

**Manitoba Liberal Party**

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# Strong Families Healthy Communities

**PLATFORM 2011**



# A Message from Jon Gerrard

## Fellow Manitobans,

This election is about our future. It is about building strong families and healthy communities.

The wealth and the prosperity of our province depend on entrepreneurs who build businesses and those who staff them, providing products and services for Manitobans and the rest of the world. The wealth thus created provides the social supports that enable our children to be well educated, allows us universally available health care, and gives us the means to be good stewards of our province and our environment.

Our Liberal platform strengthens this economic base, both in our private sector as well as in our all-important public sector crown corporations such as Manitoba Hydro, which generate wealth.

We will position Manitoba for the future by ensuring rapid transit for Winnipeg, and a water management system for Manitoba that will better protect farmers and decrease flooding. Our platform will promote the research and development that will build the businesses and produce the products and services of the future.

At the same time, Manitoba Liberals are addressing major weaknesses, including low graduation rates in our education system, problems in Child and Family Services, long waits in for health care, and steep declines in the water quality of our lakes and rivers, particularly our magnificent fresh-water sea, Lake Winnipeg.

Manitobans are cost conscious. We believe that every dollar must be used wisely, but we also believe that high quality is essential. Our objective is to move from the present lower quality, high cost model to a Liberal model that combines high quality with improved cost management.

Our province has extraordinary potential that lies not only in our natural resources, but even more in our people — in our creative entrepreneurs and our diligent workers. This potential is increased by the diversity within our borders, by our ability to build on the traditions of our First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples, as well as our immigrants, who assist us as we reach out around the world to trade and prosper.

I hope you will support our Liberal candidates as the best option for the future of Manitobans.



Leader  
Manitoba Liberal Party

Dr. Jon Gerrard believes that education makes all the difference. He has shared his passion for learning with students of all ages throughout Manitoba.



# Education: An Investment in Youth

## Helping our young people succeed

Nothing is more important for Manitoba's future than the education of its people. Yet our province continues to have the highest or second-highest high school drop-out rate in Canada. According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), only 55.8% of students in low income neighbourhoods, including those in Winnipeg's inner city, graduate from high school.

Drop-out rates are even higher in parts of eastern Manitoba. In some First Nations, as along the east side of Lake Winnipeg, drop-out rates may approach 90%.

In some areas, drop-out rates may relate to the long distances — up to two-and-a-half hours each way by school bus — that students must travel to high school. Along the east side of Lake Winnipeg, the absence of a local high school means that students must move away from their home communities to continue their education. Clearly, Manitoba's education system too often fails to respond to the needs of Aboriginal youth, the fastest-growing segment of our population.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Offer local distance education alternatives in remote communities.
- Provide affordable broadband access throughout Manitoba.
- Develop more technical and vocational training programs.
- Expand cooperative education and apprenticeship options.
- Expand advance placement options, especially in rural Manitoba.
- Focus on areas where drop-out rates are highest to improve the graduation rate.
- Adopt an integrated approach to truancy issues.
- Promote music, theatre, dance, visual arts and sports and recreation.
- Develop 'The Leadership in Education Plan' which provides incentives to stay in school.

We need to engage students who have the willingness and capacity to succeed, give them the tools they need for post-secondary education and training, and equip them for our ever-evolving society.

We must support rural and urban schools equally by improving access to courses and specialized programs in all our schools with the use of modern technology.

All students can learn. We must build upon the best practices developed in Manitoba and elsewhere to improve our schools and our students' educational achievements.



# 'If we teach today the way we were taught yesterday,

## Education for the future

Education is about creating well-rounded students who know their strengths. It is also about preparing students for future opportunities. We must achieve a better balance between teaching basic fundamental skills and teaching the skills that students will need to adapt to the future.

## Engaging students

Each child is different, and learns at a different speed. Adapting to that reality will help create well-rounded students who know their strengths.

