



Alberta  
**Liberal**



# A Message from Raj Sherman

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This is a fresh, bold new approach to Alberta's future.

It's the vision that I and my team of Alberta Liberal candidates share for a province that once again frees us to achieve our personal and collective best.

Our platform deals with the hard reality that, in the midst of great natural resource wealth, the current government has saddled us with enormous deficits, crumbling infrastructure and services that almost always fail to meet our needs.

It proposes common-sense solutions to doctor shortages, to long hospital and emergency waiting lines, to the lack of appropriate, dignified services for our seniors, and to many of the challenges that families, students and immigrants face in today's world.

The current government keeps saying **NO** to citizens who need the government's help.

Read our platform, and you'll realize that Alberta Liberals are committed to saying **YES** to your needs, to managing public money so that we can pay for what you need, and to an Alberta that our children can grow into with confidence in their ability to succeed.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read 'Raj'.

Dr. Raj Sherman, M.D.  
Leader of the Alberta Liberal Party



# Table of Contents

## Good People



A guarantee for health care delivery. Greatly expanded home care and seniors care. The creation of access to safe, quality preschool. Getting serious on foreign credentials. Energy efficiency for new homes. Lowing your electricity bill with smart protections.

Health.....	6
Seniors.....	8
Families.....	10
New Canadians.....	12
Consumers.....	14

## Big Ideas



Ending school fees. Provincial school lunch program. Three-stage plan to eliminate post-secondary tuition. Forgive student debt for graduates who stay and work in Alberta. Increased funding for arts, culture and sports. Carbon levy and green transportation fund.

Education (K-12).....	18
Education (Post-Secondary).....	20
Energy.....	22
Environment.....	24
Arts and Culture.....	24

# Better Government



Municipal Charters for Calgary and Edmonton. Municipal Heritage Fund. Direct funding of neighbourhood associations. Reduce the number of MLAs. Free votes in the Legislature. Recall legislation. Instant run-off elections.

Your Community.....	28
Your Democracy.....	30
Your Representatives.....	32

# The Liberal Fiscal Plan



Progressive tax on people making more than \$100,000/year. Increase on corporate tax for large corporations to 12% from 10%. No increase on small businesses. Cancel carbon capture and sequestration. Eliminate private school funding. Eliminate the Public Affairs Bureau.

Revenues.....	36
Savings.....	37
Overview.....	38

# Good People

A close-up photograph of a woman and a young girl. The woman, on the right, has dark hair and is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. The girl, on the left, is also smiling and looking towards the camera. They are both holding a white rectangular sign in front of them. The sign has the word "Yes." written in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. The woman is wearing a red sweater, and the girl is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. The background is plain white.

**Yes.**

**The people of Alberta deserve a government that is able and willing to secure public health care and protect their family - a government that helps each Albertan reach his or her full potential.**

## **Health (General)**

Guarantee surgery and emergency wait times.....	6
Call a public inquiry into health care.....	6
Get every Albertan a family doctor and wellness team.....	6
Train more medical professionals.....	6

## **Health (Seniors)**

Increase home care funding.....	9
Provide the required long term care.....	9

## **Families**

Create access to safe, quality preschool.....	10
Provincial advocate for seniors.....	10
Modernize maternity/parental leave.....	10

## **New Canadians**

More settlement funding.....	12
Get serious on foreign credentials.....	12
Government services in more languages.....	12
Increased ESL funding.....	12

## **Consumer Protection**

Energy efficiency labelling for new homes.....	14
Guarantees for new homes and condos.....	14
Lower your electricity bill with smart protections.....	15

# Health (General)

☒ **Guarantee surgery and emergency wait times.**

No matter how good it is, health care service you can't access is of no use to anybody. Under the Raj Sherman health care plan, Albertans will be able to rely on a guarantee of non-emergency surgery within six months, and emergency room treatment within six hours.

☒ **Call a Public Inquiry into the health care system.**

Questions remain unanswered about the conduct of our politicians and health care executives over the last decade. It's time for a forensic audit and inquiry into health care spending and management.

☒ **Get every Albertan a family doctor and wellness team.**

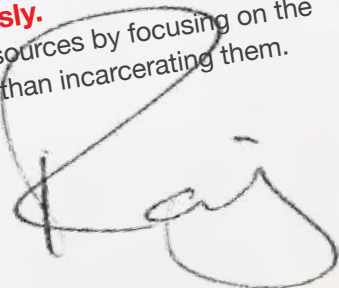
Prevention really is the best medicine. Studies show health funding goes further when directed to prevention and wellness. And by linking family medicine teams with hospitals, we further ensure the continuity and quality of care.

☒ **Return decision making ability to the front lines.**

The buck can't stop 300km away - decision making has to be returned to the front lines. It's time to reinstate elected local health boards, and create strong accountability measures for administrators and providers.

☒ **Take mental health and addictions seriously.**

It's better to use our limited police and health resources by focusing on the treatment of the mentally ill and addicted rather than incarcerating them.





# A Fix for Health Care



Health care is the biggest government portfolio, and it speaks volumes that the only two medical doctors in the Alberta Legislature are both Liberals.

The Alberta Liberal Party has a pragmatic plan to fix our publicly funded, publicly delivered health care system now. It tackles the short term challenges created by mismanagement and neglect, and charts a common-sense course forward to reduce costs, increase service, and sustain the system for future generations.

And that plan comes in the form of a pledge - **within two years, you will be able to rely on guaranteed surgery and emergency wait times.**

In the longer term, improvements to our health care education system will provide more doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals, many of whom can and should be trained in some of our smaller regional centres. This will increase the quality of care outside of our major population centres while reducing the pressures put on the Calgary and Edmonton regions.

\* \* \*

In the past years, Alberta has fallen from being one of Canada's most efficient systems with the best outcomes to one of the most costly, most wasteful, and poorest performing. Wait times are dangerously high and investment in prevention and wellness is seriously low.

It's time for new ideas and a pragmatic approach. The health care system needs to be there for you when you need it.

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals will see that you and your family can count on publicly funded and delivered health care now - and into the future.**



## Training More Health Care Providers

The creation of wellness teams, the provision of family doctors, and the care for our seniors requires more men and women to be able to choose careers in medicine - particularly generalists, as well as those in geriatric and pediatric medicine, and mental health. And that requires more space in our universities and colleges for them to be educated and more places in our hospitals for them to be trained.

The Alberta Liberal Party plan calls for **incentives for medical professionals to choose generalist fields over specialist ones**, and to expand medical programs into regional colleges, **integrating medical training with smaller Alberta communities.**

We also need to make better use of those who have medical education from other provinces and countries and help them start or restart their medical careers in Alberta.

The Alberta Liberal Party plan also calls for an **increase of the ratio of residencies to medical school graduates**, allowing us to train up those with foreign credentials and train those coming through our education programs.

# Health (Seniors)

## Home Care and Long Term Care



The health care system is beset by many complex problems, but a clear starting point can be found in our management of home care and long term care.

Failure to provide adequate home care and long term care ends up with patients in the emergency room, and far too many seniors being warehoused in acute care beds.

It's not an exaggeration to say that **the key to fixing health care is fixing this problem.**

Investing in an enlightened, world-class home care system will free up hundreds of hospital beds, unplug our emergency wards, and allow us to guarantee wait times and quicker access to the care we need.

The quantity of long term care options available is important, but so is the quality. There is little room for profit in the care of our elders - those who are wealthy and wish to pay are free to do so, but no one should be nickel-and-dimed.

Nobody should have to ask "can I afford to have this bath today?" and nobody should be separated from their spouse because of careless limitations in a long term care system. Attention provided to the regulation of these services will mean better care, and better outcomes.

