

PARTY PLATFORM

BC Provincial General Election

May 12, 2009

“BE A PART OF THE CHANGE”



10 POINT PLATFORM

Election 2009

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Background:

We have heard from growing numbers of British Columbia voters who are unhappy with the BC Liberal Government and their record of scandal and incompetent management. Examples include the **BC Rail scandal**, the **Tree Farm License scandal**, the **ICBC scandal**, the **Gag Law** and most recently the **Recognition and Reconciliation Bill**.

There is growing concern over apparent **misleading statements** regarding the 2010 Olympics. Some estimates now place the total cost of the 2010 Olympics at \$5.7 billion and the impending deficit as high as \$2 billion. It is embarrassing to have a provincial government that wants to mislead our citizens to the degree that they deliberately fudge the 2009 provincial budget including the placement of operating costs in capital projects to hide the true cost of Olympics. This is shameful and further undermines the public trust in the political structure.

It is clear that the **2009 Liberal provincial budget is grossly misleading**. BC Liberals are now touring the province announcing funding initiatives principally made possible with federal dollars and touting them as their own.

Now that the BC Liberals have abandoned their conservative partners and taken a dramatic shift to the left with the introduction of the **carbon tax, big pay raises for high level civil servants and the gag law**, many voters are telling us they are tired of the incompetent and “**ethically challenged**” **Liberals** and our voters are looking for **CHANGE**.

Those voters also recall the NDP as having a similar record with poor economic and political mismanagement. When they look at the “**fiscally challenged**” **NDP**, many realize that they trust them even less than the Liberals to manage the economy of British Columbia. The Green party remains an extreme left single issue party.

The voters tell us they are looking for a viable alternative to the Liberals the Green and the NDP. **YOU DO HAVE A CHOICE**. The BC Conservative Party can and will provide **CHANGE YOU CAN TRUST** and **YOU CAN BE A PART OF IT**.

Many policies are required to run a province efficiently and effectively. We believe in small government, low taxes, strong families and we look first to the free market economy for solutions rather than expecting government to solve all problems. We believe in equal opportunities rather than forcing equal outcomes. During this election campaign we will highlight policies to help move this province forward with a goal of **Improved Quality of Life**.

1) **HEALTH CARE**

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to Implement Performance Based Health Care Solutions.

The Healthcare system is broken, there is increasing concern over wait lists. The solution is not simple and requires more than throwing money at the problem. If we continue down this route it will consume 100% of government revenue. The solution requires innovations and new partnerships.

BC Conservative MLAs will work to re-vamp the Health Care system so that it works for British Columbians by providing the highest quality health care to all British Columbians in a timely manner without bankrupting individuals or the province. Options for seniors care including the provision of additional facilities and advanced home care solutions should be considered

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to Allow More Competitive Delivery Options Within a Publicly Funded Health Care System.

BC Conservative MLAs will support the availability of more competitively provided health services. We need the advantage of competition. We cannot allow the Canadian health care system to continue to fail us with longer waiting lists and a lack of timely services. Too many Canadians are spending their money in the USA to get timely health care services. We need those services and jobs available here at home. We are bold enough to negotiate with powerful unions to allow for competition in the provision of Health Care Services.

2) ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS

BC Conservative MLAs will Oppose Aboriginal Title in the Recognition and Reconciliation Bill.

The BC Conservative position is diametrically opposite to the Liberal / NDP position on the Recognition and Reconciliation Bill, and would return treaty responsibility to the federal government as per Section 13 of the Terms of Union that BC signed when we joined confederation. BC Conservative MLAs will support changing BC's position in treaty talks from one of participant to one of observer/consultant. We would charge full compensation from the federal government for any/all lands and/or resources provided by BC for treaties, subject to approval via a referendum of the citizens of BC.

The Recognition and Reconciliation Bill threatens property rights of non natives in this province to the point that it has potential to place over 90 percent of all property in BC subject to Aboriginal control. It is remarkable that the Recognition and Reconciliation Bill was almost enacted prior to the May 12 election without full public consultation.

3) THE ENVIRONMENT

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to Eliminate the Carbon Tax.

The Carbon Tax is an ineffective and discriminatory tax. The BC Conservative Party will not support an NDP style Environmental Levy or a Carbon Trading System favoured by Liberals and the NDP.

BC Conservatives will work to ensure that the future energy needs for British Columbia are provided for in a clean environment by supporting the development and utilization of new technologies such as tidal power, wind power, geothermal power and the development and production of biodiesel from waste wood, ethanol and hydrogen.

The production of coal, petroleum, natural gas and methane will be encouraged under strict environmental guidelines utilizing technology to ensure the removal of pollutants from those fuels.

The BC Conservative Party is the only party in BC proposing a balanced approach, combining a strong economy with effective environmental protection. This approach does not include a discriminatory punitive tax on consumption or carbon dioxide production. We will support incentives for industry to develop new, clean technology and for individuals to utilize that new and other clean technology.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Maintain Control of Our Lakes and Rivers.**

Selling off our rivers, streams and lakes to long term foreign control is unconscionable. BC Conservative MLAs will protect these resources for the long term benefit of all our citizens. Commercialization opportunities should be provided only through limited time lease agreements rather than outright sales agreements.