We must promote leadership in order to engage students. They must learn to be proactive, creative, organized, ethical team players who can set goals and communicate well.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Support local schools in their efforts to improve curriculums and instruction and to better develop staff.
- Recognize student leadership approaches to increase graduation rates and dramatically reduce behaviour issues.
- Facilitate provincewide strategies to raise both school and student performance scores.
- Provide inexpensive broadband access to every community in Manitoba.

Manitoba Liberals  
recognize that  
teachers and  
school boards  
are our front line  
partners in  
educating the  
Manitobans  
of tomorrow.



## Support for post-secondary education: we must do better

For more than a century, Manitoba's post-secondary education institutions have played a crucial role in preparing Manitobans for life and work.

The University of Manitoba is committed to provide access to education, even at a risk to its national ranking. It needs better support to retain students, support its outstanding research and development and deal with its crumbling infrastructure.

University of Winnipeg President Lloyd Axworthy has developed this urban university as a full participant in the surrounding community. The U of W's core of highly educated people is making a dramatic difference in the inner city.

We must adapt  
to the needs of  
students in the  
21<sup>st</sup> century.



# we aren't preparing students for today or tomorrow.' – John Dewey, education reformer

Brandon University, University College of the North, Université de St. Boniface, Red River College, Assiniboine College and Canadian Mennonite University all have areas of particular excellence and serve not just the students, but the larger community.

Community colleges educate and train students for the modern world, but for some courses, waiting lists are far too long. The University College of the North has been slow to introduce programs into northern communities, as seen with the midwifery program at Norway House.



At Red River College in 2010, wait times for welding courses were six years and for nursing four years.

These delays meant delays in working and earning, often forcing students to leave Manitoba. We need to end these wait times.

## **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Collaborate with all post-secondary institutions to create exciting, 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning environments.
- Remove payroll tax on publicly funded universities and colleges to deal with crumbling infrastructures.
- Commit to tuition increases at no more than the rate of inflation.
- Put more resources towards research and invest more in scholarships and bursaries.
- Commit to working with Red River College to reduce wait times.
- Develop specialized programs for rural and northern communities.
- Focus on cooperative education, apprenticeship and training, allowing businesses to look at students who might be potential employees and linking education to the practical needs of the province.
- Develop and subsidize UPASS: integrated with student tuition as each year begins, this transit pass transforms a student's ID into a bus pass.

For more than a century, Manitoba's post-secondary education institutions have played a very important role in preparing Manitobans for life and work.

### **Support post-secondary students: we must do better**

Manitoba Liberals will support students attending post-secondary institutions with **5 critical programs:**

- 1** Beginning in grade 4, provide credits to be used at the post-secondary level. Students with the maximum number of credits will have the full costs of post-secondary education tuition covered in the first year and half or more of the second year.
- 2** Advance the present 40% rebate on tuition provided for students staying in Manitoba so that those in need receive up to 20% of post-secondary tuition on their initial entry, and the balance monthly, based on satisfactory attendance and grades.
- 3** Revise the Manitoba student loan program to make it more inclusive and provide for principal and interest payments on student loans to be deducted from income tax on income earned following graduation.
- 4** Improve funding for apprenticeship and cooperative education programs.
- 5** Improve funding for graduate student scholarships to double graduate student numbers over a four-year period.

We must focus on apprenticeships that match skills with the needs of Manitoba employers. Though there are people in rural and northern communities who want to work, industries in these areas continue to rely on imported labour. We must develop centres of excellence in rural and northern Manitoba to match the need for labour with community needs, such as better housing and infrastructure.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG  
CONTINUING EDUCATION

### **Support life-long learning: we must do better**

Manitoba has a surprisingly high rate of illiteracy. Adult learners need more opportunities for training, particularly in the area of basic language skills.

It is never too late to educate, but access to education and training is difficult in some places and does not always match the needs of Manitoba's employers.

#### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Invest more resources in adult literacy programs and training opportunities.
- Increase transition programming and credentialing for new immigrants.
- Better link adult and continuing education to improve post-secondary education.
- Support teachers by ensuring that their pensions include annual cost-of-living increases.

With today's rapid advancements in knowledge, Manitoba needs to pay more attention to the development of lifelong learning.

