

Power to People:

Public Education for Alberta's Future

Alberta Used to be the Best in Canada

A strong public education system is central to Alberta's success. Excellence in education shapes the future of our province and gives our young people the tools they need to strengthen our society and our economy. It provides a place for life-long learning so our workforce remains innovative and competitive in the global economy.

The Tories Have Taken Us Down

The Tories seem to have forgotten this. Since 1993, excellence in Alberta's public education system has been eroded. Alberta has fallen from the highest in Canada to fifth lowest, based on per-capita funding. The Tories have ignored continued calls by parents, teachers, leaders and education associations.

Funding has dropped, class sizes have jumped and costs have been shifted to Alberta families. Fixing the public education system is not just about funding – it is about whether government values public education. It is about having a stable, realistic plan. At its root, it is about a commitment to value children and their future.

The Tory solution is to privatize – first health care – now education. So they have increased funding for private schools, while slashing funding for public education. Special interests favour this approach, but what about the public interest?

Alberta is one of Canada's wealthiest provinces, yet the Tories have undermined the foundation of our public education system. Alberta should be debating how to strengthen public education but instead we are struggling to supply the basics under the Tories.

Alberta Students Are Paying the Price

After eight years of Tory mismanagement, here's where Alberta stands today:

There aren't enough books.

Teachers schedule their teaching time around the availability of book sets. Students share books in classrooms and cannot take textbooks home, where they need them to do their homework. School libraries and librarians are casualties of Tory policy.

There aren't enough teachers.

Experienced teachers are retiring earlier – younger teachers are leaving for jobs with less stress and higher salaries – recruiting new teachers is understandably difficult.

Class sizes are undermining the quality of education.

Every credible study conducted in North America in the past decade supports the fact that the smaller the class size, the higher the educational achievement. Last year, the Tory government took \$100,000 from the public purse to study whether or not class size affects student performance. The report has been sitting on a shelf since November 2000.

Alberta has Canada's highest student-teacher ratio.

Newfoundland, a smaller province with fewer resources, is outpacing Alberta, one of the richest jurisdictions in Canada, with smaller class sizes and more per capita spending on public education.

Parents are struggling to fill in the gaps.

Parents are taking time out to volunteer in classrooms, work casinos and go door-to-door to raise money for materials essential to their children's education. In 1998/1999 parents fundraised and paid fees totaling \$121 Million for public education.

Ad hoc funding is part of the problem.

The Tories have created a crisis in public education with utilization formulas and one-time pre-election funding announcements. Ad-hoc funding leaves school boards unable to plan for the future.

We're Also Falling Behind in Advanced Education

Albertans who expect to see their children attend college or university face 'sticker price shock' when they find out what it will cost. Many students cannot afford to follow a chosen career path. They compromise by choosing shorter courses of study, working and taking extra years to complete their programs, accepting a huge debt burden, or by abandoning their aspirations entirely. When this happens to students, Alberta loses.

Here are some of the facts:

- Alberta's tuition fees have increased more than 200% since 1993.
- Support for advanced education dropped 21% between 1994 and 1997.
- Real dollar, per-student government funding has declined by 50.4%.
- In the 2000-2001 budget, Alberta allocated only 6.5 percent of its budget to higher education.

| Tuition Fees | 1995-1996 | 2000-2001 | INCREASE |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| U of Alberta | \$2,529 | \$3,770 | + 49% |
| U of Calgary | \$2,660 | \$3,834 | + 44% |
| U of Lethbridge | \$2,600 | \$3,370 | + 30% |

Source: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

Alberta Should Lead the Way

Today we have an opportunity to be a model for public education in Canada. Our economic strength gives us a unique advantage — all we need is the leadership and the political will to put Alberta students at the heart of our vision.

The Tories won't do that. Instead of investing in Alberta students, they are prepared to throw away \$17 Billion in a futile attempt to cover up their electricity deregulation fiasco. Under the Alberta Liberal plan for electricity, electricity bills will go down AND Alberta's surplus will be invested where it will benefit Alberta families the most — fixing education and medicare.

Public Education Albertans Can Be Proud Of

Albertans know that our children represent our hopes and dreams for the future. Our children are not a commodity, nor should their education be. We had a government that understood that once, but the current government has lost sight of that goal.

Alberta needs a government that leads by example, for a change.

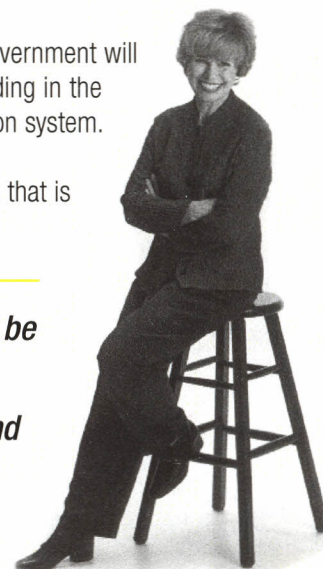
Nowhere is this more important than in our schools. We will not allow the drive for cost-cutting to squeeze schools until they cannot provide the basics to our children. Teachers must have the time and support to ensure that children learn the values that made Alberta strong - respect, thoughtfulness, the joy of achievement. These are the values that built Alberta, values that our schools should provide, and that our government should embody.

We believe all children and our citizens must be educated well. A MacBeth government will prepare students and workers for the challenges and opportunities of succeeding in the global economy. Our priority is to restore excellence in Alberta's public education system.

It's time for a government that understands the importance of these values, and that is prepared to both lead and support our schools into the future. We will.

"Every child who comes into school has a talent that should be developed. It is the job of public education to find that light within each child, give them the skills to turn that light on, and then go out and use those abilities and knowledge in their lives — and change our world."

Nancy MacBeth, October 2000



We Have a Plan- Starting Today

MacBeth Commission on the Future of Education

Alberta's public education system needs a vision that respects students, parents, communities, teachers and citizens. Community support is key to a strong school system. *The MacBeth Commission on the Future of Education* will develop a structure to ensure local priorities are identified and local needs are met. The Commission will tap resources of the extraordinary people in this province to build a pragmatic plan to improve public education in Alberta – from basic to post-secondary.

Rutherford Tuition Program

A MacBeth government will strategically re-invest part of Alberta's surplus in a tuition program accessible to all Alberta students. The *Rutherford Tuition Program* will provide additional support for a post-secondary degree or diploma for students meeting a high academic standard and/or facing economic need. This builds on the Rutherford Scholarship Program. This new initiative expands tuition support from one year only to program completion. It is an investment in our future.

Full Funding

Our commitment is to a fully funded public education system. Fundraising efforts and corporate donations entrench inequities between have and have-not communities. A MacBeth government will increase funding immediately to the Canadian average. We will work toward a funding level equal to the average of the top three provinces.

Fair Funding

We will finance schools with an 80-20 formula, with 80% from the province and 20% from local ratepayers. This formula will be phased in as the provincial debt is paid down. This formula is fair, and ensures that decision-making takes place at the local level – by parents and teachers, principals and school boards.

Protect Rural Schools

We will protect communities by keeping rural schools viable. We will consider the fabric of a community and consult with citizens before making decisions that affect their children and their lives.

Smaller Class Sizes

Smaller class sizes let teachers spend more time with students and on curriculum development, and it is less likely that students will fall through the cracks. We will work with school boards to achieve class size targets of:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Kindergarten to Grade 3 | 17 students |
| Grade 4 to Grade 9 | 25 students |
| Grade 10 to Grade 12 | 30 students |

More Teachers – More Teaching Time

Over the next three years, we will bring 1,000 new teachers into the system, enabling them to spend more time teaching.

Lower Tuition Fees

We will cap tuition fees at 20% of the cost of the institution's operating costs, and compensate institutions while we implement a long-term financing plan for post secondary institutions.