**The Raj Sherman plan for home care and long term care provides dignity, quality of care, and affordability to those who built this province.**

## Cost Per Day of Different Health Options

Home Care and Long Term Care options are more dignified and provide a better quality of life for our senior citizens. They also cost less and would save Albertans a significant amount of money over the current system of warehousing our parents in acute care beds. How much cheaper is the proper care? In addition to unburdening our emergency services, **upgrading just 500 seniors from acute care to long term care would save the province \$55 million per year.**

**\$426**  
**PER DAY COST OF**  
**ACUTE CARE**



### **Double the funding of home care.**

It's better to keep families together and it's best to keep families in their homes. By doubling the funding of home care subsidies, the province will both save money and improve quality of life.



### **Provide long term care beds.**

While the preference will be to keep seniors in their homes, additional supply of non-profit long term care beds is necessary to moderate prices and ensure an adequate supply of affordable space.



### **Increase the quality of all long term care.**

Standards for long term care need to be strengthened and enforced for all facilities - private and publicly funded. Requirements for Registered Nurses to be on site and guarantees of service will ensure a proper level of care.



### **Couples together.**

Whether with our focus on home care or in the development of non-profit long term care, the Alberta Liberal plan calls for the province to be guided by the principle that families should not be split up because of health needs.



# \$161

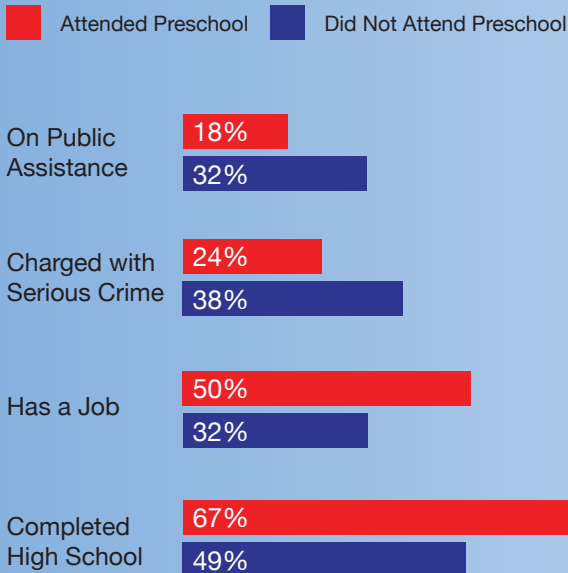
**PER DAY COST OF  
LONG TERM CARE**

# \$106\*

**PER DAY COST OF  
HOME CARE**

\* Based on John Hancock's 2011 Cost of Care Survey. Home care costs are highly variable and depend on individual conditions and needs.

## Effects of two years of preschool on high risk youth by age 19



Source: Osborn, A.F. and J.E. Milbank. 1987. The Effects of Early Education: A Report From The Child Health and Education Study. New York, New York: Clarendon Press.

## The Benefits of Early Childhood Education

In study after study, the benefits of early childhood education have been shown to have an effect on everything from high school graduation rates to adult happiness.

Larger academic studies have concluded the cost to the taxpayer of preschool to be overwhelmingly repaid by both reduced future social costs and the benefit to the participants in the program.

The Alberta Liberal Party would create regulations and standards for a play-based Alberta curriculum run by qualified, trained staff, and fund a \$100 million expansion of government subsidized early childhood education, rolled out starting in high needs areas.



### Create access to safe, quality preschool and non-profit day care.

High quality preschools have significant short and long term effects on improving a child's opportunities for educational success - particular for children with special needs or from disadvantaged households. Preschools also provide working families with choice. Single parents and working couples alike are able to more actively engage in the workforce - helping our economy keep moving along.



### Modernize Maternity/Parental Leave.

Currently, in Alberta employees must have 52 consecutive weeks of employment with their employer to be eligible for parental leave, the highest among the provinces. Halving this to 26 weeks means we will no longer have the unfair situation where you can be hired, pass 3 months probation, subsequently get pregnant, give birth, and then be fired.



### Establish an Independent Seniors Advocate.

The need for elder care will increase significantly in the coming years. A seniors advocate will help families navigate the system of government programs and be a champion for the care and dignity of the elderly.



# Families

## Your Family



**From birth to your golden years, government should be there for you when you need it.**

For Alberta's youngest citizens, we can help provide access to safe, quality preschool and day care. The more we can enrich the lives of those aged 2-5, the more advantages they take into their school life, their family life, their community life, and into Alberta's future.

Young families should trust that having a child doesn't mean getting a pink slip. Alberta's parental leave rules are among Canada's most regressive. Alberta Liberals will modernize those rules to end this strange penalty on starting a family.

And as our population gets older and the first baby boomers retire, the need for elder care will increase. Seniors are projected to increase from 10.5% of the population to 22% within 20 years, putting pressure on seniors, their families, and the currently overburdened and complicated web of seniors programs – programs that are often cumbersome and hard to navigate.

For this reason, our plan calls for the creation of an Independent Seniors Advocate, who will champion seniors issues, ensure access to seniors programs, and coordinate within the existing systems.

**Stresses placed on one member of the family affect all members of the family. Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals have a plan that will make life easier - for everyone.**



# New Canadians

## Welcoming the World to Alberta



From the time of the first settlers who took up the offers of free land to settle the “Last Best West”, Alberta has been and continues to be built on immigration.

The skillsets New Canadians bring allow us to maximize our economic output, and the diversity of cultures enriches us and connects us to the world.

But despite being bedrock to the Alberta experience, immigration has been largely ignored by the current government.

New Canadians and their children need the greatest help in two areas: language skills and the acceptance of professional accreditation from their home countries.

Immigrant families also need more help learning the ins and outs of the broader Alberta community, and interacting with their government to make use of the services that are available to them.

Failing to provide these services means we are leaving an enormous resource bottled up. Helping New Canadians settle in our province makes good economic sense.

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals are prepared to invest heavily in unlocking the talent New Canadians bring - turning it loose to help Alberta cope with skilled labour shortages and to encourage even healthier economic growth.**



### **More settlement funding.**

Helping new Canadians settle in our province makes good economic sense. Settlement programs will help them integrate and become productive, tax-paying members of the community.



### **Get serious on foreign credentials.**

For far too long the goal to increase the recognition of foreign credentials has stalled out. The government needs to work with professional groups to create streamlined paths forward so new Albertans can have their training recognized. We need to provide resources to give the additional education and work experience they need.



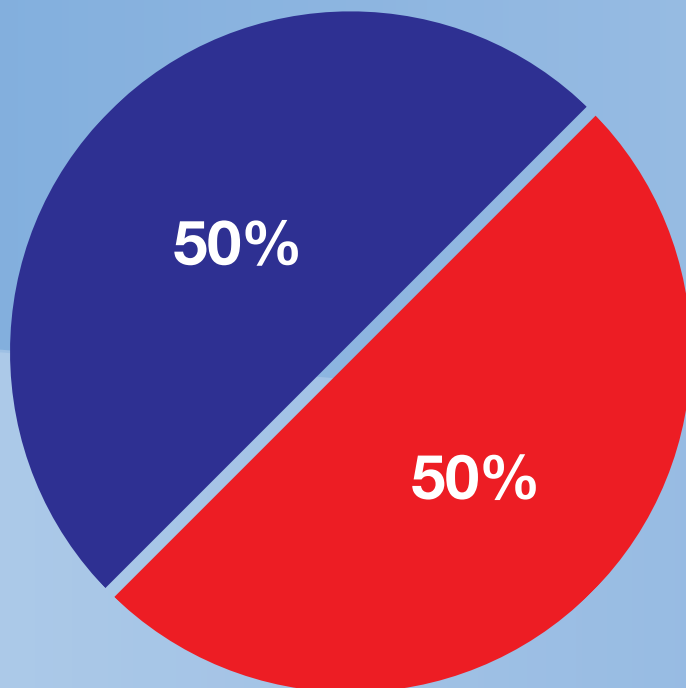
### **Government services in more languages.**

The Alberta Liberal Party will create a phone service that will allow government agents and the residents they serve to interact through translators - helping new Canadians integrate more efficiently.