# We MUST do better.

## Invest in early childhood education and child care

Early childhood is the most important part of life, a crucial time that later assists with school, in society and at work. Early childhood programs can be integrated into the education system to help ensure that all children are ready to begin school. We must ensure that parents are provided with more opportunities for child care and early childhood education.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Incorporate optional, accessible early childhood programs into public schools.
- Increase early childhood education spaces and hire more child care professionals.
- Recognize that the public school system can provide a physical infrastructure for early childhood education in terms of building space and sharing of some services.
- Ensure that learning disabilities and FASD are better diagnosed and recognized.
- Ensure that where early childhood education programs partner with the public school system, the concept of 'learning through play' remains the primary focus of a young child's day.



Today, almost 70% of mothers of children under two years of age, and 85% of mothers of children between six and 15 are working. According to the Canadian Pediatric Society, only 20.6% of Manitoba children under five have a regulated child care space.

## The Manitoba Katimavik Youth Corps

The Manitoba Katimavik Youth Corps would bring youth together to work on common projects and learn about one other. Working in partnership with young people, the private sector and community groups, this corps would give our young people hope and understanding and the opportunity to participate in social and environmental services around our province.

Aimed at those under 25, whether high school drop outs or university graduates, whether lifelong Manitobans or new residents, the corps would give participants a greater appreciation of Manitoba's communities and develop lifelong skills.

We will commit to initiating this program in the first year and building in future years.

## Work to end bullying in schools

One in seven children has been either a victim or a bully, according to *Bullying at School*, by Dan Olweus. Moreover, 60% of children characterized as severe bullies in grades 6 to 9 had at least one criminal conviction by age 24, and 35 to 40% had three or more convictions.

Manitoba Liberals will work with school boards and schools across Manitoba to ensure strong anti-bullying policies, and continue education about violence, racism, gender equality, anti-homophobia, and sexual exploitation as children move beyond primary school.

# Health Care

Today, the very future of health care is threatened. Clearly, the status quo is not an answer.

## Rebuilding our health care system

Over the past decade, poor management has increasingly denied Manitobans high quality health care when they need it. Combined with deteriorating outcomes, issues of patient safety, spiralling costs and an increasing lack of trust, this is nothing short of a crisis. Manitoba Liberals, under Dr. Jon Gerrard, have a real vision for our health care system. We can get it working again.

Central to our plan is making wellness a top priority; if Manitobans are healthier, the demand for health care will decrease, allowing funding to be spent where it is really needed. Addressing preventable diseases like diabetes must be any government's top priority, for studies have shown that it would save billions of dollars.

The **5 fundamental principles** of Canada's health care system are that it must be:

- |                  |               |                          |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1) universal     | 2) accessible |                          |
| 3) comprehensive | 4) portable   | 5) publicly administered |

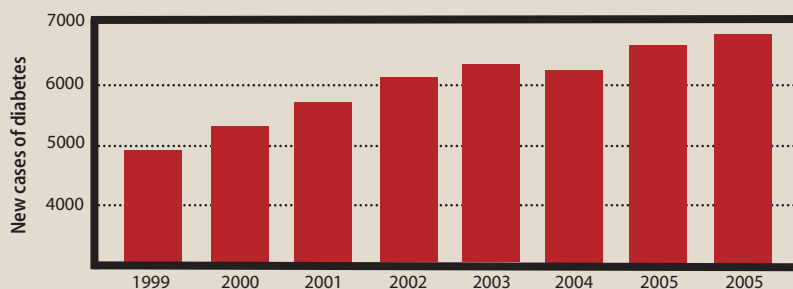
Manitoba Liberals would legislate a sixth principle; our health care system must also be accountable. Liberals would end global budgets for Regional Health Authorities and focus resources and efforts where they are needed — on the front lines.

## Improve the health of Manitobans: reducing and preventing illness

We will focus first on improving health by preventing diabetes, FASD, dental caries, and on better prenatal health and screening newborns.

### Diabetes

Diabetes is becoming epidemic. Its effects include blindness, heart and kidney disease, all of which increase our health care costs.



