationally.

The ASCP opposes international agriculture subsidies as damaging and restrictive.

The ASCP supports active ongoing research into environmental protection for agriculture such as “holistic resource management”.

The ASCP would encourage and promote an environment for the development of organic farming and gardening.

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## 2 Alberta Treasury Branches

The ASCP would institute a program of growth in the Treasury Branches of Alberta: providing a strong Alberta based alternative to out-of- province financial institutions. The past record of national financial institutions indicates that the financial aims and objectives of Albertans is not a primary factor in lending or interest rate decisions. Thus, a financial plan tailored to the needs of Albertans is in order.

The ASCP will defend the Treasury Branches of Alberta against any efforts to dispose of this valued entity.

The ASCP would return the Treasury Branches of Alberta to their original purpose of providing competitive financial services for Alberta's families, farmers and small businesses.

The ASCP supports increases in regional financial institutions in order to provide competitive and service oriented financial options for Albertans.

The ASCP would institute an interest rate policy with low interest loans being supplied by the Alberta Treasury Branches to credit worthy Albertans.

The ASCP rejects the concept of unilateral negotiations between the Government of Canada and Quebec in constitutional matters. All provinces must be equal and active participants in all constitutional negotiations.

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## **3 Justice**

The ASCP would institute a program whereby spending on police and courts will be increased by 33% to make apprehension and conviction more certain.

The ASCP would institute a program where all sentences given in provincial court will be subject to a "truth in sentencing" provision. This provision would ensure that all time would be served. While a sentence could not be shortened, provisions would be made to provide for sentence extensions for unacceptable behavior.

The ASCP would institute a program whereby juvenile records would be released at the first adult felony conviction so that long time offenders could be quickly identified.

The ASCP would institute a program whereby convicted criminals on probation would be tested on a regular basis for illegal drug use.

The ASCP would institute a program where spending on drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs would be increased.

The ASCP would institute a program whereby juvenile offenders would be sentenced to "boot camps" featuring physical labor and education.

The ASCP would institute a program of community policing, which would put more police officers on the street instead of behind desks.

The ASCP would provide government funding for a public inquiry into the sentencing and parole systems.

### **3.1 Firearms Control**

The ASCP would challenge all federally sponsored firearms control legislation as being unconstitutional. Firearms are property and therefore, under the Constitution of Canada, fall within the jurisdiction of the provincial government.

## **3.2 Legal System**

The ASCP would institute greater independence for the Minister of Justice.

The ASCP would institute victim's rights to compensation from convicted persons.

The ASCP would institute legally enforceable arbitration between all parties in a legal dispute to settle non-criminal actions.

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# **4 Trade and Economy**

## **4.1 Domestic/International Trade**

The ASCP supports the removal of inter-provincial trade barriers.

The ASCP supports a more proactive approach for government to assist in the establishment of increased international trade for all Alberta businesses.

## **4.2 Economic Development and Diversification**

The ASCP supports four basic principles of economic growth and diversification:

1. A strong competitive marketplace
2. Demanding, financially secure consumers
3. Supporting industries and strategic business alliances
4. State of the art training, equipment & intensified research

A Social Credit government would encourage the development of communities outside the major centres.

A Social Credit government would encourage and assist all communities and work together with the school systems and local governments to develop programs for building communities.

A Social Credit government would develop a Public Works Department that retains ownership of and maintains all schools and hospitals it builds but gives the control of each building to a community or co-operative organization or board. (For example: The Calgary Board of Education would not have to be responsible for old buildings in

communities where there is a student population that is too low, and smaller communities would not have to worry about being unable to maintain their school buildings.)

A Social Credit government would implement programs to aid first time homebuyers and needy Albertans.

The ASCP supports a free market approach to energy, providing abundant availability of energy supplies at competitive prices for Albertans and for export.

### **4.3 Labour**

The ASCP supports a comprehensive program of co-operative partnership between business, labour and government to compete effectively in a global marketplace.

The ASCP would pursue an aggressive program of co-operative workplace health and safety inspections.

The ASCP would institute legislation, which would allow individual workers the right to voluntarily determine their membership in labour organizations.

The ASCP would institute legislation allowing for competition with the Workers' Compensation Board.

### **4.4 Tourism**

The ASCP supports tourism as a major growth area for the province's economy. We propose that provincial government control over the National Parks in Alberta be shared with Albertans to protect our provincial interests in these parks.