### **Increased ESL funding.**

To better integrate and interact with the broader community, new Canadians need to be able to speak the language. By increasing funding to both traditional and internet/mobile English as a Second Language training, we can help unburden our social services, our teachers, and help newcomers achieve their full potential in the province of Alberta.



**Only half of immigrants with post-secondary credentials are using their experience.**

Barriers to the recognition of foreign credentials mean that there is a stunning waste of intelligence, creativity, and know-how that new Canadians have brought to Alberta and been unable to put to work in the economy.

It's time to get serious on this issue, and speed up the recognition of these credentials. We need to enable newcomers to more quickly put their training to work!

# Consumer Protection

## Protecting Home Buyers

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A new home is the largest purchase most of us will ever make. So why is it our car's muffler has a better warranty than the roof over our head? And why do you have a better sense of your automobile's energy efficiency than the four walls around you?

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals will bring in energy efficiency labeling and guarantees for new homes and condos, so you know exactly what you bought, and that you can depend on it.**



### **Energy Efficiency Labeling for New Homes and Condos.**

You can't know the ultimate cost of a house if you don't know its energy efficiency. By requiring efficiency standards labeling, Alberta Liberals will ensure that you have more information when making the biggest purchase of your life.



### **Guarantees for New Homes and Condos.**

The roof over your head is important to you, and it should be important to your government as well. The Alberta Liberals will require builders to provide Canada's strongest warranties: 3 years on labour and materials, 5 years on building envelope, and 10 years on the structure.

## Cutting Your Power Bill

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Electricity deregulation has not been accompanied with the promised reductions in prices - it's time for smart changes to the system that will cut your power bill and protect us from profiteering power generators and transmitters.

The Alberta Liberal Party will increase the powers and resources of the market surveillance administrator to allow them to fight for open, efficient, competitive marketplaces. We will create new rules that allow utilities to save on generation and pass those savings on to consumers. We will bring in penalties that match the magnitude of the offense - breaking the rules and paying the fine should never be cheaper than following them.

And we will also end the provincial cabinet's ability to approve major power lines in secret, with no public input process.







### Let utilities lock in savings.

Currently, utilities can only buy electricity up to 45 days in advance, creating uncertainty and higher prices. By increasing this timeframe to one year, utilities will lock in savings and pass them on to consumers.



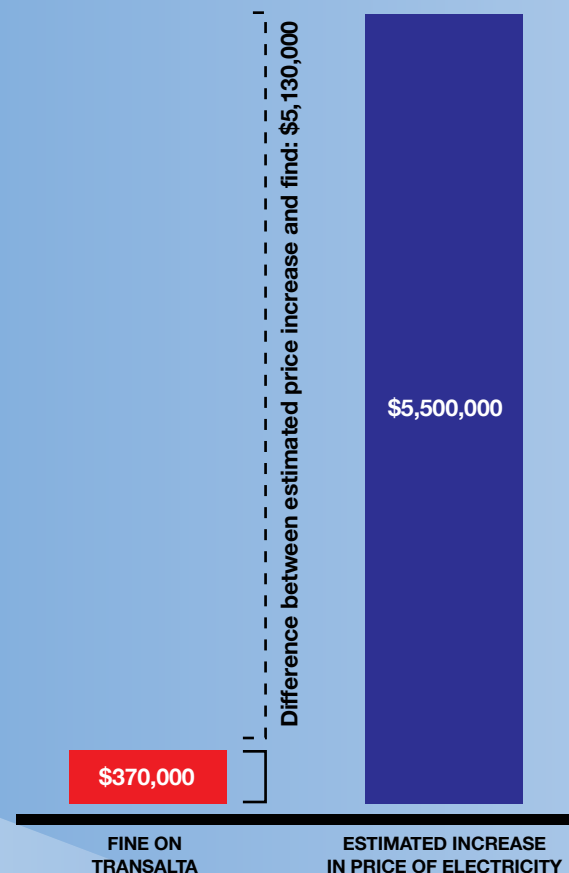
### Increase the powers of the market surveillance administrator.

We will increase the powers and resources of the market surveillance administrator to ensure an open, efficient, competitive market. This will enable the administrator to become more of a champion for low prices.



### Bring in penalties that match the magnitude of the offense.

Generators and utilities should never be able to profit from breaking rules that protect us consumers and keep prices low. The Alberta Liberal Party will make sure that minimum penalties are relative to the amount of improper profit that companies have made.



## When the Punishment Doesn't Match the Offense

In November of 2010 TransAlta - source of 16% of Alberta's commercial power - blocked imports of electricity from B.C., creating an artificial shortage - and higher prices.

The company admitted wrongdoing, and was fined by regulators, but that fine amounted to less than 10% of the estimated increase to electricity bills that resulted.

Situations like this - and the high electricity prices that result - will continue until Alberta takes its job as regulator of the electricity market seriously. Fines levied must always exceed the damage done.

# Big Ideas



**Alberta has been blessed with natural resources and inspired people - but we can't take either for granted. Education, the arts, and taking care of our resources are the keys to a keeping our future bright.**

### **Education (K-12)**

End school fees.....	19
Start a provincial school lunch program.....	19
Create a \$500 tax credit for teachers.....	19
Expand registered apprenticeship programs.....	19
Zero tolerance on bullying.....	19

### **Education (Post-Secondary)**

Three-stage plan to eliminate tuition fees.....	21
Forgive student debt for graduates who stay and work in Alberta.....	21
Delink parental income from student loan criteria.....	21
Expand availability of distance learning.....	21

### **Arts, Culture, and Amateur Sport**

Increase funding for visual and performing arts.....	22
Increase grants to amateur sports.....	22

### **Energy**

Diversify Markets: Expand export opportunities for oil and gas.....	24
Create a Centre for Energy Innovation.....	24

### **Environment**

Apply carbon levy to more emissions.....	24
Use carbon levy to finance environmental innovation, Green Transportation Fund.....	24
Introduce independent monitoring, stiffer penalties for polluters.....	24

# Education (K-12)

## Eliminating School Fees, Providing Better Education



Investing in our education system is the surest and most cost effective way to plan for our province's future. And with a few commonsense programs, we will better prepare the leaders of tomorrow and ease the pressures put on students and families.

Alberta Liberals believe the full cost of education should be borne by the Alberta government. We will end school fees and provide teachers with a tax credit recognizing their almost universal personal cash contribution.

We will invest in providing a faster track to good careers, higher incomes, and lower dropout rates for students who wish to pursue trades.

We will better tie education to your community by making schools community hubs, where everything from social services to community health can be found.

And we will make sure all students are given the opportunity to excel. Students of all ages and incomes should feel welcome and safe while at school. No child should have to deal with bullying. No child should have to learn on an empty stomach.

**Alberta Liberals believe no investment has a better return than an investment in our education system and our children.**



## Nobody should be asked to learn on an empty stomach.

The benefits of nutrition on education are well documented - by providing meal options to parents, we get more bang for our educational dollars.

Children whose nutritional needs are met have fewer attendance and discipline problems and are more attentive in class - and classrooms with less discipline problems mean a better quality of education for all students.





### **End school fees.**

School fees are taxes on families. Education should be *properly* funded instead. Eliminating school fees and transit fees will save the average family \$185 per child per year.