Fair Student Testing

We will replace the current unfair achievement testing with diagnostic testing models that are more meaningful and less time consuming. Parents and teachers will be better able to recognize the talents and abilities of Alberta's students.

Special Needs Education

We believe parents should choose education programs for special needs children. Where parents wish their children to be integrated within regular classrooms, we will provide the resources to ensure this happens.

Second Language Programs

Fluency in two or more languages strengthens the foundation for life in today's global society – economically, socially and culturally. We will enhance students' opportunities to study languages.

Repair Crumbling Schools

Public school buildings are deteriorating due to chronic neglect and underfunding. Many buildings are unsafe and pose environmental health hazards; others lack communications infrastructure to support computers or educational technologies. A MacBeth government will repair and maintain schools on the basis of priority needs. ►

Albertans Have a Choice

ALBERTA LIBERALS

Fully fund public education

Ensure smaller class sizes

Treat schools as integral to community

Respect local autonomy

Cap tuition at 20% of cost

Appropriately fund special needs students

TORIES

Promote privatization and user fees

Ignore parents, experts and associations who call for smaller class sizes

Hurt communities by closing schools

Transfer resources from rural to urban centres

Have allowed tuition fees to skyrocket

Underfund special needs students

Why Albertans Should Support This Plan

It Restores the Basics

A MacBeth government will raise per-student funding levels to the Canadian average. We will provide the necessary elements for a sound public education system – including books, teaching aids, and learning resource materials.

It Respects the Teaching Profession

Teachers are gifted professionals who can change their students' lives for the better. They will have the resources they need to spend more time with their students, and more time on curriculum development.

It Values Public Education

Equipping Albertans for careers is important. So is ensuring students have the opportunity to learn, to discover, to develop their abilities and to live meaningful lives. Alberta students, at every age, will acquire the skills they need to succeed, and Alberta business will benefit from having access to knowledgeable, creative, productive people.

It Prevents Wholesale Privatization

Increased funds will be used for public education – not private.

It Ensures Equality and Individual Achievement

A MacBeth government will protect the principles Albertans consider important – equality of opportunity, support for individual achievement, and recognition that good schools build strong communities and bright futures.

Looking to the Future

Albertans must have the opportunity to develop their talents, realize their potential and achieve their goals. A MacBeth government recognizes the importance of educating our children well, and providing opportunities for growth and advancement throughout all stages of life.

We believe in public education for Alberta's future.

albertaliberal.com

Power to People: Respecting Alberta Seniors

Seniors Built This Province

The Tories Have Forgotten That

Seniors are important Albertans. Our seniors raised families, worked the land, built our cities, expanded our economy and kept our communities strong. Alberta is strong and independent today because of their work. Alberta seniors continue to make a difference to their families and in their communities. They deserve respect for their achievements.

Instead, the Tory government has ignored seniors. The Tories do not respect those who are not in the mainstream of the provincial economy. In contrast, it is those who generate economic wealth, the fittest in our society, who benefit most from Tory programs and policies. Under the Tory government, Alberta seniors have been left behind.

Seniors Felt the First and Deepest Cuts

Alberta seniors have been the hardest hit by the past eight years of Tory cutbacks. The first document shredded by the Klein regime in 1993 was a \$1 million study on how services to seniors could be managed as Alberta's population aged.

The study showed that over the previous six years, funding had dropped by 14% per senior in housing, 15% per senior in transportation, and 31% per senior in social services, which included preventative programs. In health care, costs per senior had not "skyrocketed" as claimed, but had fallen to among the lowest in Canada.

All copies of the study were shredded in the second week of February, 1993. Programs for Alberta seniors were subsequently cut back or shelved. The Tories have talked about policy but have failed to take action. How long must Alberta seniors wait?

Seniors Bear the Brunt of Tory Neglect

Tory policies continue to favour special interests and overlook the well-being of seniors.

For instance:

- The Tory flat tax scheme shifts the tax burden from the wealthiest onto Alberta seniors, those on low or fixed incomes, and working Alberta families.
- Private, two-tier health care pushes most seniors to the back of the line.
- Closing beds in long-term care facilities, particularly those in rural centres, creates "senior separations" where elderly couples must live in facilities located hours away from one another.
- They refuse to expand home care to the level our seniors deserve.

Electricity Deregulation Hurts Seniors

Seniors were the first to sound the alarm on rising utility prices. During the fall sitting of the Alberta Legislature, Alberta seniors' groups appealed to their elected representatives for help. The Tory majority ignored calls that seniors would be faced with having to choose between "heating and eating" and pushed ahead with deregulation. Alberta seniors are most affected by the deregulation fiasco, especially those living in apartments, condos or lodges who don't receive direct rebates.

Seniors Have Been Overlooked Since 1993

Seniors are most vulnerable to cutbacks to social services and public health programs. Over the past eight years, the Tory government has slashed expenditures for health care by 18%, closing public hospitals and taking necessary services from Alberta seniors.

The Tories have no plans for expanding or enhancing home care programs, or restoring the care facilities so desperately needed by Alberta seniors and their families. Only a small fraction of the 8375 nursing staff laid off in Alberta by 1996 has been or will be brought back into the public system.

The Tory government has refused to take a cooperative approach with seniors. When seniors are left out of decisions, Albertans lose the practical advice and wisdom they offer.

We Have a Plan

A MacBeth government will value Albertans at all stages of life – not just during their earning years. Alberta seniors will be acknowledged for their contributions, given a voice in the provincial decision-making process, and provided with the support, assistance and respect they have earned.

A MacBeth government will develop a strategy that crosses all government department lines. Through a genuine consultation process, we will work with seniors to develop a comprehensive plan that meets seniors' needs and restores their quality of life.

Lower Electricity Rates for Seniors

We will scrap the Tory electricity deregulation program, and implement our Competitive Market Development Plan. This plan protects all Alberta seniors and small consumers with regulated rates AND prevents Alberta from wasting \$17 billion trying to cover up the Tories deregulation fiasco. A MacBeth government will retire the debt, reduce taxes more fairly and invest in programs of value to Albertans – starting with public health care.

Fix Medicare First

A MacBeth government will repeal Bill 11 and replace it with a law that guarantees a truly public health care system for Albertans. Many Alberta seniors experienced the inadequacy and expense of health care before Medicare existed. They deserve a top

Power to People:

Respecting Alberta Seniors

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Power to People: Strengthening Rural Communities

The People and The Land Keep Rural Alberta Strong

Alberta's prosperity is tied to its people and its land – in farming and ranching, in oil and gas, in forestry and tourism. Rural communities are the foundation of Alberta's prosperity. As stewards of the land, people in rural communities hold Alberta's future in trust.

The Tories Have Forgotten This

The land brings people together but a rural community's heart and soul is usually found in its school or hospital. Health and education structures are being eroded under the current Tory government, where resources have been steadily transferred from rural to urban Alberta. People in rural Alberta have seen the autonomy of their municipal councils and school boards curtailed while services in health care and education have declined.

Electricity deregulation has hurt rural Alberta. The auction of Alberta's generation capacity saw \$4 Billion of public investment sold for 25 cents on the dollar. All Albertans now pay skyrocketing electricity prices, but dollars from across rural Alberta go directly to the big power companies now owned by the two major cities. Provincial policies should not separate nor divide Albertans.

Agriculture Deserves More Attention

Tory mismanagement has set agriculture back in Alberta. There is little comprehension of the complexities facing farmers and ranchers in the 21st century. International trade agreements, regulations and commodity markets all have a direct bearing on agriculture in Alberta. As this complexity increases, the agricultural community must be equipped and prepared to adapt to challenge and change. They shouldn't have to do it alone.