### **4.5 Transportation**

The ASCP would upgrade provincial transportation systems to provide a network-joining all regions of Alberta and thereby providing enhanced domestic, international, agricultural and business export opportunities.

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## **5 Education**

The ASCP believes that the single most important factor in educational achievement is a supportive home life. As such the ASCP would work to empower parents in the educational process.

The ASCP would allow parental choice by instituting a voucher system of financing education where the funds follow the student to any accredited public, separate, private, religious, or home school.

The ASCP would institute "Chastity-based" sex education courses to be offered in Alberta schools as an alternative to the "Contraceptive-based" courses now available. Parents would have the choice of options for their children.

The ASCP would make parental initiatives binding on school boards.

The ASCP would institute annual testing of all students on provincially established evaluations in all subjects studied. A passing grade would be a simple 50 % with results being given in actual percentages and not simple pass / fail terms.

The ASCP would take immediate action to bring together representatives of parents, school boards, teachers and government to develop respect, understanding and a spirit of teamwork in order to address the issues facing Alberta's Education sector.

The ASCP would establish a professional governing body for teachers that is separate and distinct from the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The ASCP would institute mandatory Canadian History courses in all middle and high schools in Alberta.

The ASCP supports post-secondary education in Alberta. We would ensure that Alberta citizens be given priority for admission over out-of-province students.

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## 6 Government

The ASCP supports **representative democracy**. An elected member of the legislature is responsible to vote and to express views from his or her constituents even when those views run contrary to the party.

The ASCP would institute **fixed election dates** for all elected officials in Alberta. MLA's would be elected for a four (4) year term. The right of the Legislature to call a vote of non-confidence in the government would still be in force.

The ASCP would institute the **right of recall** of all elected officials by their constituents.

The ASCP would reduce the size of the Provincial Cabinet to twelve (12) members and the Premier.

The ASCP would institute a program whereby Throne Speeches, Budget Announcements and Legislative dates would be on a set date each year.

The ASCP would institute **free votes in the Legislature** for MLA's. They would vote according to their conscience or as indicated by the constituents through the constituency organization. Should a government bill be defeated it would not mean a vote of non-confidence for the government but simply a defeat of that particular piece of legislation.

The ASCP supports **free votes within the Social Credit caucus**. The party position would be determined by a simple majority of the MLA's casting a vote. The ASCP would institute an open application process to fill all government positions and all hiring would be based upon qualifications and merit rather than **patronage**.

## **6.1 Commissions/Boards**

The ASCP would institute elections for all provincial boards and commissions every four years in conjunction with provincial legislative elections.

## **6.2 Conflict of Interest**

The ASCP would institute strict conflict of interest guidelines facilitated through the Provincial Ethics Commissioner's office.

## **6.3 Federal Constitutional Reform**

The ASCP supports popular ratification of all Constitutional Amendments by a simple majority vote in at least 2/3 of all the provinces (including the Territories) and representing at least 50% of the country's population in a national referendum.

The ASCP rejects the concept of unilateral negotiations between the Government of Canada and Quebec in constitutional matters. All provinces must be equal and active participants in all constitutional negotiations.

## **6.4 Freedom of Information**

The ASCP would institute the most comprehensive Freedom of Information Act in Canada, which would open government dealings to all people.

## **6.5 Mandatory Tendering**

The ASCP would institute a procurement policy whereby all major purchases by the government would be through an open tender process.

## **6.6 M.L.A. Accountability**

The ASCP supports MLA accountability to their constituents. Each MLA would be required to file a monthly report to the Auditor General. In order to facilitate consistency and control costs, the Auditor General would publish a yearly report on each MLA's activities.

Each MLA report would include:

- How they voted
- Their attendance record
- Their involvement in committees, cabinet, etc.
- A complete accounting of all funds received from the government

The ASCP would institute a program of complete public financial disclosure on all MLA expenses. In addition, a receipt must accompany any and all expenses over \$5.00.

## **6.7 M.L.A. Salaries**

The ASCP would institute a reduction in the salaries of Cabinet Ministers and the Premier.

The ASCP would institute a program for removing all tax-free allowances to MLA's.

## **6.8 Municipal Government**

The ASCP supports continued dialogue and co-operation between the province and municipalities.

The ASCP supports the assignment of government functions to that level of government most appropriate to the situation.