### **Start a provincial school lunch program.**

Each day in Alberta, far too many children go to school hungry - they are asked to achieve and excel academically and athletically on an empty stomach. Alberta Liberals will start a school lunch program, initially rolling it out in areas of greatest need.



### **Create a \$500 tax credit for teachers.**

Teachers give - and not just of their time. To recognize the cost that teachers incur purchasing incidentals for their students, a \$500 tax credit for teachers will be introduced.



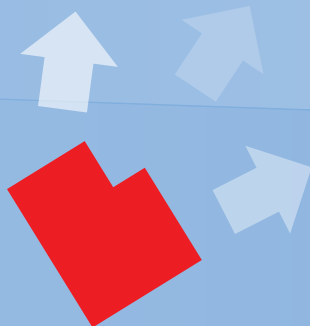
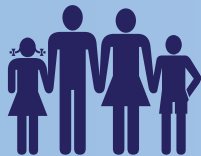
### **Expand registered apprenticeship programs.**

Registered apprenticeship programs give high school students the chance to learn a trade, make money, and graduate. Their expansion will increase graduation rates and opportunities for our children.



### **Zero tolerance on bullying.**

Bullying is **not** "just part of growing up". Everybody should feel safe and included in our public schools. A zero tolerance policy protects our children from abuse.



## **A school is the heart of a community.**

A school's usefulness goes beyond its ability to house students. Schools are the backbones of vibrant communities, and government policy needs to reflect that.

By developing new schools and redeveloping old schools to house community services, medical centres, community centres and libraries, education becomes better supported and neighbourhoods more united.

Raj Sherman will make schools the centre of community activity.

# Education (Post-Secondary)

## A Plan to Eliminate Tuition, Student Debt



Alberta's present is grounded in natural resources, but our future lies in an educated, knowledge-based workforce. In preparing for that day, no investment provides a better return than an investment in post-secondary education.

Alberta Liberals will begin to eliminate the burden of student debt - and start down a clear path towards eliminating post-secondary tuition fees entirely. It's a plan that sees the province invest in people, an investment that will pay back in greater economic output and a stronger tax base.

It's a plan that makes education more accessible, both financially and geographically through the expansion of distance learning programs.

And it's a plan that starts on day one. Loans will be easier to get, student debts will be forgiven, and tuitions will be decreased.

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals believe all Albertans should be able to get an education, regardless of financial means or geography.**





### **Cap and lower tuition for undergrads.**

The first step towards eliminating tuition is stopping its continuous upward creep. Undergraduate tuition would be capped, and post-secondary institutions provided funding to decrease tuition by \$250 per year.



### **Create a post-secondary endowment fund to reduce and eliminate tuition.**

As the Alberta Liberal Party fiscal plan ramps up, more and more money will be invested in a Post-Secondary Education Fund. Interest from this fund will further reduce tuition, ultimately bringing it to zero.



### **Forgive 5% or \$1000 of student debt each year a student stays and works in Alberta.**

As graduates work and pay taxes in Alberta, the cost of their education and Alberta Student Loans is more than offset. Alberta Liberals will forgive 5% or \$1000 every year a graduate works and file taxes in Alberta, ultimately expanding the program's breadth and depth with growing returns from the Post-Secondary Education Heritage Fund.



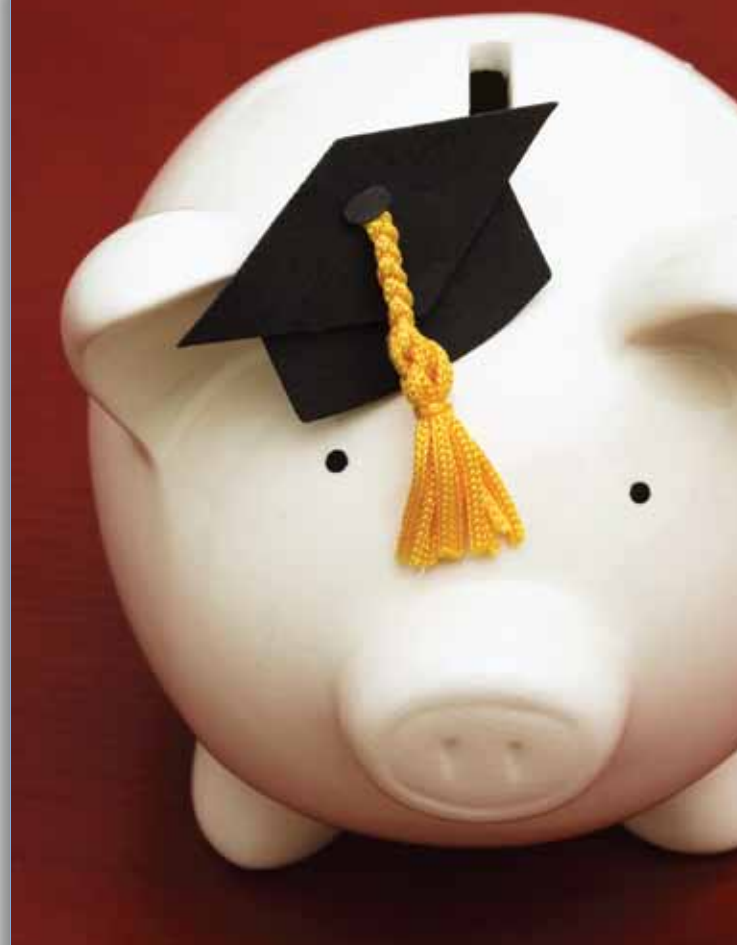
### **Delink parents income from loan criteria.**

People over 18 are adults. Alberta Liberals believe it is inappropriate to have loan officers consider ask details of parental income when considering whether to give financial support. We will stop this practice.



### **Expand distance learning.**

As a post-secondary degree or certificate becomes essential to finding employment, more and more people are being forced to leave smaller communities for bigger centres to get an education - and while away at school many start their lives and never return. Expanding the availability of distance learning programs will make it possible for people to stay in their community while acquiring the knowledge they need to succeed.



## **An Endowment for Education: Explained**

The Alberta Liberal Party financial plan calls for the creation of endowments out of our growing resource revenue to fund certain long term legacies - one of the largest of which is for post-secondary education.

Under the Alberta Liberal Party plan, payments into the endowment begin in 2013 and ramp up as more oil revenues come online. While money will continue to go into those endowments, only *interest* from the funds will be spent.

Current royalty projections show the fund becoming self sustaining sometime after 2025. When that occurs, interest will exceed the base cost of the program *and* cover inflation, creating a permanent legacy of investing in our future.

# Arts, Culture, and Amateur Sport

## Supporting Arts and Amateur Sport

The arts enrich our lives. They can give life meaning. Great art brings joy, understanding and new challenges.

And if it wasn't worth investing in for those reasons alone, it would still be money well spent: arts, culture and heritage attract investment, create jobs and diversify the economy.

Unfortunately, culture has been first on the chopping block when the current government looks to cut expenses. Short-sighted policy hollows out the Alberta experience, and costs us dearly in the long term.

Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals will make culture and amateur sport funding self-sustaining, through the creation of two new endowment funds that ensure stable funding - in good times and bad.

Culture and sport are ways of being more sure of who we are as a society. They make us healthier, happier, and more appreciative of ourselves. They're worth fighting for.

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals will fund and champion Alberta's cultural and amateur sport communities.**



### Create endowment for amateur sport.

Participation in amateur sport benefits physical health, self-esteem, and fosters a sense of community. Alberta Liberals will create a Heritage Fund endowment to finance amateur sport, and provide "bridge" funding of up to \$25 million a year between now and when the endowment is of size to pay a meaningful dividend.