They talk a good line about fighting Ottawa but have little to show. Ralph Klein says he won't ask Ottawa for "favours" and yet his representatives walk away from the table in Ottawa before even making a fair case for Alberta interests. The Tories did not stand alongside Saskatchewan and Manitoba last year, so Alberta farmers and ranchers got shortchanged.

Tory mismanagement has placed rural communities at a disadvantage – in agriculture, electricity deregulation, health care, education and infrastructure.

We Have a Plan

A MacBeth government will support Alberta's rural communities by restoring funding levels, supporting rural and community-based health care programs, protecting rural schools and ensuring that agriculture gets a fair deal.

Agriculture is part of our heritage and it must be part of our future. We will demand that Ottawa give ranchers and farmers the support they need to remain viable. And we will stay at the table until we get the deal we need.

A Solution on Deregulation

A MacBeth government will fix electricity deregulation and prevent excess profits from accumulating in the urban centres. The Competitive Market Development Plan protects all consumers by regulating rates for those who use under \$1 million in power – most seniors, families, farmers and businesses in Alberta. The price to consumers will come down to 5 – 6 cents per kwh, doing away with the need for taxpayer-funded rebates.

Our Plan

A Community-Based Vision

A MacBeth government will recognize the diversity and independence of our rural communities. Our goal is to develop a viable agricultural sector in collaboration with local communities – not by dictating to them. We will empower communities to make decisions on matters that affect their quality of life and economic strength. We will assist the industry to compete in the global economy and capitalize on opportunities for growth.

Enhanced Local Autonomy

What's Wrong:

The Tories disregard local priorities and fail to give municipalities the respect they deserve.

What We Will Do:

A MacBeth government will forge a true partnership with Alberta municipalities. We will create a long term funding framework, so municipalities can make responsible plans to meet their infrastructure and community service needs. We will enable local authorities to set and regulate standards for land use. Creating a balance between community, environmental, economic and social needs can best be attained with local input to the decision-making process.

Farm Income Support

What's Wrong:

The Tories constantly modify the Income Support Program, trying to cope with specific problems long after a crisis erupts. Regional disparities worsen because the Tories don't understand that one size doesn't fit all.

What We Will Do:

A MacBeth government will create a comprehensive insurance safety net program, based on the variable costs of production and be consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations.

Agricultural Dispositions Statutes Amendment Act, 1999 - Grazing Leases

What's Wrong:

The Tories are changing the rules mid-stream, creating economic uncertainty and undermining the ability of leaseholders to manage resources effectively. With Bill 31, the Tories would terminate leases without letting them run their full course.

What We Will Do:

A MacBeth government will NOT proclaim Bill 31. When a lease matures, new leases will be negotiated with the current lease holder and cover aspects of subsurface access, damages to surface right holders, and the extent of public access.

Grain Marketing

What's Wrong:

This government is trying to meddle with federal legislation, by interfering with representatives of the Canadian Wheat Board.

What We Will Do:

A MacBeth government will work with the duly elected Canadian Wheat Board members from Alberta. We will also work with farmer representatives to determine the most effective grain-marketing and transportation strategy.



Industrial Livestock Operations

What's Wrong:

The Tories shelved their own draft regulations for Industrial Livestock Operations. They won't make decisions or set out the rules. Instead they're adding to uncertainty by setting up another ad hoc committee ostensibly to seek input from the industry, but in reality to avoid coming to grips with the question.

What We Will Do:

By changing the Municipal Government Act, a MacBeth government will put mandatory environmental monitoring in place so that local communities will be given the power to plan and decide whether or not any Industrial Livestock Operations belong in their community. We will work to establish provincial standards for air and water quality.

Land Use Issues

What's Wrong:

Tory policy does not resolve land use conflicts. It pits family against family, community against community and municipality against municipality. Industrial Livestock Operations and the Trans Canada Trail are being proposed throughout the province. Inevitably land use issues arise around concerns about the environment, and personal and public property.

What Will We Do:

A MacBeth government will tackle these issues directly, encouraging decisions that balance environment, community, social and economic needs. Regional planning mechanisms will be restored to bring all parties together to deal effectively with environmental and watershed issues.

Solve the Rural Physicians Crisis

The Alberta Liberals have a comprehensive plan for public health care that includes fixing medicare first, eliminating premiums, ending hallway medicine, hiring more nurses and re-opening hospital beds. We will take action to stop putting rural communities at a disadvantage on public health care.

- We will implement a workable plan to attract physicians to smaller Alberta communities where they are desperately needed. Our plan will initiate a Rural Physicians' Bursary Programme to provide tuition assistance to students prepared to work in rural Alberta for a minimum of three years after graduation.
- We will expand capabilities in tele-health to provide Albertans who live in rural areas with the same high quality of diagnostic services found in major cities.
- We will provide a home care system and better community support for seniors.

Protect Rural Schools

The Alberta Liberals have a plan to restore the public education system. Our plan will mean manageable classrooms, more teachers, adequate resources for books and supplies and lower tuition fees for post-secondary education. We will also protect rural communities by keeping rural schools viable. We will consider the fabric of the community and consult with citizens before making decisions that affect their children and their lives. ►

Albertans Have a Choice

ALBERTA LIBERALS

Will scrap electricity deregulation and lower prices

Will fight Ottawa for Alberta's fair share

Provide greater autonomy to rural communities through stable funding

Develop community planning mechanisms with farmers, ranchers, agricultural operators, and community members

Develop regulations for Industrial Livestock Operations

Recognize diversity at the local level

Solve the rural physicians crisis

Protect rural schools

TORIES

Will push through deregulation and transfer wealth from rural to urban areas

Walk away from the table

Keep dictating priorities to rural communities

No plan

Shelve regulations for Industrial Livestock Operations

Think "one size fits all"

No plan

Further erosion of rural schools

Why Albertans Should Support This Plan

It protects the rural quality of life and supports the agricultural industry. We are prepared to work with communities across the province to support local priorities. We have comprehensive plans to strengthen our agricultural community, fix electricity deregulation, and restore public health care and public education across Alberta. Our plan provides certainty for rural communities.

It gives municipalities the authority to shape their own future. We believe that those who live and work in rural communities should make the decisions and those who understand the long-term consequences for their communities should lead the way.

Our plan respects rural communities because they provide the foundation and texture for a prosperous Alberta.

We believe in a clear and certain future for rural communities.

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MacBeth pledges to help renew rural Alberta

Rural platform based on respect and putting power in the hands of communities

Calgary – Alberta Liberal Leader Nancy MacBeth wants to renew the power of rural Albertans to guide their own communities again.

MacBeth is in Calgary, Stettler, Drayton Valley and St. Paul today unveiling her party's rural platform, Power to People: Strengthening our Rural Communities.

"Alberta is only as strong as our rural communities," MacBeth said. "It has always been a challenge to keep them viable, but those who live and work there have never backed down from any challenge. The least the provincial government could do is stand beside them to help them thrive."

Rural Alberta has been hit hard by skyrocketing electricity rates under deregulation and the decline of our public health care system under this tired Tory government. But there are many other rural institutions that have been mismanaged by the government, largely as a result of taking away the voice of rural communities. The Alberta Liberals will put decision-making power back into the hands of these rural communities so that they can take control of their own destiny.

Agriculture

When you have a government who sends its agriculture minister to Ottawa, only to walk away from the table before presenting our case, you know you have a government that lacks a will to fight for farmers.