## **6.9 Privatization and Crown Corporations**

The ASCP endorses the concept of free enterprise. As such it is inconsistent with the role of government to own and operate competitive businesses. The history of government involvement in private enterprise has been one of significant financial and competitive losses.

## **6.10 Referenda**

The ASCP would institute legislation allowing the citizens of Alberta to call for a referendum / initiative on a matter of significant public concern upon the presentation of a petition signed by at least 10% of the total voting population of Alberta.

Should a referendum be called regarding a pending piece of legislation, the legislation in question would be decided by the outcome of the referendum and would be considered binding.

## **6.11 Senate Reform**

The ASCP endorses the concept of a “Triple E” Senate with effective parliamentary powers that is elected by the people of each province with equal representation from each province.

## **6.12 Vote of Non Confidence**

The ASCP would allow for the defeat of a government through a proclaimed vote of non-confidence in the Legislature and not through the mere defeat of a bill.

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# **7 Environment**

The ASCP supports the concept of "environmentally sensitive zoning".

The Social Credit government will take a strong stand in favor of: a) policing the cleanup and protection of the environment, b) doing honest investigation of water contamination and the subsequent related health of Albertans c) balancing environmental development and the needs of Albertans.

Provincial tax on alternative and non-polluting automotive fuels would be significantly reduced for five years.

The ASCP government would encourage alternate forms and sources of energy.

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# **8 Social Policy**

The ASCP supports the concept that all Canadians have equal rights, privileges and responsibilities.

The ASCP condemns discrimination based upon religion, ethnic origin, age, gender, language, politics or social standing (as contrary to the constitution, principles and bylaws of the ASCP).

The ASCP supports the right of each individual to pursue their goals and objectives in a free society secure in the knowledge of their equality under the law.

## **8.1 Aboriginal Affairs**

The ASCP would institute a provincial commission settle all provincial jurisdiction land claim and mineral rights disputes by Aboriginal Peoples by the year within 5 years of implementation.

## **8.2 Families**

The ASCP opposes all acts of family violence. We are committed to protecting all family members against these reprehensible acts. We further commit to educational programs to help the abused and the abuser and to provide access for all Albertans to therapy where required.

The ASCP believes that parental authority and responsibility need to be recognized and protected, along with the right of parents to choose appropriate forms of correction for the safety and upbringing of their children.

The ASCP would adopt the definition of family as stated in Bill C-225: " ...that a marriage is valid only when it is a marriage between one unmarried man and one unmarried woman".

The ASCP would make equitable tax benefits to families who use day care and those who do not.

The ASCP would review the standards for commercial day care operations.

The ASCP opposes government run Daycare facilities.

## **8.3 Immigration**

The ASCP supports the acceptance of refugees escaping violence, intolerance or economic deprivation. However there must be a mechanism in place to safeguard against illegal entry with the deportation of those immigrants who do not act in a responsible, acceptable manner. The government must better determine the wishes of all Canadians regarding immigration.

The ASCP supports an immigration policy based upon equality for all acceptable immigration applicants regardless of race, color, creed, religious background, education or financial capabilities.

The ASCP supports the principle of the sponsors of immigrants being personally financially responsible for the sponsored immigrant.

## 8.4 Official Languages

The ASCP supports the principle of English as the language of commerce, society and education in Alberta. We support the concept of second language education with a variety of languages available.

## 8.5 Pension Plan

The ASCP supports an investigation of the merits of a Provincial Pension Plan funded by Albertans for Alberta.

## 8.6 Social Issues & Responsibility

The ASCP **supports the concept of social responsibility within the framework of a free enterprise economic system.** We support compassionate service, voluntarism, individual responsibility and care for those not able to care for themselves.

## 8.7 Welfare

The ASCP supports the right of individuals to be helped by society when they are incapable of helping themselves. However, the priority of the welfare system should be to assist individuals in realizing their full potential and re-establishing their self-esteem through active self-management and work experience.

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# 9 Finance

The ASCP would institute Crown Corporations, giving complete information to the legislature and being accountable to the taxpayer.

The ASCP would institute complete disclosure of all provincial finances including the Heritage Trust Fund, government crown corporations and all government investments. These disclosures would be made in the Legislature with a complete accounting available to all Albertans.

The ASCP would phase out all provincial grants to special interest groups.

## **9.1 Auditor General**

The ASCP would institute open access to the Provincial Auditor General of all government spending, crown corporations, government investments or any other government financial involvements. These findings would be made available to the public.