### Double, then triple funding to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

At \$29 million, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts currently makes up less than 0.1% of Alberta's budget. AFA grants support festivals, book publishers, artist-in-residence programs, emerging artists, education, community events and exhibits, and provide a method for the government to invest directly in our arts and cultural industries.



### Create endowment for performing and visual arts.

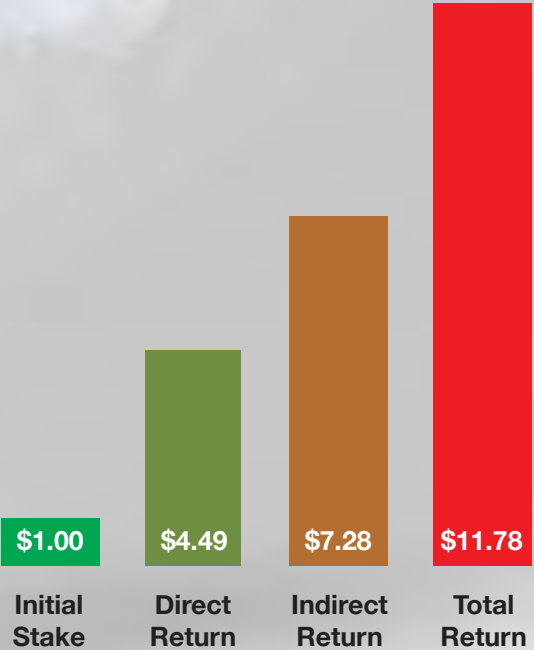
Stable funding for the arts protects them from the chopping block in tough economic times. A legacy of lasting arts funding will be provided through the creation of a visual and performing arts Heritage Fund endowment.



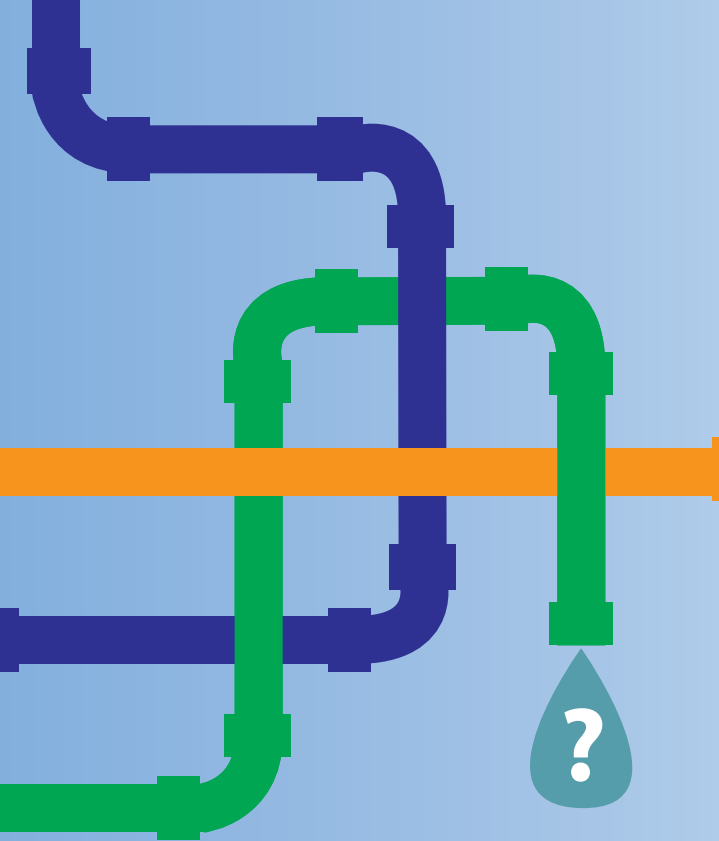




**For every dollar  
government invests  
in the arts, it is  
estimated that almost  
\$12 of economic  
activity is created.**



Source: Alberta Foundation for the Arts, 2005. The Economic Impact of the Arts in Alberta.



## Do we know what's being released into our environment?

In Alberta, the very people who would be in a position to catch hell for releasing toxins into our environment are those we ask to do the monitoring.

Industry is expected to self-regulate, and we're expected to take them at their word.

We can **not** run emission and toxin control on the honour system and still be taken seriously by the international community. When we say the environmental impacts of the oil and gas industry are being well managed, we need *independent* data to back it up.

**For the sake of our international reputation and continued prosperity, Alberta Liberals will not let industry self-monitoring continue for another day.**



### **Diversify our markets.**

The resilience of Alberta's economy is harmed by putting all of our eggs into very few baskets. Alberta Liberals will actively pursue new markets through investment in Alberta trade offices, opening Alberta to foreign trade and harmonization of standards, and investing in a permanent crisis communications capability - prepared to counter misinformation about Alberta whenever and wherever it appears.



### **Centre for Energy Innovation.**

Alberta can leverage its market-leading position in oil and gas into becoming a broad-based energy superpower. By funding a centre for innovation, and inviting the world to Alberta we will foster the development of new technologies to help established energy industries, and parlay our expertise into emerging areas of energy production such as solar and wind.



### **Apply carbon levy to actual emissions.**

It's long past time to expand Alberta's carbon levy program to force **real** environmental improvements. Phased in over four years, Alberta will move from levying on intensity emissions (emissions relative to economic output) to actual emissions (what is actually released into our environment).



### **Use carbon levy to finance environmental innovation, Green Transportation Fund.**

Carbon levy funds will be reinvested in the environment - by returning 50% of the levy to companies which make improvements that reduce their emissions, and by investing 50% in green transportation such as LRT and other public transportation projects, so that real reductions in emissions can be achieved.



### **Independent monitoring, stiffer penalties.**

The current system in Alberta of industry monitoring industry is completely ineffective. Alberta Liberals will introduce independent monitoring.

# Energy & Environment

## Alberta's Energy Future

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**Alberta's energy industry fuels our prosperity. It has given rise to the highest standard of living in this country.**

For Alberta to continue enjoying that prosperity, government needs to ensure stability and opportunity. Alberta's energy industry needs a government that can champion it abroad, expand its markets, build more value at home, and work with it to ensure long term viability.

That viability is inevitably tied up in its sustainability and reputation abroad. Environmental concerns cannot be ignored, and industry must be good stewards of our natural resources.

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals have a plan to clean up our international reputation and open up our markets - a pragmatic plan that will secure the prosperity our energy industry brings us for years to come.**

## Our Environment

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In Alberta, energy and environment are two sides of the same coin and are not easily separated.

For both the health of our province's environment and the reputation and marketability of our industry, a better approach has to be taken to environmental regulation.

The Alberta Liberals will apply our existing carbon levy to more emissions and harmonize emission standards with the federal government. The money from this program will be split between technological improvements and a green transportation fund.

And we will introduce independent monitoring - ending industry's self policing of pollutants.



# Better Government





**Open Government is Better Government. Open government is accountable, responsive, and directed by the people who elect it. It's time to renew our democracy. It's time for voters - not political parties - to have the power.**

## **Your Community**

Make municipalities full partners with the province .....	29
Create a Municipal Heritage Fund .....	29
Directly fund neighbourhood associations .....	29
Reinstate Community Lottery Boards .....	29

## **Your Representatives**

Reduce the number of MLAs .....	31
Simplify MLA Pay Structure .....	31
Cap transition allowance for MLAs .....	31
Free Votes .....	31
Recall Legislation .....	31
Candidate Leave .....	31

## **Your Democracy**

Instant Run-off Elections .....	32
Open public process for issuing government contracts .....	32
Increase availability of government information .....	32
Fixed election dates .....	32
Disband the Public Affairs Bureau .....	32

# Your Community

## Empowering Local Governments

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For years, Alberta's towns and cities have been far more mature than our provincial relationship with them reflects. It's long past time that municipalities are treated by the province as partners, not children.