The Alberta Liberals will:

- provide a comprehensive insurance safety net that is flexible in dealing with the vastly different costs of production for farmers throughout our province;
- throw out Bill 31, which changes the rules on grazing leases so that the government can terminate them whenever they want;
- co-operate with the Canadian Wheat Board, not meddle in federal legislation. We will also work with farmers to develop an effective grain-marketing and transportation strategy;

.../2

- put mandatory environmental monitoring controls in place so that communities can make their own decisions about Industrial Livestock Operations. The Tories buried their own draft regulations on Industrial Livestock Operations and continue seeking input only from the industry;
- put all community members back in control of land use issues. Environmental and social concerns can be balanced with economic needs through bringing people together, not driving them apart and pitting one group against another.

Health

The Alberta Liberals also want to get more physicians into rural communities. We will launch a Rural Physicians Bursary Program that will provide tuition assistance to medical students who commit to working in rural Alberta for at least three years.

MacBeth also pledges to expand tele-health and home care services to give rural Albertans and seniors the same high quality diagnostic tests available in the cities.

Education

Rural schools have been hit hard by the Tory government's mismanagement, and students are paying the price. The Alberta Liberals will maintain and improve rural schools so that they remain a proud institution in rural communities.

"At the heart of our rural policy is a deep respect for those who work and live outside of cities," MacBeth said. "We believe they should have access to all the benefits that our province offers, and have the tools to make it work."

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1994

- ✓ Called for honesty and openness regarding the Alberta Crow Benefit Off-set program.
- ✓ Stood up for farmers when municipalities given power to levy farm business licenses. Agriculture Critic, Ken Nicol said "But we must remember that our farming community is not a bottomless well. There is a limit to how many new taxes, fees and licenses our farmers can bear."
- ✓ Pointed out that the Tories "house-keeping" bill changing the Occupational Health and Safety Act allowed a Government Minister to include farmers without debate in the legislature.

1995

- ✓ Successfully amended a Tory motion to market grain by including in the motion a province wide plebiscite for the producers of wheat and barley.

1997

- ✓ Pressured the Minister of Agriculture to review the Farm Income Disaster Program pointing out that it is inadequate and does not meet the needs of farmers who have suffered two consecutive disaster years during a three-year period.

1998

- ✓ Pointed out that the government creates confusion about who is responsible for farmers when looking at the impact of Intensive Livestock Operations.

2000

- ✓ Challenged Premier Klein and Ty Lund, Minister of Agriculture, for not representing Alberta farmers at a meeting in the fall of 1999 to lobby Ottawa for farm relief.
- ✓ Charged Ty Lund, Minister of Agriculture with abdicating responsibility to farmers who were experiencing drought.

2001

- ✓ Through a public member's statement urged the Government of Alberta to address the issue of Intensive Livestock Operations and asked for a clear process allowing planning flexibility at the local level for the ILOs.

Q. What is the difference between your plan and the Tory policy?

A: For far too long the Tory's have engaged in consultation processes that lead nowhere. These processes are time consuming and expensive having no formal mechanism that reports to neither producers nor the rural community members.

The Alberta Liberals believe in community members. We believe that they have the best solutions to their particular issues and concerns. We are providing community members with mechanisms for planning and regulations so that community members can make the decisions rather than decisions being made by politicians and government employees far removed from the realities of everyday rural Alberta.

Q. What do you mean, "You will always be at the table"?

A: The Alberta Liberals believe that being at all meetings that affect our agriculture is imperative. We will be at the negotiating table for inter-provincial negotiations, for federal meetings and international meetings. The Alberta Liberals believe that Albertans cannot be heard if they are not represented.

Q. What is meant by Industrial Livestock Operations?

A: The Alberta Liberals want to distinguish between huge foreign-owned livestock operations that depend upon offshore capital investment and those operations that are locally owned.

Q. Why do you think that resources are being transferred from rural to urban Alberta?

Dollars have always been transferred from small areas to the larger centers. Every time a community member buys a product or service from outside their local community the money leaves the local community. So when a rural community member goes to Edmonton, Calgary, or Grande Prairie, for example, purchases groceries, sees a doctor, or buys a pair of shoes, the money is benefiting the larger urban centre.

Electricity is disastrous under the Tory plan because not only does it transfer money through the normal business transaction it transfers the excess profits.

Q: How much is your farm income support going to cost?

A: The Farm Income Support initiative is based on a comprehensive insurance program for input costs. Any initiative of this nature is complicated and crosses numerous boundaries federally, provincially and internationally. Therefore we would evaluate the existing programs and look at one inclusive program. We anticipate that costs can be accommodated within existing programs.

Q: You talk about creating a long-term funding framework for municipalities, what do you mean?

A: A long-term funding framework will be created so that municipalities can plan responsibly when determining infrastructure and community service requirements. The Alberta Liberals recognize that local governments need primary access to the property tax base to ensure self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Q: How will the Alberta Liberals effectively address Bill 31?

A: First, the Alberta Liberals will not bring Bill 31 into law. The current bill is flawed and fails to address adequately, the issues of subsurface access, damages to surface rights holders and the issue of public access. The leases will be re-negotiated as they mature rather than terminated in mid-stream.

Q: What will your electricity deregulation plan do for farmers and small business in rural Alberta?

A: Our plan will protect all consumers using less than 5 MW of electricity – that includes most families, community organizations, farmers and business people in rural Alberta. This will mean that prices will drop to 5 – 6 cents within months of the government forming. A MacBeth government would buy back the Power Purchase Arrangements from the companies, returning generating capacity and wealth back to Albertans.

Q: What will happen to public health in smaller communities?

A: The Alberta Liberals will ensure that public health care is maintained in Alberta by repealing Bill 11, hiring more nurses and re-opening hospital beds. We will also remove health care premiums, starting with seniors. In rural Alberta, we will ensure that tele-health programs deliver the best diagnostic services to rural Alberta, solve the rural physicians' crisis and provide better support for home care programs.

Power to People:

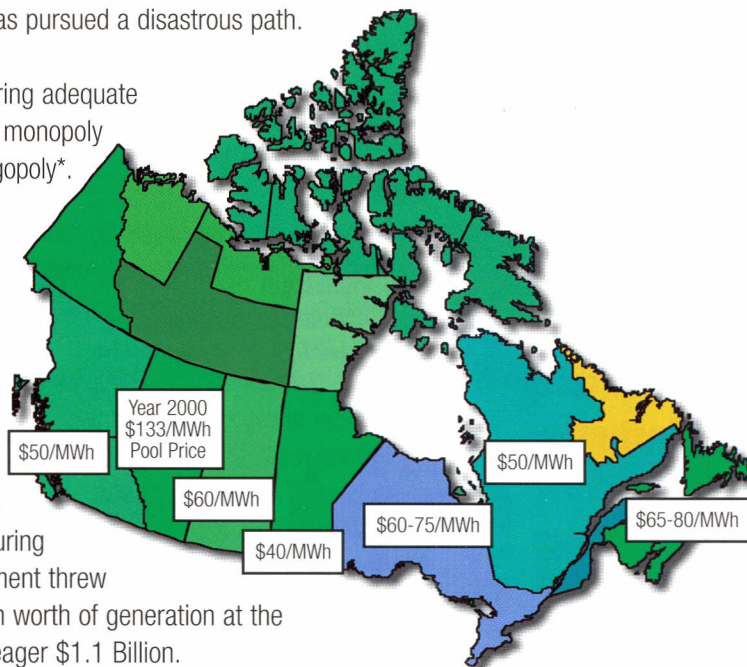
A Competitive Market Development Plan for Albertans

How Did Alberta Get Into This Mess?

In the last six months, Albertans have gone from having a reliable supply of low-cost energy to facing some of the highest utility prices in North America. Despite continued warnings from industry leaders, consumer groups and businesses, this government has pursued a disastrous path.

In deregulating a market without first ensuring adequate supply, this government took the regulated monopoly in electricity and created an unregulated oligopoly*. A few wholesalers now have Alberta consumers in a stranglehold. As a result, prices have jumped, consumers are exposed to unlimited risk without a viable, competitive market, and wealth is flowing from Alberta consumers to a lucky few.

