



Alberta Social Credit Party

PARTY POLICIES

as approved by its Standing Policy Committee in 2003

(Source: <http://www.socialcredit.com/policies.htm>)

1. Agriculture

A strong and free Alberta produces its own food.

Social Credit will insure that farming practices are environmentally sensitive and mindful of long-term safety of our food supply (e.g. genetic diversity). The viability of family farm, a foundation of Alberta's rural communities, must be restored. Social Credit supports choice for farmers on what, how and for whom they will produce. Social Credit supports increasing the variety of foods we produce.

2. Arts and Culture

A strong and free Alberta offers a variety of opportunities for cultural and artistic expression.

A Social Credit government will create and implement an ongoing program for arts funding and development.

3. Economy and Trade

A strong and free Alberta has a robust and diversified economy.

Social Credit will take active steps to promote free trade between provinces, and fair and open international trade.

Social Credit opposes market manipulation by cartels, trusts and monopolies. Social Credit will regulate industries to defend the rights of Albertans to a fair and competitive free market. Specifically, a Social Credit government will introduce legislation to re-regulate utilities in order to provide abundant energy supplies at competitive prices for Alberta consumers and for export.

Social Credit believes Alberta businesses can be competitive while still providing employees a higher minimum wage, and part-time workers with part-time benefits.

Social Credit supports freedom of association and believes workers or professionals should have the right to refuse compulsory involvement in worker's compensation programs, labour organizations or professional associations. If necessary, Social Credit will make possible alternative sources for certification or compensation.

Social Credit supports community or co-operative initiated business or development ventures.

Social Credit endorses the concept of free enterprise and recognizes the need for all forms, including private, public (or crown), publicly traded, and co-operative enterprise.

4. Education

A strong and free Alberta offers a wide range of educational choices supported by parents and families.

A Social Credit government will make a renewed commitment to supporting our publicly funded schools. Provincial ownership and maintenance of all school buildings will be retained.

A Social Credit government will meet with parents, school boards, and teachers to develop respect, understanding and a spirit of teamwork to address the challenges faced by Alberta's educational system.

Social Credit believes educational funding should follow students to the accredited public, separate, private, religious or home school of their parent's choice.

Social Credit believes that parents should have options as to what kind of values education their children receive.

Social Credit supports provincially administered standardized examinations in all academic areas studied.

4.1 Post-Secondary Education

Social Credit supports a freeze and eventually lowering of tuition rates for post-secondary education.

Social Credit favours Alberta citizens being given priority over admission of out-of-province students in all post-secondary institutions that receive public funding.

A Social Credit government will provide students who attend Alberta universities with a tax credit towards the interest paid on student loans if they maintain residency in the province.

5. Environment

A strong and free Alberta has a clean, well-managed environment.

A Social Credit government will:

1. Police and enforce the protection and cleanup of the environment.
2. Conduct an honest investigation of water contamination and subsequent health effects on Albertans
3. Reduce provincial tax on alternative and low-emission automobile fuels.
4. Encourage the use and development of alternate sources of energy.
5. Enable the sale of surplus energy by private individuals to the grid.
6. Balance environmental preservation with the development needs of Albertans.

Social Credit favours a "made in Canada" alternative to the Kyoto Accord that protects the environment without compromising Alberta's economic well being. Social Credit will encourage the federal government to use the Bank of Canada to issue interest-free loans to provinces to fund initiatives designed to achieve environmental objectives.

6. Finance

A strong and free Alberta has a fair and competitive financial services industry.

The Alberta Treasury Branches (ATB Financial) is one of the few remaining legacies of Alberta's previous Social Credit government, and will continue to provide a strong Alberta-based alternative to out-of-province financial institutions. Social Credit favours a low interest rate policy for loans from ATB Financial to Albertans. The Alberta Social Credit Party will resist any efforts to dispose of this valued entity.

The Alberta Social Credit Party supports the development of regional financial institutions, such as credit unions.

7. Fiscal Management

A strong and free Alberta is accountable and thrifty.

In setting spending priorities, a Social Credit government will be guided by the Party's fourth Principle, and will have regard for public need and the availability of physical resources, rather than being guided only by the availability of dollars."

Social Credit will institute complete disclosure of all provincial finances including but not limited to:

1. The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
2. Crown corporations
3. Investment in private or publicly traded corporations.

7.1 Debt Reduction

Alberta was left strong and debt free by the end of Social Credit rule in 1972.

Social Credit supports allocating a percentage of all provincial revenue to eliminate the accumulated provincial debt. Once the provincial debt has been eliminated, this revenue would be deposited in the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

7.2 Heritage Fund

A Social Credit government will preserve the Heritage Fund in trust for Alberta citizens, and not as a "slush fund" for government spending. A Social Credit government will reorganize the fund as a provincial crown corporation, and will use the earnings of the fund to issue a tax-free dividend to each Albertan who meets a minimum residency requirement. The fund would be loosely modeled on the Alaska Permanent Fund, with a fixed portion of provincial non-renewable resource revenue being invested annually.

7.3 Taxation

Social Credit favours the elimination of most user fees (e.g. Healthcare premiums), a form of hidden taxation.

A Social Credit government will insure that "earmarked" taxes, created to fund associated programs or services will go where they are intended, rather than into general revenue. Gasoline taxes, for example, would go to fund road maintenance and transportation infrastructure.

8. Government

A strong and free Alberta empowers the electorate.

Social Credit supports free votes in the legislature. Social Credit believes Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) have a responsibility to vote and express the views of their constituents even when those views may run contrary to their party. Should a government bill be defeated, it will not be a vote of non-confidence in the government but only a defeat of that particular piece of legislation. Following a defeat of legislation, a separate vote of non-confidence would be required to defeat the government.