As partners, Alberta Liberals believe that municipalities have a right to share in sources of Alberta's wealth that are far more stable than property tax. We need a new deal for cities.

With that new deal comes new funding. The Alberta Liberal Fiscal plan calls for the establishment of a Municipal Heritage Fund in 2014 to begin providing and creating stable, sustainable funding to local governments and creating long term infrastructure solutions.

Just as municipalities need new resources to reflect their expanded role, so do Alberta's community leagues and neighbourhood associations.

We will provide more flexibility to communities including non-partisan distribution of lottery funds and new sources of funding to strengthen community leagues and associations. Depending on the size of your neighbourhood, this could mean tens of thousands of dollars to your community league - a figure that will grow every single year.

**The Alberta Liberals believe the best government is local government, and we will provide the tools to make your municipality and neighbourhood thrive.**

## Providing your neighbourhood with the resources you need to make a difference.

Neighbourhoods today are the size of the towns of yesterday, so it's only fitting that any increase in municipal powers include a review of the most local form of citizen involvement.

Just as municipalities will benefit from increased authority under the Alberta Liberal plan, neighbourhood associations are also benefit in a big way. The Municipal Heritage Fund will provide funding to municipalities, but a portion will also go to neighbourhood associations - allowing your community to pay for the local projects that are important to you.

This per capita funding will increase as the size of the fund grows, providing sustainable, predictable funding for projects such as parks, beautification, community centres - whatever you and your neighbours deem a priority.



### Draft City Charters.

Calgary and Edmonton are large urban areas with special needs. Alberta Liberals will work with them to draft the City of Calgary Act and the City of Edmonton Act, giving them the powers they need to tackle their own unique challenges



### Create a Municipal Heritage Fund.

As our revenue situation improves under the Alberta Liberal fiscal plan, a portion of increasing resource revenues will be allocated to a number of funds in addition to the Heritage Fund, including a Municipal Heritage Fund to provide stable reliable funding for our local governments.



### Directly fund neighbourhood associations.

In towns and cities, sometimes local priorities are too small to be noticed and addressed. By directly funding neighbourhood associations provincewide with 25% of the Municipal Heritage Fund's earnings, we will provide the most local form of citizen participation with the means through which to turn neighbourhood priorities into reality.



### Reinstate Community Lottery Boards.

Lottery money should not be used as a slush fund for government politicians to throw perks around. By reinstating Lottery Boards and removing politicians from the process, spending priorities will reflect the needs of the community.



## Neighbourhood of 4000 People 15 Years of Annual Funding\*

What could your neighbourhood  
do with \$300,000 a year?



\* Based on \$1.5 billion entered into Municipal Heritage Fund and 5% return on investment.

# Your Representatives

## A Liberal MLA is a Local MLA



Alberta Liberals believe your MLA is elected to serve **you**, not his or her Party bosses - and we're backing up that belief with changes to the way the Legislature operates.

Your elected representative should be free to vote according to **your** wishes without the threat of losing perks coming from party leaders.

While MLAs will still be bound to support the platform on which they were elected, Alberta Liberals will change the rules so all other votes free votes.

This will enable MLAs to go to constituents for guidance: first and foremost, a Liberal MLA is a local MLA.

You will also be able to track MLA pay under a simplified pay structure, and initiate a recall of your representative if he or she isn't living up to their role.

And should you decide you wish to run for office yourself, your job will be secure while you run for office.

**Raj Sherman and the Alberta Liberals want you to be able to count on your MLA to serve your community first.**







### **Reduce the number of MLAs.**

Alberta has more MLAs than it needs to provide effective government. Reducing the number of MLAs will save money.



### **Simplify MLA pay structure.**

Cabinet members and MLAs might or might not be over paid, but it's tough to say because MLA pay is a complicated mess of allowances, committee payments, and perks that leave a less-than-clear picture of the total compensation we are providing elected officials. It's time to create a simple, transparent pay structure that makes clearer to Albertans.



### **Cap transition allowance for MLAs.**

Under the current rules, long serving MLAs 'retire' with huge six or seven figure sums to tide them over until they find a new job. Transition allowances will be capped to eight years of service in the Legislature.



### **Free votes in the Legislature.**

Your MLA needs to report to **you**, not his or her Party bosses. Alberta Liberals will remove the authority of political masters over your representative by allowing free votes on all issues except those that parties were elected on.



### **Recall legislation.**

Sometimes four years is too long to wait to pass judgment on MLA behaviour. Alberta Liberals will introduce the ability to recall your MLA after a citizen initiative and a vote by constituents.



### **Candidate leave.**

In a healthy democracy the right to vote must be accompanied by the right to put yourself forward to voters. We will bring forward changes to the labour code to allow Albertans to take unpaid leave to stand as a candidate - and be guaranteed their job when the 28-day campaign is over.

## **Number of constituents per member of the legislature by province**

ON 123364

QC 64000

BC 52941

AB 42528

## **Too many politicians... and not enough reason for them.**

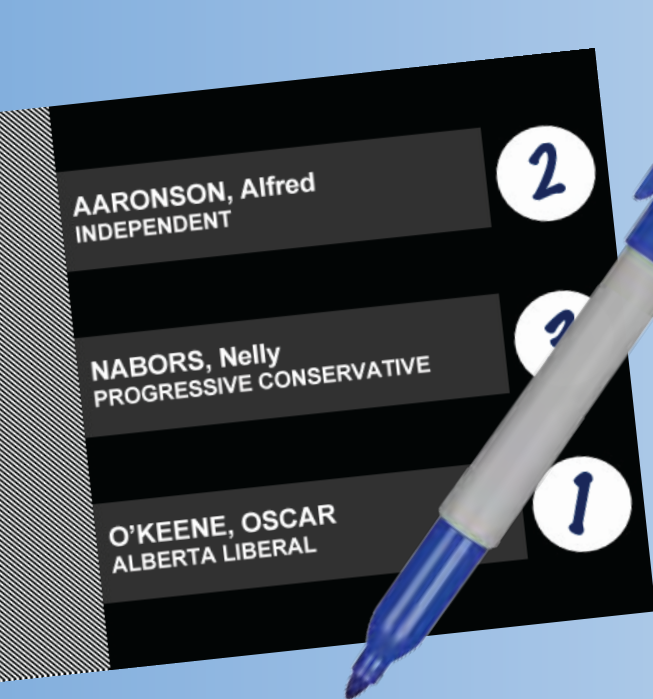
Alberta's Legislature is about to be comprised of 87 MLAs. Ontario, with 9 million more people, has only 107.

In fact, of the four large provinces, Alberta has the fewest number of citizens per MLA.

Simply put, we have a glut of politicians.

Because it's politically easier to add seats than remove them, so that's exactly what happened.

Adding seats is both expensive, and needless, so Alberta Liberals will decrease the number of MLAs to twice the number of MPs, saving money while maintaining the integrity of your right to be competently represented.



## Better democracy is as easy as 1-2-3.

Our current voting system has room for improvement. Right now, it's possible to become an MLA if you only get 30% of the vote - even if you're the last choice of the other 70%.

An instant runoff - or single transferrable vote - election is similar to current elections, but it produces more representative results.

You still vote for your local representative, but instead of marking an X, you also have the option of ranking your choices 1,2,3. As counting continues, 2nd and 3rd choice votes for losing candidates are redistributed, until one candidate has more than 50%.

This method - which we call 1,2,3 - produces results that are more reflective of the actual desires of the voters.

And because the second choice of people suddenly matters a lot more, politics becomes a little more civil.