Today, 90% of Alberta's power is generated in plants that Albertans built and paid for during 50 years of market regulation. The government threw this away when they sold at least \$4 Billion worth of generation at the Alberta Power Auction last August for a meager \$1.1 Billion.



It took 50 years to build a stable, low-cost electrical energy supply in Alberta. It took this government five months to throw it away.

Did They Think Albertans Wouldn't Care?

This government would like to hide a few facts:

- Their approach fails to adequately protect Alberta consumers, particularly seniors, Alberta families, farmers and small businesses.
- While the average cost of generating electricity in Alberta has doubled over the last five years, prices have jumped five and a half fold. Where does the price difference come from? Under this government's plan, a few industry players are now free to command peak prices and reap huge profits from the power plants that Albertans built.

| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Generation Costs: \$/MWh | \$26.27 | \$27.28 | \$29.71 | \$38.47 | \$53.12 |
| Pool Price | \$20.36 | \$32.96 | \$42.74 | \$133.22 | \$150.00 |

- This is a made-in-Alberta problem. Electricity prices have not increased in BC, Saskatchewan or Manitoba. Unlike natural gas prices that are set by a continental market, this government caused the skyrocketing prices for electricity. Other jurisdictions throughout North America continue to enjoy reasonable prices for electricity, while Alberta's high prices are second only to California.
- High electricity prices are bad for Alberta, causing the potential loss of 31,000 jobs and driving business away.

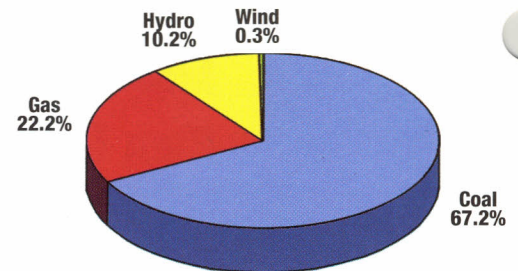
*The market condition that exists when there are few sellers

- With the government's approach, Albertans will be paying \$17 Billion over the next five years to clean up the mess. Whether consumers pay for higher electricity costs or taxpayer dollars pay for rebates and subsidies, it's all coming out of the same pocket.

Despite the warning signs, this government is determined to ignore the growing costs and follow through on their disastrous approach.

The problem can be fixed with a bold and comprehensive plan to create a stable electricity market for all Albertans.

2000 Alberta Supply Mix



| | Coal | Gas | Hydro | Wind | Imports | Total Net of Onsite Load | System Peak Demand | System Reserves |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1997 Alberta Supply (in MW) | 5,655 | 939 | 848 | 21 | 950 | 8,414 | 7,222 | 17% |
| 2000 Alberta Supply (in MW) | 5,599 | 1,869 | 861 | 29 | 950 | 9,309 | 7,785 | 20% |

The Foundation for a **Stable** Electricity Market

The solution must be guided by three principles:

protect consumers, ensure a growing supply of electricity and keep Alberta competitive. A stable electricity market must consider:

- The province's natural resources should benefit the people of Alberta – not just their government or a small number of resource companies.
- Natural resource development remains important to Alberta's economy. Our wise stewardship of our natural resources is key to our future prosperity.
- Revenues from resource development must be used as a springboard to move Alberta forward, not as a slush fund for past mistakes.
- Society has a responsibility to protect those who have little or no disposable income – seniors, those on fixed incomes, and Alberta families.
- Low cost electrical energy is a prerequisite for small business development and manufacturing growth in Alberta.
- Improving energy conservation and diversifying supply will keep Alberta competitive in the global market. The government has a responsibility to lead by example.

Alberta Can Have Both – Consumer Protection And a Competitive Market

The Competitive Market Development Plan for Albertans will return to fair prices for consumers and allow large consumers to move into a genuinely competitive market. It will also foster an environment where producers can invest in new generation with confidence.

Market forces are neither inherently perfect nor inherently flawed. The wholesale market is a tool that can move Alberta's utility industry forward. A competitive market, when it operates efficiently, will lower prices, reduce consumption and accelerate innovation.

Electricity is an essential utility for small consumers who want reliable service at a fair price. A responsible, long-term solution recognizes that all consumers and the Alberta economy will benefit from a truly competitive supply market.

There are five steps to developing a stable electricity market for Albertans.

Step One Re-define Consumers

Small consumers are unique and require protection while a truly competitive market develops. These Albertans have no influence on price and can be held captive (as they are now) to high prices on the wholesale market. They neither requested nor benefit from deregulation. Consumers, however, will benefit from a competitive supply market. Large consumers, many of whom advocated deregulation, will be able to arrange for new supply from producers through the wholesale market.

This Plan defines and separates these two unique groups:

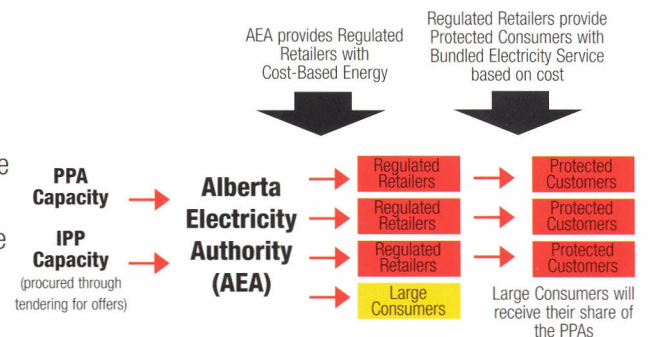
Protected Consumers - Small consumers who use less than 5 MW will receive protected prices from Regulated Retailers. This category includes all Alberta households, community organizations and most small and medium-sized businesses. Their energy supply will come from existing low-cost generating units. New supply will be purchased in bulk from the wholesale market or arranged by contract from new generation.

Competitive Consumers - Consumers who use more than 5 MW (\$1 million or more) will purchase their power from the wholesale market either through a marketer/retailer or as an active participant in the market. This gives large consumers the flexibility and choice they desired. A consumer with between 1 and 5 MW of load will have the option of entering the competitive market.

Step Two Develop the market structure

The existing electricity market structure will be redefined and rebuilt, with two new agencies being created:

A new **Alberta Electricity Authority (AEA)** will allocate energy to Regulated Retailers. These retailers will be governed by the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board and will be obligated to provide regulated rates to service Protected Consumers. The AEA will also foster the creation of a wholesale market to serve Competitive Consumers.



A new **Alberta Integrated Manager (AIM)** will serve as the system manager. AIM will encompass the functions of the current Power Pool, the System Controller, the Load Settlement Administrator and the Transmission Administrator.



Step Three Stabilize Prices

The Competitive Market Development Plan will recapture the residual value of the Power Purchase Arrangements (PPAs) for Alberta consumers. The Alberta Electricity Authority will then return electricity prices to the cost-of-production for Protected Consumers. Competitive Consumers will also receive a benefit from recapturing the PPAs.

Albertans will regain access to low-cost power generated here at home. The sooner there is a move to buy back the PPAs, the less it will cost Albertans. The cost of re-purchasing the PPAs will be the price of the contracts sold in the August auction plus a premium to be negotiated between the PPA owners and the government.

Step Four Achieve a Stable Electricity Market

Bold steps are necessary and they must be taken in consultation with Albertans. A Panel of Experts will be formed immediately following the election to oversee the implementation of the Competitive Market Development Plan. The Panel would report within 60 days and the Plan would be fully operational within 8 to 12 months.

Encouraging energy conservation is integral to the strategy. This Plan will see the provincial government reduce its own electricity consumption by 10 per cent over the first ten months and develop an Alberta Energy Conservation strategy for the future.