Social Credit supports free votes in government caucus, when a position has not already been determined by the party's general membership.

Social Credit favours a substantial reduction in the maximum allowable annual political contributions by individuals, corporations, and trade unions to registered political parties.

A Social Credit government will implement legislation providing for citizen-initiated binding referenda.

Social Credit supports fixed election dates for MLAs every four years, excepting a vote of non-confidence in the government. Social Credit also supports set dates for throne speeches, budget announcements, and the beginning of legislative sessions.

Social Credit government will reduce the size of the Provincial Cabinet, and all Cabinet member's salaries.

Along with complete financial disclosure (see Fiscal Management), a Social Credit government will institute the most open and comprehensive freedom of information legislation in Canada.

8.1 Municipal Affairs

Social Credit believes local governments, including school boards and health authorities, must be given full power and authority to fulfill the responsibilities that fall within their jurisdiction.

Social Credit supports the right of municipalities to own and control public utility companies.

8.2 Constitutional Matters

Social Credit recognizes that Provincial Governments are "Sovereign within their powers" and believes that all provinces must be equal and active participants in any Constitutional negotiations.

Social Credit supports popular ratification of all constitutional amendments by a simple majority vote in at least two-thirds of all the

provinces and territories, and representing a simple majority of the country's eligible voters in a national referendum.

Social Credit supports the concept of a "triple-E" Senate.

The Alberta Social Credit Party will assert Alberta's constitutional powers by creating an Alberta pension plan, collecting tax revenues, assuming provincial responsibility for health care policy, and re-establishing a provincial police force.

Social Credit supports creating an Alberta Constitution to entrench property rights, and will protect Albertans from unconstitutional intrusions by the federal government.

Social Credit opposes an interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms that entrenches any recognizable group with "distinct or unique status" thus granting special privileges and exceptional rights not available to other Canadians. Equality before the law is essential to a just democracy and cannot be compromised.

9. Health Care

A strong a free Alberta encourages wellness, and heals the sick.

The Hippocratic Oath of "first do no harm" will be a cornerstone of a Social Credit government health care policy. The pledging of this oath by graduating medical students would be encouraged.

To reduce future long-term costs of treating illness, Social Credit believes preventative health and wellness must be emphasized.

A Social Credit government will:

1. Conduct a complete and independent efficiency review of our healthcare system.
2. Give proper regard to the working conditions of health care workers.
3. Discontinue funding abortion as a method of birth control.

Social Credit supports broadening healthcare coverage to include:

1. A choice of alternative medical treatments.
2. Health food supplements recommended by recognized alternative medical practitioners offered as alternatives to some insured prescribed medications.
3. Emergency ambulance service.
4. Dental care for students to the end of high school or until a voluntary earlier termination of their education.

A Social Credit government will implement a "Triple-A" healthcare system—accessible, accountable and affordable.

Accessibility

Services must be delivered based on patients' needs.

Accountability

Hospitals will be publicly owned and maintained. Administration of hospitals by community elected boards or non-profit organizations will be mandatory.

Service delivery will be tracked by signed receipts when services have been delivered. Statements will be sent to each Albertan itemizing the cost of services they have received covered by Alberta Health.

Alberta Health will move toward full disclosure of the administrative costs of healthcare delivery on an annual basis.

Affordability

Social Credit supports patient-based budgeting, with a minimum of resources spent on administration.

A Social Credit government will move toward health savings plans as an alternative to healthcare premiums.

10. Justice

A strong and free Alberta is free from the fear of crime.

Rehabilitating gambling, drug and alcohol abusers must play an essential role in a crime prevention strategy.

Rehabilitation of criminals, though important, must take a back seat to public safety. We must be secure in the assurance that violent offenders are removed from our streets. To this end, Social Credit supports a public inquiry into our sentencing and parole system. Social Credit also favours:

1. "Truth in sentencing."
2. Drug testing of paroled offenders.
3. A "tough love" approach to juvenile criminals.
4. Accountability of adult re-offenders for crimes committed as juveniles.
5. Re-establishing a provincial police force.

Social Credit is prepared to spend more on law enforcement, especially community policing, to make apprehension and conviction of criminals more certain.

To settle non-criminal legal disputes economically and effectively, Social Credit would provide mediation and legally enforceable arbitration between all parties.

10.1 Firearms rights

A Social Credit government will defend the right of Alberta residents to responsible ownership, enjoyment, and use of firearms. The Alberta Social Credit Party opposes any law that would infringe upon the cultural and historical rights to collect or use firearms for the purposes of recreation, agriculture, hunting, and trapping.

10.2 Victim's rights

Social Credit will ensure that convicted criminals are obligated to provide some form of compensation to their victims.

11. Social Policy

A strong and free Alberta encourages individual responsibility while strengthening the weak.

Social Credit supports compassionate service and volunteerism. We also believe we have an obligation to help individuals who are incapable of helping themselves.

Social assistance priorities will include assisting individuals to realize their full potential and creating positive self-management experiences that establish self-esteem.

Social Credit supports studying an acceptable annual income for all Alberta citizens.

11.1 Families

Social Credit recognizes that happy and secure families are pillars of a strong and free Alberta.

Social Credit believes that marriage, defined as "a union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others," represents the preferred foundation for a happy and secure family and provides the best environment for the upbringing of children. Social Credit believes wherever it is financially possible, government should support this institution.

To this end, a Social Credit government will:

1. Implement immediate tax incentives or rebates for stay-at-home care givers.
2. Provide equitable tax benefits to stay-at-home care givers if a federal government program should offer benefits exclusively to care givers using daycare.
3. Upon a tendered proposal, provide low-interest loans through ATB Financial to parents or guardians establishing home-based businesses while supporting a family.