### **Instant run-off elections.**

Changing our voting system to instant run-off elections makes every vote count, promotes positive campaigns, ensures majority rule... and is dead simple: if voters wish they mark their ballot 1-2-3, if not they simple vote as they always have. Alberta Liberals will introduce instant run-off voting in future elections.



### **Open public process for issuing government contracts.**

Sunlight is the best disinfectant. We will discuss and issue larger government contracts in public committee hearings, so Government Ministers will have to justify their spending decisions and convince the public that they have found the best price - and are providing true value - for Albertans.



### **Increase availability of government information.**

Government can't have secrets from its bosses, the people. For voters to decide whether or not their elected officials are doing a good job, they need the facts. Alberta Liberals will make government expense documents searchable online, and change rules so Albertans can submit five freedom of information requests each year free of charge.



### **Fixed election dates.**

The date we go to the polls shouldn't be a strategic decision so the party in power wins a better election result. Fixed election dates level the playing field between political parties and give voters a better contest.



### **Disband the Public Affairs Bureau.**

The Public Affairs Bureau was created to inform Albertans about the work of their government, but it has morphed into a publicly-funded propaganda arm for the ruling party. It's time to create a new government communications department, free of partisan interests.

# Your Democracy

## Strengthening Your Voice



### **A stronger democracy benefits us all.**

Raj Sherman's Alberta Liberals will return to the citizens of Alberta the power that over the years the current government has claimed for itself.

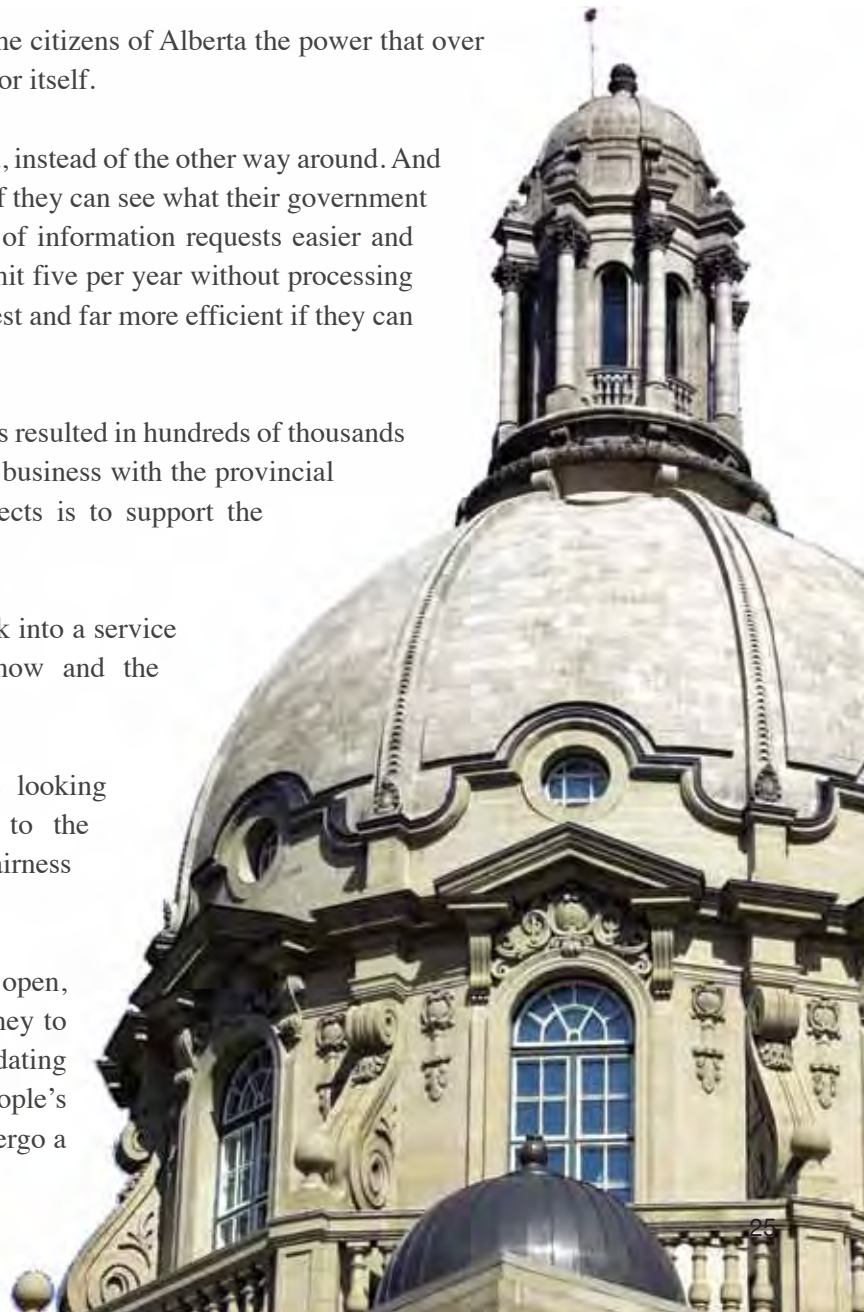
People should be in control of their government, instead of the other way around. And the only way for people to maintain control is if they can see what their government is doing. Alberta Liberals will make freedom of information requests easier and cheaper, with each Albertan being able to submit five per year without processing costs. Albertans will keep the government honest and far more efficient if they can see much deeper inside its workings.

We will end the warlord politics attitude that has resulted in hundreds of thousands of Albertans believing that the only way to do business with the provincial government or secure funding for local projects is to support the governing party.

We will turn government communications back into a service for voters. The People have a right to know and the government has a duty to tell them.

And after many decades of inertia we are looking outward to proven creative improvements to the electoral process that will result in far greater fairness and increased respect for every citizen's vote.

By forcing government activities into the open, ending the practice of Premiers using our money to sell us on their political initiatives, and updating election rules to more accurately reflect people's opinions, we can help civic life in Alberta undergo a refreshing renaissance.





# The Liberal Fiscal Plan





**The Alberta Liberal Party has a fiscal plan that cuts unnecessary expenses and raises revenue from those most able to afford it - eliminating the Conservative Party’s structural deficit and giving us the flexibility to make the critical investments in our future.**

**Revenue**

Progressive tax on people making over \$100,000/year.....36

Raise corporate income tax on larger businesses from 10% to 12%.....36

**Savings**

Terminate carbon sequestration program.....37

Eliminate private school funding.....37

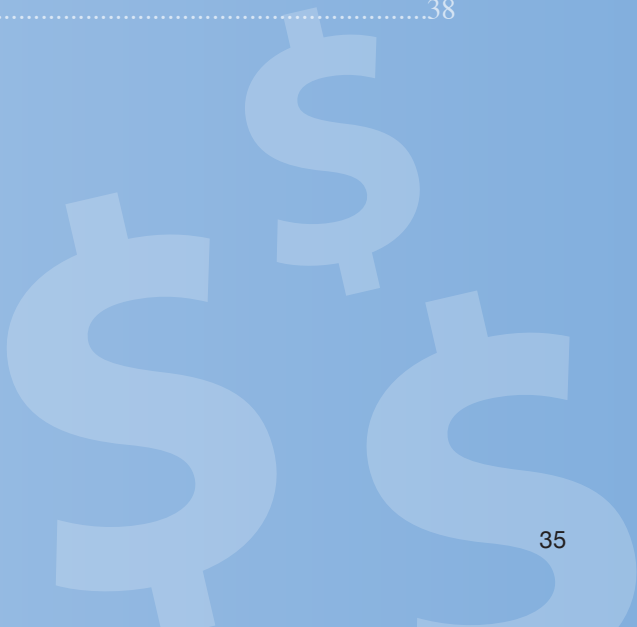
Reduce the number of government departments.....37

Reduce the number of MLAs.....37

Halve amount spent on government communicatons.....37

**Overview**

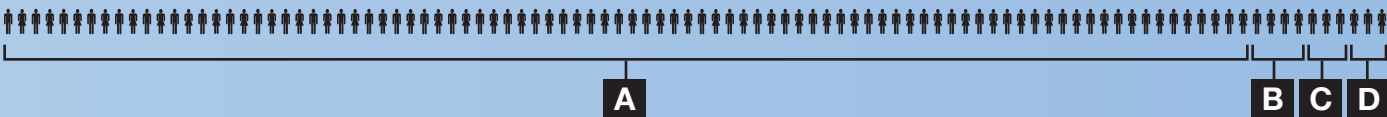
Overview of platform costs, savings, and revenues.....38



# Revenues

## Personal Income: Fair Tax Rates

The Alberta Liberal Party Fiscal Plan will raise marginal revenue on income earned over \$100,000 by introducing a progressive and fair tax. Using Statistics Canada data, it is projected that 90% of income earners would see no tax increase at all. We calculate that this change will bring in ~\$850,000,000 in additional revenue.