Step Five Protect Consumers During Implementation

Small consumers must be protected during the implementation period for the Plan. Consumers of all types will be served by bringing electricity prices to a level where Alberta again becomes competitive in North America. Surplus royalties will be used to protect consumers.

Putting Alberta on track will require industry cooperation, the participation of all stakeholders, and the political will to do the right thing.

Why should Albertans Support This Plan?

Consumer Protection and Fair Prices – The Alberta Electricity Authority will return prices to the cost of production for consumers who use less than 5 MW.

Reliable Supply – The Alberta Integrated Manager will ensure that supply and demand are balanced at all times.

Wholesale Market Competition – The Alberta Electricity Authority will operate a fair and competitive wholesale market for Competitive Consumers. The AEA will also ensure that Protected Consumers will have adequate supply at a fair price.

New Supply - Demand will drive the development of new generation and co-generation facilities.

Conservation and Innovation - The benefits of competition in the wholesale market – voluntary energy reduction and innovation in supply development – will enhance the competitiveness of Alberta industry.

Going Back Is Not the Answer

In contrast to returning to a fully regulated environment, the Competitive Market Development Plan:

- Allows the development of technological innovations that will change the size and type of electricity generation options available. This means a more stable, diversified energy mix, more choice for consumers and support for renewable energy.
- Provides new suppliers with the necessary incentive to develop new generation projects.
- Allows a wholesale market to develop and grow.
- Encourages larger consumers to develop on-site co-generation plants or to arrange for other supply alternatives.

It Beats Ad-Hoc Market Intervention

The current government has no long-term plan and is throwing money at the problem. Like California, the government has chosen market intervention mechanisms over a truly competitive supply market. In contrast, the Competitive Market Development Plan:

- Protects small consumers who are casualties of the current deregulated industry.
- Addresses the failures of the auction process by taking back the PPAs and ensuring all Alberta consumers truly benefit from the low cost of existing generation.
- Addresses the shortcomings of the current market by creating the Alberta Electricity Authority and the Alberta Integrated Manager.
- Rather than hoping that new supply will come online soon enough to lower prices, this solution is proactive.
- The Alberta Electricity Authority will ensure that power is purchased in a fair and timely manner for Protected Customers, while encouraging Competitive Customers to actively participate in a competitive wholesale market.
- Large competitive customers can achieve reasonable rates through long term contracts thus stimulating new supply.
- An efficient industry and predictable regulatory environment mean investors can once again be confident in Alberta's future.

**It Keeps
Alberta
Strong**

Consumer protection is at the heart of this Plan. A truly competitive wholesale market is the long-term goal and the only acceptable outcome. When the market is self-sustaining, demand will drive supply and consumers will have access to reliable electricity at fair prices – which is precisely what Albertans wanted in the first place.

That's our goal. And that will keep Alberta strong.

albertaliberal.com

Power to People:

Public Education for Alberta's Future

Alberta Used to be the Best in Canada

The Tories Have Taken Us Down

A strong public education system is central to Alberta's success. Excellence in education shapes the future of our province and gives our young people the tools they need to strengthen our society and our economy. It provides a place for life-long learning so our workforce remains innovative and competitive in the global economy.

The Tories seem to have forgotten this. Since 1993, excellence in Alberta's public education system has been eroded. Alberta has fallen from the highest in Canada to fifth lowest, based on per-capita funding. The Tories have ignored continued calls by parents, teachers, leaders and education associations.

Funding has dropped, class sizes have jumped and costs have been shifted to Alberta families. Fixing the public education system is not just about funding – it is about whether government values public education. It is about having a stable, realistic plan. At its root, it is about a commitment to value children and their future.

The Tory solution is to privatize – first health care – now education. So they have increased funding for private schools, while slashing funding for public education. Special interests favour this approach, but what about the public interest?

Alberta is one of Canada's wealthiest provinces, yet the Tories have undermined the foundation of our public education system. Alberta should be debating how to strengthen public education but instead we are struggling to supply the basics under the Tories.

After eight years of Tory mismanagement, here's where Alberta stands today:

There aren't enough books.

Teachers schedule their teaching time around the availability of book sets. Students share books in classrooms and cannot take textbooks home, where they need them to do their homework. School libraries and librarians are casualties of Tory policy.

There aren't enough teachers.

Experienced teachers are retiring earlier – younger teachers are leaving for jobs with less stress and higher salaries – recruiting new teachers is understandably difficult.

Class sizes are undermining the quality of education.

Every credible study conducted in North America in the past decade supports the fact that the smaller the class size, the higher the educational achievement. Last year, the Tory government took \$100,000 from the public purse to study whether or not class size affects student performance. The report has been sitting on a shelf since November 2000.

Alberta has Canada's highest student-teacher ratio.

Newfoundland, a smaller province with fewer resources, is outpacing Alberta, one of the richest jurisdictions in Canada, with smaller class sizes and more per capita spending on public education.

Parents are struggling to fill in the gaps.

Parents are taking time out to volunteer in classrooms, work casinos and go door-to-door to raise money for materials essential to their children's education. In 1998/1999 parents fundraised and paid fees totaling \$121 Million for public education.

Ad hoc funding is part of the problem.

The Tories have created a crisis in public education with utilization formulas and one-time pre-election funding announcements. Ad-hoc funding leaves school boards unable to plan for the future.

We're Also Falling Behind in Advanced Education

Albertans who expect to see their children attend college or university face 'sticker price shock' when they find out what it will cost. Many students cannot afford to follow a chosen career path. They compromise by choosing shorter courses of study, working and taking extra years to complete their programs, accepting a huge debt burden, or by abandoning their aspirations entirely. When this happens to students, Alberta loses.

Here are some of the facts:

- Alberta's tuition fees have increased more than 200% since 1993.
- Support for advanced education dropped 21% between 1994 and 1997.
- Real dollar, per-student government funding has declined by 50.4%.
- In the 2000-2001 budget, Alberta allocated only 6.5 percent of its budget to higher education.

| Tuition Fees | 1995-1996 | 2000-2001 | INCREASE |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| U of Alberta | \$2,529 | \$3,770 | + 49% |
| U of Calgary | \$2,660 | \$3,834 | + 44% |
| U of Lethbridge | \$2,600 | \$3,370 | + 30% |

Source: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

Alberta Should Lead the Way

Today we have an opportunity to be a model for public education in Canada. Our economic strength gives us a unique advantage – all we need is the leadership and the political will to put Alberta students at the heart of our vision.

The Tories won't do that. Instead of investing in Alberta students, they are prepared to throw away \$17 Billion in a futile attempt to cover up their electricity deregulation fiasco. Under the Alberta Liberal plan for electricity, electricity bills will go down AND Alberta's surplus will be invested where it will benefit Alberta families the most – fixing education and medicare.

Public Education Albertans Can Be Proud Of

Albertans know that our children represent our hopes and dreams for the future. Our children are not a commodity, nor should their education be. We had a government that understood that once, but the current government has lost sight of that goal.

Alberta needs a government that leads by example, for a change.

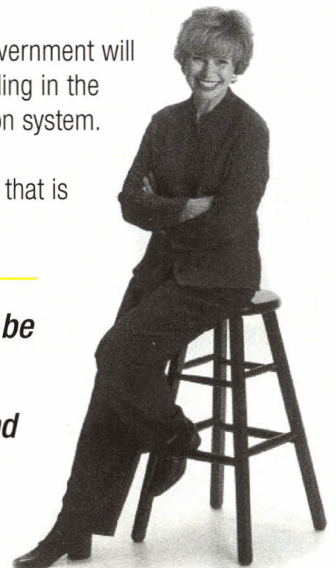
Nowhere is this more important than in our schools. We will not allow the drive for cost-cutting to squeeze schools until they cannot provide the basics to our children. Teachers must have the time and support to ensure that children learn the values that made Alberta strong - respect, thoughtfulness, the joy of achievement. These are the values that built Alberta, values that our schools should provide, and that our government should embody.