4) THE ECONOMY

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Reduce Regulation and Taxes to Stimulate Business and Create Jobs.**

BC Conservatives support the removal of barriers that confront small and large businesses with wasteful regulatory requirements. We will support the removal of disincentives to do what is right and we will encourage entrepreneurialism. Supporting BC jobs will be high on our priority list. We will facilitate multidirectional trade.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Expand Resource Development**

The expanded development of the rich resources of the province will create a very significant expansion of the economy through export income and job creation.

We will vote to improve the economy by finding new markets and new uses for our forest products including value added manufacturing of consumer products.

We support allowing the development of new mines and the expansion of the oil and gas industry to its fullest potential. We support opening up the offshore to drilling and we encourage oil and gas companies to explore, develop and produce oil and gas from off the Northwest Coast and on land across British Columbia in an environmentally safe way. We support negotiating a deal with the Federal Government, similar to the deal they now have with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, to give British Columbia control over and the royalties from offshore resources.

We will vote to extensively review options for our electric power generation industry to ensure that the residents of British Columbia receive the greatest possible benefit.

We are supporters of policies that encourage innovation entrepreneurs that create new jobs through the delivery of new and improved products for new and existing markets.

BC Conservatives believe that improved taxation policies will stimulate investment creating many new jobs resulting in a substantial positive impact on the economy.

The implementation of the Recognition and Reconciliation Bill would have a devastating negative impact on the BC economy.

5) TAXATION

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Reduce the PST by 1 percent in 2009.](#)

BC Conservatives are committed to make the BC PST more competitive. We are committed to further reduce the PST over time.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Make the BC PST More Investment Friendly.](#)

For Business to flourish, BC needs to investigate the benefits of a made in BC investor friendly PST. BC Conservatives recommend that businesses receive input tax credits for PST paid. BC Conservatives will aggressively investigate the benefits of harmonizing the BC PST with the Federal GST. Businesses are overburdened with the collection of various taxes for government. Duplicating administrations are wasteful and onerous. The provision of PST input tax credits will help spur investment and reduce government and business administrative costs.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Lower Personal and Corporate Income Taxes.](#)

BC Conservative MLAs will take a responsible approach to taxation. We will work to ensure that British Columbians have the lowest personal and business tax rates in Canada. We will vote to phase in Rate Reductions in line with an improving economy.

BC Conservatives believe that other substantial untapped provincial revenue opportunities exist.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Eliminate the BC Property Transfer Tax.](#)

Property Tax should be dedicated for local government purposes. The BC Property Transfer Tax unfairly crowds municipal taxation. The Property Transfer Tax is a discriminatory tax and it is a deterrent to trade.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Eliminate Excessive Salaries Awarded to Government Employees and MLAs.](#)

Excessive salary increases awarded to government employees and MLAs are unreasonable. Salaries must be reasonable and they must be affordable. Eliminating excessive salaries will reduce required taxation. Government should not be the leader in the development of new pay scales. It is inappropriate for government to set new higher pay scales which compete for employees beyond the rates offered within the private sector.

Government should follow the private sector wage rates rather than the reverse.

6) **EDUCATION**

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Provide Education Funding Based on an Equal Per Student Funding Formula Payable to the School of Choice.**

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to reform the education funding system. We will give parents the right to choose which qualifying K-12 school their child will attend while ensuring that a reasonable cost for education is born by the provincial system based on an equal “per student” funding formula. Equal funding will be available to both private and public systems. All schools will be required to meet provincial standards to qualify for funding.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Repeal the Corren Agreement and Restore the Principle of Parental Rights in the Education System for BC Children.**

BC Conservatives believe the government must respect all families, religions, and values, and legislation should not be used as an instrument to socially engineer society toward the agenda of special interests over the general interest.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Provide Tuition Assistance for All Qualifying Post Secondary Students.**

BC Conservatives believe that education is an important requirement for the future health of the BC economy. We will encourage students to achieve a post secondary education. Over eight years we propose to support initiatives to enhance our institutions and remove some of the burden of tuition fees. In the first year of our plan all students will qualify for the provision of up to 50% support for one year of province-wide average tuition fees for qualified post secondary education. The plan will be more favourable to students who achieve minimum standards. Assistance will be more favourable to students that work within

the province after graduation. We will support a plan to provide assistance for up to 4 years of post secondary education.