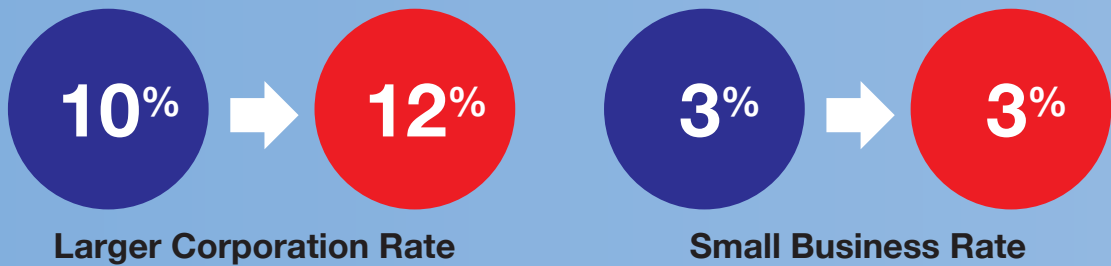


	INCOME LEVEL	RATE	CHANGE	% OF POP.
A	\$0 - \$17,000	0%	(No Change)	90.4%
	\$17,000 - \$100,000	10%	(No Change)	
B	\$100,001 - \$150,000	13%	+3%	5.9%
C	\$150,001 - \$200,000	15%	+5%	1.8%
D	\$200,000 +	17%	+7%	1.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 111-0008.

## Corporate Tax Rate

The base corporate income tax rate of 10% would be increased to 12%. The small business rate will not be affected. It is calculated this change will bring in \$650,000,000 to \$750,000,000 in additional revenue.



# Savings

## Reduced Spending

As well as increasing revenue, the Alberta Liberal Party vision calls for targeted reduction of spending in non-core areas. This money will rebalance the government finances, and pay for investments in our future that we must make today. Averaged over the life of this platform, approximately \$204,000,000/year in savings can be found.

### Terminate carbon sequestration program.

The current government of Alberta has rolled the dice on what it believes to be the solution to carbon emissions. Billions have been spent or set aside for Carbon Capture and Sequestration (CCS) - a technology that pipes excess emissions into the ground. While CCS may ultimately be one of the technologies that helps us reduce emissions, the idea that government will be able to pick the winning technology is unrealistic, and by putting their thumb on the scale, other cheaper and more promising technologies may be left on the side. It is expected that cancelling CCS will save the unallocated **\$500,000,000** balance in the program.

### Eliminate private school funding.

As of last year, Alberta has funded private educational institutions to the tune of **\$127,000,000**. Private schools in Alberta place pressures on our public education system. These exclusive private institutions take critical financial resources away from the public school system. As a result, our children in the public systems suffer. Public funds should not prop up private institutions that compete with public ones. While there is a place for private schools, it is not the job of the people of Alberta to subsidize them. Alberta Liberals will phase out non-special needs funding over five years.

### Reduce number of government ministries.

A reduction and merging of government ministries will result in annual savings of **\$25,400,000**.

### Reduce number of MLAs.

The Alberta Liberal plan to tie the number of MLAs to twice the number of MPs allotted to Alberta will result in a reduction of legislators and constituency offices, and an annual saving of **\$7,000,000** after 2016.

### Halve amount spent on government communications.

The current government funds a Public Affairs Bureau to sell the Alberta public on the job the government is doing. Our plan replaces a propaganda department with a more modest communications department, dedicated to informing Albertans of important government projects. In the process, we estimate a saving of **\$7,100,000**.

**Estimated Revenue:**

**Estimated Savings:**

**Total Improved Situation:**

**\$1,500,000,000 + \$204,000,000 = \$1,704,000,000**

# Overview

Platform Costs (Millions)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Long Term Care Capital Costs	36	36	36	36	36	
Long Term Care Operating Costs		6	12	18	24	30
Home Care - Double Funding	202	202	404	404	404	404
Other Health & Wellness Platform Items	50	100	100	100	100	100
Preschool and Early Childhood Learning		25	75	100	100	100
End School Fees	103	103	103	103	103	103
School Lunch Program	15	15	15	15	15	15
Boost RAP program	10	20	20	20	20	20
Post-Secondary Tuition Reduction	40	40	40	40	40	40
Student Loan Forgiveness (Pre-Fund)	15	30	45	45		
Alberta Teachers Tax Credit	16	16	16	16	16	16
Government Language Phone line	25	25	25	25	25	25
Expand Settlement Programs	20	30	30	30	30	30
50% Boost to ESL School funding	20	35	56	56	56	56
Adult ESL (Mobile/Internet development)	5	10	15	20	20	20
Intensify Foreign Credential Funding	5	10	10	10	10	10
Alberta Amateur Sport (Pre-Fund)	10	15	25	25	25	
Visual & Performing Arts	29	58	58	58	58	58
Centre for Energy Innovation	5	10	10	10	10	10
Additional and Unannounced Platform Items	50	50	50	50	50	50
<b>TOTAL PLATFORM COST</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>1,142</b>	<b>1,087</b>



Revenues and Expense Reductions (Millions)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Additional Corporate Tax	650	722	809	858	884	897
Additional Personal Tax	856	910	974	1,003	1,018	1,026
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL INCOME</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>1,632</b>	<b>1,783</b>	<b>1,861</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>1,923</b>
Terminate CCS Program	500					
Eliminate Private School Funding	25	51	76	102	127	127
Reduce the Number of Government Departments	25	25	25	25	25	25
Reduce the Number of MLAs	0	0	0	7	7	7
Halve Amount Spent on Government Comms	7	7	7	7	7	7
<b>TOTAL SPENDING REDUCTIONS</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>167</b>
Government Projected Surplus/Deficit	(886)	952	5193	...	...	...
Government Projections Revised to Market Expectations	(1386)	(1068)	2793	...	...	...
Alberta Liberal Planned Surplus/Deficit	22	(188)	3540	...	...	...

Positive trend lines to revenue are reduced by 50% each year after 2016 to account for increased uncertainty.

Carbon levy and green transportation funding are not included, as they are revenue neutral.

Due to revenue neutral and earmarked nature of program, carbon levy and technology/green transportation fund not listed. After 4 year phase-in, the levy will return (est.) \$1.8 billion annually for investment in clean environment technology and green transportation.

Government revenue projections in the 2012 Budget are reliant on a WTI price significantly above market projections. Alberta Liberal Party revised projections are based on the current average future prices and provide a more realistic revenue outlook.

Figures in chart are in addition to current provincial spending.







The 2012 Election Platform from the  
**Alberta Liberal Party**