We believe all children and our citizens must be educated well. A MacBeth government will prepare students and workers for the challenges and opportunities of succeeding in the global economy. Our priority is to restore excellence in Alberta's public education system.

It's time for a government that understands the importance of these values, and that is prepared to both lead and support our schools into the future. We will.

"Every child who comes into school has a talent that should be developed. It is the job of public education to find that light within each child, give them the skills to turn that light on, and then go out and use those abilities and knowledge in their lives – and change our world."

Nancy MacBeth, October 2000



We Have a Plan- Starting Today

MacBeth Commission on the Future of Education

Alberta's public education system needs a vision that respects students, parents, communities, teachers and citizens. Community support is key to a strong school system. *The MacBeth Commission on the Future of Education* will develop a structure to ensure local priorities are identified and local needs are met. The Commission will tap resources of the extraordinary people in this province to build a pragmatic plan to improve public education in Alberta – from basic to post-secondary.

Rutherford Tuition Program

A MacBeth government will strategically re-invest part of Alberta's surplus in a tuition program accessible to all Alberta students. The *Rutherford Tuition Program* will provide additional support for a post-secondary degree or diploma for students meeting a high academic standard and/or facing economic need. This builds on the Rutherford Scholarship Program. This new initiative expands tuition support from one year only to program completion. It is an investment in our future.

Full Funding

Our commitment is to a fully funded public education system. Fundraising efforts and corporate donations entrench inequities between have and have-not communities. A MacBeth government will increase funding immediately to the Canadian average. We will work toward a funding level equal to the average of the top three provinces.

Fair Funding

We will finance schools with an 80-20 formula, with 80% from the province and 20% from local ratepayers. This formula will be phased in as the provincial debt is paid down. This formula is fair, and ensures that decision-making takes place at the local level – by parents and teachers, principals and school boards.

Protect Rural Schools

We will protect communities by keeping rural schools viable. We will consider the fabric of a community and consult with citizens before making decisions that affect their children and their lives.

Smaller Class Sizes

Smaller class sizes let teachers spend more time with students and on curriculum development, and it is less likely that students will fall through the cracks. We will work with school boards to achieve class size targets of:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Kindergarten to Grade 3 | 17 students |
| Grade 4 to Grade 9 | 25 students |
| Grade 10 to Grade 12 | 30 students |

More Teachers – More Teaching Time

Over the next three years, we will bring 1,000 new teachers into the system, enabling them to spend more time teaching.

Lower Tuition Fees

We will cap tuition fees at 20% of the cost of the institution's operating costs, and compensate institutions while we implement a long-term financing plan for post secondary institutions.

Fair Student Testing

We will replace the current unfair achievement testing with diagnostic testing models that are more meaningful and less time consuming. Parents and teachers will be better able to recognize the talents and abilities of Alberta's students.

Special Needs Education

We believe parents should choose education programs for special needs children. Where parents wish their children to be integrated within regular classrooms, we will provide the resources to ensure this happens.

Second Language Programs

Fluency in two or more languages strengthens the foundation for life in today's global society – economically, socially and culturally. We will enhance students' opportunities to study languages.

Repair Crumbling Schools

Public school buildings are deteriorating due to chronic neglect and underfunding. Many buildings are unsafe and pose environmental health hazards; others lack communications infrastructure to support computers or educational technologies. A MacBeth government will repair and maintain schools on the basis of priority needs. ►

Albertans Have a Choice

ALBERTA LIBERALS

Fully fund public education

Ensure smaller class sizes

Treat schools as integral to community

Respect local autonomy

Cap tuition at 20% of cost

Appropriately fund special needs students

TORIES

Promote privatization and user fees

Ignore parents, experts and associations who call for smaller class sizes

Hurt communities by closing schools

Transfer resources from rural to urban centres

Have allowed tuition fees to skyrocket

Underfund special needs students

Why Albertans Should Support This Plan

It Restores the Basics

A MacBeth government will raise per-student funding levels to the Canadian average. We will provide the necessary elements for a sound public education system – including books, teaching aids, and learning resource materials.

It Respects the Teaching Profession

Teachers are gifted professionals who can change their students' lives for the better. They will have the resources they need to spend more time with their students, and more time on curriculum development.

It Values Public Education

Equipping Albertans for careers is important. So is ensuring students have the opportunity to learn, to discover, to develop their abilities and to live meaningful lives. Alberta students, at every age, will acquire the skills they need to succeed, and Alberta business will benefit from having access to knowledgeable, creative, productive people.

It Prevents Wholesale Privatization

Increased funds will be used for public education – not private.

It Ensures Equality and Individual Achievement

A MacBeth government will protect the principles Albertans consider important – equality of opportunity, support for individual achievement, and recognition that good schools build strong communities and bright futures.

Looking to the Future

Albertans must have the opportunity to develop their talents, realize their potential and achieve their goals. A MacBeth government recognizes the importance of educating our children well, and providing opportunities for growth and advancement throughout all stages of life.

We believe in public education for Alberta's future.

albertaliberal.com

Power to People:

Fix Medicare First

**Albertans
Believe in
Public Health
Care.**

**The Tories
Haven't
Listened.**

Since 1993 the Tory government has pushed Alberta toward private, for-profit medicine. They believe that the private sector is better than the public sector in delivering health care services. In the United States, private for-profit medicine benefits only insurance companies, shareholders of private companies, and the affluent that can afford private health care.

The Tories have used closure to force through legislation that enshrines their belief – private over public.

Who are they listening to? No credible study conducted in the past decade in North America supports this allegation. All respected authorities disagree. So do most Albertans.

Even after being bombarded with a \$2.4 million propaganda campaign during the Bill 11 debate, 56% of Albertans opposed the bill and rejected private, two-tier medicine.

The Tories didn't listen.

They Had No Plan in 1993. There's No Plan Now.

Eight years of mismanagement and cutbacks have taken a toll on Alberta's health care system. Between 1992 and 1995, the Tory government cut expenditures for health care by 18% and acute care by 30%, gutting the public health care system, closing hospitals and taking services away from Albertans. The Tories cut more than any other province and now admit that they cut with no plan.

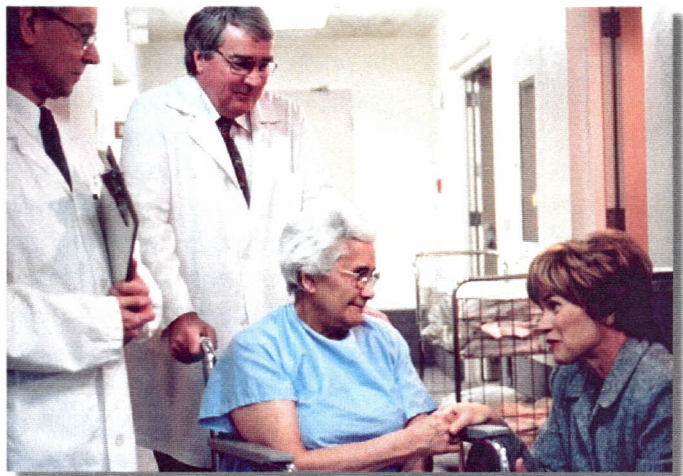
As a result, Alberta communities face critical shortages of doctors, nurses and facilities. Alberta families wait hours for emergency services. Patients spend entire hospital stays in hallways. Seniors do not have the care they need to remain in their homes.