## **9.2 Balanced Budget**

The ASCP would institute mandatory yearly balances (projected and actual) and budget provisions for the provincial government.

## **9.3 Debt Reduction**

The ASCP would institute a portion of the yearly provincial income be allocated for accumulated debt reduction until the provincial debt has been eliminated. These funds would be in addition to any normal yearly debt servicing costs.

Following the elimination of the provincial debt the ASCP would continue depositing these yearly amounts into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

## **9.4 Government Spending**

The ASCP would institute a *zero based* budgeting program in all government departments. The basis of this budgeting system would call for a justification of all funds spent each year, not simply a standard percentage increase as presently exists.

The ASCP would institute a merit system within government departments rewarding individuals for initiative and efficiency.

## **9.5 Heritage Fund**

The ASCP believes that the Heritage Fund belongs to the people of Alberta and not the government.

The ASCP would set up the Heritage fund as a separate crown corporation thereby limiting the involvement of the current government.

The ASCP would limit withdrawals from the Heritage Fund for government purposes by holding a binding referendum on all such withdrawals.

The ASCP would institute a policy of depositing 50% of government natural resource income each year into the Heritage Fund.

The ASCP would institute a policy of providing from the earnings of the Heritage Fund a tax-free dividend to each person who has been a citizen of Alberta for one year. This dividend would be based upon a formula set out in the provincial constitution and would be issued on a set date each year.

The ASCP would model other aspects of the Heritage Trust Fund managing principles after the Alaska Permanent Fund.

## **9.6 Tax Reform**

The ASCP would institute a flat, fixed percentage rate Provincial Income Tax, with basic personal exemptions and deductions for recognized charitable donations. The ASCP opposes the past application of unfair and industry specific taxation such as the National Energy Program from the federal government. All industries should be treated fairly under the taxation system.

Contributions by any person, corporation, trade union or employee may not exceed \$2500 to a registered party as a calendar year contribution and may not exceed \$5000 to a registered party for campaign period contributions.

## **9.7 Taxation**

The ASCP government would eliminate many of the “nuisance” taxes and user fees, such as hotel tax, manufacturers tax, etc.

The ASCP government would ensure that dedicated taxes go to their sources. Gasoline taxes, for example, would go to road maintenance and other transportation services, not into general revenue.

A 50% (fifty) reduction would take place on all provincial taxes on fuel, diesel, propane, and lubricating products.

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# **10 Health Care**

The ASCP would implement the “Triple A” Health Care System:

## **10.1 Accessible:**

- Health services would be delivered on the basis of patients' needs. Big bureaucracy resulting in a quota system has limited accessibility.

## **10.2 Accountable:**

- Health care services must be accountable to the communities where they are delivered.

FACILITIES: Hospitals/health care centers should be publicly owned (or non-profit) and community operated by elected volunteer boards.

SERVICES: We support the policy that all patients must sign a statement when health care services have been received. Statements would be issued to Albertans itemizing cost of services charged to health care.

Alberta Health would be required to move to full disclosure of administrative costs for the health system. Reports would be made public on an annual basis.

## **10.3 Affordable:**

- We would move to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy (regional health authorities) and move to patient-based budgeting. Health care can be more affordable. Historically, hospitals were funded based on what they did, not on what they demanded.
- The ASCP would move toward a health savings plan to encourage responsible health care use—for example, reduced health care premiums.

Albertans would be provided a choice for alternative medicine covered by health care.

To reduce the future long-term costs of health, the preventative and wellness component of health would be emphasized.

The ASCP would institute a complete and independent efficiency review of all sectors of the health care system.

The ASCP would eliminate all grants and subsidies to hospitals and other health care facilities in the province.

The ASCP would, in conjunction with Public Health, add HIV as a reportable disease.

The ASCP would, in the event of an HIV positive test result, ensure the testing and tracing of all contacts.

The ASCP would ensure that HIV testing be routinely performed on hospital patients prior to surgery if that patient has not been tested within the past year.

The ASCP would eliminate the funding and use of abortion as a birth control method.

The ASCP opposes the privatization of Alberta hospitals.

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## **11 Quebec**

The ASCP opposes the entrenchment by law of Quebec and / or any other recognizable group as a "Distinct or Unique Society" and as such has special privileges and exceptional rights not available to other Canadians. Equality of all citizens is the very essence of democracy and cannot be compromised.