7) INFRASTRUCTURE

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Initiate Equalized Province-Wide Infrastructure Funding.](#)

BC Conservatives will support Infrastructure Projects, including highways, schools and health care facilities, not just in the Lower Mainland, but throughout British Columbia. School safety issues should not be ignored. Trans Canada Highway Improvements from Kamloops to the Alberta Border and from Hope to Victoria are Critical to Safety and Quality of Life. Providing light rail transit for the residents of the Fraser Valley from Chilliwack to Vancouver as well as the southern Vancouver Island should be prioritized. Transit service objectives of every 15 minutes 15 hours per day, seven days per week should apply to more than just the lower mainland.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Eliminate Discriminatory Tolls.](#)

Tolls to fund infrastructure on primary transportation routes is a discriminatory practice. The proposed Port Mann Bridge toll on the Trans Canada Highway is totally unreasonable.

8) CRIME and JUSTICE

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Reform the Justice System and Enhance Personal Security.](#)

BC Conservative MLAs will support reforming the justice system to ensure where possible that criminals, not their victims, pay for the crimes they have committed. This will include tougher sentences, more timely court processing and more dedicated funds for law enforcement. Sentences should not be served in Five Star institutions. Criminals serving sentences should be required to do hard work on projects that benefit BC citizens and improve our general quality of life.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Address Crime where Crime Begins.](#)

Small crimes need to be addressed because small crime leads to big crime. Restitution and penalties should fit the crime. A new low cost infrastructure can be established to address small crime. Young people need to hear about values and the effects of crime. Young people need to see a better way of life and they need a sense of belonging. BC Conservatives will investigate and consider the implementation of a ‘Communities that Care’ (CTC) program for the province. CTC aims to strengthen family dynamics, reduce negative youth behaviors and increase healthy community living.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Create and Publish a Criminal Offenders Registry.](#)

Crimes above a certain level should result in appropriate electronic publications that easily identify individuals with their associated crimes. Criminals such as murderers or sex offenders should not be allowed to anonymously integrate within a community once their sentence is complete.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Revamp the BC Human Rights Code.](#)

BC Conservatives look to reform the BC Human Rights Code in order to ensure proper and unbiased justice. In particular, we believe the BC Human Rights Tribunal should be stripped of certain powers granting them the right to unnecessarily hear cases or unreasonably interfere with freedom of speech. BC Conservatives recommend the creation of a substantive appeal process beyond the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to [Reform Statute Law for both ICBC and Work Safe BC and Create Understandable and Accessible Appeal Processes Within the Courts for Both.](#)

The principles of justice should be universally applied including decisions made with respect to ICBC and Work Safe BC. Reform should include an understandable, accessible appeal process within the courts for decisions of both ICBC and Work Safe BC.

9) **GOOD GOVERNMENT**

The BC Conservative Party policy will **Provide MLAs with the Right to a Free Vote in the Legislature.**

BC Conservatives believe free votes are the best way to provide true representation for the people of differing constituencies. The current system is focused on power rather than constituent representation. This is wrong. Except for BC Conservative Policy in effect at the time an MLA is elected, BC Conservative MLAs will have the right to a free vote on all matters while sitting in the legislature.

The BC Conservative Party will vote to **Implement a Preferential Ballot Electoral Voting System.**

BC Conservatives believe that a preferential Ballot electoral voting system provides better representation than our current system. BC Conservatives are opposed to the Referendum BC STV proposal. This proposal includes a proportional balloting system with very large constituencies. It will lead to fringe rather than mainstream representation.

The BC Conservative Party will vote to **Implement Elections for BC Federal Senators.**

BC Conservatives support the election of Federal Senators. We believe in an equal Senate to address the uneven distribution of Canada's population and provide a balance to safeguard regional interests. BC Conservatives support holding elections to fill the seats in the Senate that are reserved for British Columbia.

Overall, we support more stringent requirements for ethical conduct by all members of the government, by making government accountable to the voters, not just once every four years at election time, but every day of every year. This will include Ethics Guidelines, Free Votes in the Legislature and effective Recall Legislation.

10) FREEDOM of SPEECH

BC Conservative MLAs will vote to **Completely Repeal the Gag Law.**

Freedom of speech is a fundamental requirement to uphold democracy. BC Gag Law Legislation is some of the most undemocratic legislation ever created in Canada. This has been born out by a recent Supreme Court decision to strike down much of the Gag Law Legislation. The attitude of the current government to eliminate freedom of speech is unconscionable. In addition detailed P3 contract information is currently hidden from the public. This practice confronts the very intention of freedom of information legislation typical for government expenditures.

Conclusion:

Our objective is to elect BC Conservative MLAs to provide a new voice of reason. We believe that the liberal-socialist alternatives have proven themselves incapable of providing good government.

Citizens of British Columbia will benefit from selecting our candidates as their preferred MLA. Votes for the BC Conservative Party Candidates will demonstrate that you are not happy with the NDP, Green or Liberal alternatives. Your vote for a BC Conservative Candidate will be a vote for true representation.

Our support for electoral reform that includes preferential balloting demonstrates our commitment to bring the government back to be **Government by the People and For the People.**

As we elect several BC Conservative Party candidates we will have a strong voice for you and we may hold the balance of power. Whether it is the balance of power or just our strong voice of reason we will make a difference and we will freely vote for the interests of our constituents.

“BE A PART OF THE CHANGE”

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