In the weeks leading up to the election, the Tories started to throw money back into the system, but they did so without a plan. What kind of health care system will Albertans have? Where will medical care be delivered? Which services will be covered? The Tories don't have the answers.

**Albertans
Deserve
Better.**

Despite the cutbacks, Alberta's public health care system can be revived. Most medical facilities and health clinics still stand. Equipment is still in place. The heart of the public system – the people who created it and worked to develop it – remain committed to public health care.

Today, we have an historic opportunity to put our resource royalties to work for Alberta families. Our economic strength puts Alberta in a position unique in Canada. Alberta has the resources to fix medicare but it means taking on the special interests that are profiting from private health care.



The Tories won't do that. Instead, they are preparing to squander \$17 Billion to cover up their electricity deregulation fiasco. We announced an electricity deregulation plan last week and, by acting quickly, Albertans will save billions, see their electricity bills go down AND they will see a greater portion of Alberta's surplus invested where it will benefit Alberta families.

We Have a Plan.

Our plan for health care puts Albertans first. The health and well-being of Albertans at all stages of life will be placed before the financial interests of private shareholders.

Alberta is truly blessed with opportunity right now, with energy royalties providing historic budget surpluses after years of belt-tightening. This provides Alberta with the opportunity and revenues to fix medicare and protect it for the future.

A MacBeth government will not hesitate to restore the public interest, quickly making a series of strategic investments to put the public health care system back on its feet. We will undertake necessary infrastructure improvements, launch sustainable health programs centred on preventative health care, acquire needed diagnostic equipment, and improve working conditions to attract and retain qualified, committed health care professionals. Alberta can lead the way.

Fix Medicare First.

The first order of business for a MacBeth government will be to repeal Bill 11 and replace it with a law that guarantees a truly public health care system for Albertans. More than any other province, Alberta has the resources to have a first-rate public health care system. We also have the responsibility to invest in the health of all Albertans.

Public Or Private: Albertans Have a Choice

| ALBERTA LIBERALS | TORIES |
|---|--|
| Will enact new legislation enshrining the principles of public health care in law. | Used closure to pass Bill 11 for private health care |
| Favour strong public health care | Favour private health care |
| Introduced Patient Bill of Rights | Voted down Patient Bill of Rights |
| Will re-open beds | Closes/destroys public hospitals |
| Will guarantee timely access for all medically necessary MRIs | Refuse to provide timely access for all medically necessary MRIs |

End Hallway Medicine

In Alberta, it is unconscionable that patients are left on stretchers in hallways and are turned away from emergency rooms. The haphazard approach to spending in these areas has left the system weakened and uncertain.

We will stabilize the system. With more nurses and other health professionals back in our public health care system, we will re-open hospital wards and add beds to areas where there are shortages. We will:

- Re-open hospital beds to meet current and future needs;
- Ensure sufficient front-line health care staff by improving working conditions – retaining the qualified individuals we have today and attracting others;
- Increase university and college placements leading to the direct hiring of 5,000 nurses over the next five years;
- Work with provincial health organizations to recruit health care professionals and better allocate health care professionals currently working in the system;
- Ensure our acute care system is supported by a stable, integrated home care and community rehabilitation program; and
- Improve ambulance and emergency services.

Eliminate Health Care Premiums

Health care premiums are simply another tax on Albertans. We will eliminate this unfair tax, starting with seniors.

Provide Home Care and Better Care for Alberta Seniors

A MacBeth government will provide a home care system that enables seniors in smaller centres and major cities to live their lives with independence and dignity. We will introduce a Seniors' Care Enhancement Act to make uniform standards of care available to Alberta's long-term care patients.

Solve the Rural Physician Crisis

We will stop putting our rural communities at a disadvantage on health care. A MacBeth government will implement a workable plan to attract physicians to smaller Alberta communities where they are desperately needed. We will expand capabilities in tele-health to provide Albertans who live in rural areas and small communities the same high quality of diagnostic services found in major cities. Complementing the tele-health programme is the Alberta Rural Physician Bursary Programme (ARPB). Under the ARPB, we will provide tuition assistance to students prepared to work in rural Alberta for a minimum of three years after graduation.

Access to MRIs

Timely access to Magnetic Resonance Imaging scans must be available to all Albertans, not only for those able to afford the scans in private clinics. Yet the Tory privatization agenda prevents such timely access.

A MacBeth government will pay for all medically necessary MRIs. We will reduce public health care system waiting lists for medically necessary MRIs by recruiting and training enough technicians to run the MRIs we have.

Improve Working Conditions

Against seemingly insurmountable odds, dedicated health care professionals have held Alberta's health care system together for the past eight years. Based on consultations, we will create working conditions and professional opportunities that allow them to develop and apply their skills in a meaningful and rewarding way. A MacBeth government will treat all health care practitioners with the respect they deserve.

Introduce a Patients' Bill of Rights

We will enact Bill 201, the Patients' Bill of Rights Act. The Alberta Liberals introduced the bill in 1998 but the Tories defeated it. In addition, we will appoint an independent Health Ombudsman to review the concerns of Albertans and to initiate action where appropriate.

Strengthen Mental Health Services

One in five Albertans will require mental health treatment in their lifetime. Albertans need better access to mental health services. A strong and balanced mental health system requires sustainable funding for community-based and institution-based mental health facilities. We will consult with community agencies to develop public education, intervention and assistance programs.

Innovation in Prevention

Albertans expect their government to provide clear health policy, innovative health care strategies, and a dynamism that reflects the province's changing health care needs. Our commitment to health promotion and illness prevention will strengthen Alberta's public health care system in the long-term. For example, we will:

- Fully fund screening for prostate and colon cancer, a measure that will prevent human suffering and save taxpayer dollars through early detection and prevention; and
- Direct sustained resources to help persons with diabetes pay for supplies necessary to treat their condition in a responsible way.



We Will Be Smarter With Our Investments.

Why Should Albertans Support This Plan?

Over the past months, we have been consulting with health care professionals and agencies throughout the province. We have found widespread agreement that problems facing our public health care system do not rest entirely on lack of funding, but rather are a consequence of the neglect of the Tories and their chronic inability to plan.

Comprehensive plans will be developed in partnership with health professionals, health administrators and community representatives to provide clear direction over five year planning horizons. Regional Health Authority Board members who are elected, rather than appointed, will be chosen for their skills, knowledge and commitment – not for their political affiliations.

It Protects the Public Interest

There is nothing more important than the health and well-being of Albertans. We will Fix Medicare First to end the crisis in health care, enact our Patient's Bill of Rights and institute elected Regional Health Authorities.

It Stops Shortchanging Albertans

It is unacceptable that Albertans are forced to pay for medically necessary tests, equipment and medications.

It Treats Seniors with Respect

Seniors have shouldered the brunt of the Tory government's cuts. We will restore and renew programs that enable seniors to receive the care they require while they remain in their homes and communities.

It Offers Balance and Choice

All medically necessary services will be provided through a strong public health care system.

It Restores Staffing Levels

By acknowledging the value of services performed by those who work in the public health care system, and by providing a consultative working environment, existing staff will remain in the system and qualified staff will be willing to enter the system.

It Focuses on Innovation in Prevention

Programs in early detection and illness prevention, along with renewed educational initiatives, will improve Albertan's health and well-being.

It Restores Certainty to Public Health Care

The public health care system has been de-stabilized in the last eight years. We offer a comprehensive and pragmatic plan that will restore confidence and promote innovation in health care.

THE BOTTOM LINE.

We will rebuild a strong public health care system that treats all Albertans with dignity and respect, meets our health care needs responsibly and is based on the principles of dependable, quality health care services for all. With this plan, Alberta will be an innovator, providing leadership to other Canadian provinces and the world.

This will keep Albertans healthy and Alberta strong.

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