Just a one to two per cent reduction in risk factors for diabetes could save the Manitoba economy up to 3.5 billion in direct health care costs' — September 2010

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Make diabetes a public health priority.
- Follow the lead of Dr. Heather Dean and her team at Children's Hospital (see at left).
- Develop a program to educate all Manitobans about the disease and strengthen links between healthy living and reversing diabetes.

After showing how adolescents with Type 2 diabetes could be identified, Dr. Dean proved that just two weeks in a camp with good nutrition and good exercise could reverse the diabetes identifiers. In short, she demonstrated that Type 2 diabetes can be reversed with a healthy lifestyle.



# Our Most Basic Right

## Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Each child born with FASD is estimated to cost taxpayers as much as \$2 million over his or her lifetime.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Reinstatement of the FASD registry and make this disease a reportable condition.
- Dedicate more resources to improve diagnosis, treatment and counselling.
- Ensure that FASD warning labels are put on all alcohol products sold in Manitoba.
- Put a higher priority on solutions to reduce FASD.
- Implement programs proven to effectively prevent FASD, and monitor, report and assess outcomes monthly.



## Pre-natal Care

Manitoba has Canada's second-worst infant mortality rate, and one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy. Specialized treatment for infants is among the most complicated care.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Develop a provincewide prenatal plan, with increased health education in schools.

## Newborn Screening

Manitoba lags behind other provinces in newborn screening for many conditions.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

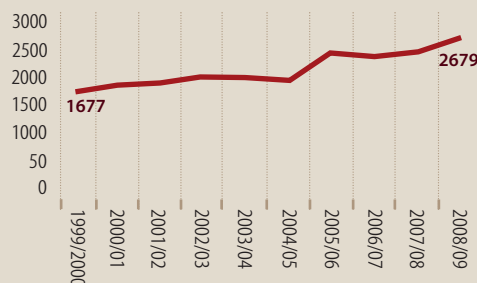
- Introduce legislation to bring in universal newborn hearing screening.
- Ensure that Manitoba becomes one of the best places in North America for newborn screening, not only for hearing, but for other inherited conditions.

## Dental Caries

Surgeries for dental caries in infants and young children have increased over the past decade.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Work with RHAs and First Nations to decrease dental caries in infants.
- Introduce a single, provincewide price for milk, to ensure that milk is affordable.

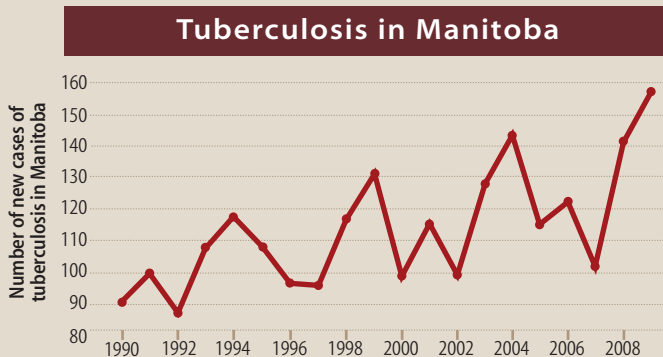


Dental caries, or tooth decay, is often found in children who are allowed to fall asleep with sweetened liquids in a baby bottle, or fed sweetened liquids several times a day. Dentists sometimes refer to this as 'baby bottle tooth decay'.

# Health Care

## Tuberculosis

In 2003, Manitoba Liberals warned the government that failure to combat tuberculosis would be dangerous. Today, the disease has skyrocketed in northern communities and is rising everywhere.



### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Aggressively fight tuberculosis with drug therapies.

## Increase access to family doctors

Liberals have long been committed to increasing access to family doctors.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Set targets to increase the proportion of our citizens with access to a family physician and work with doctors to provide longer hours of care.
- Implement the use of electronic records and communication to speed access to and ensure accuracy of health care.
- Provide Manitoba medical students with loan subsidies if they commit to practicing initially in Manitoba.
- Ensure same day access to family doctors during weekdays.

## Fix emergency room care

Emergency rooms are the hubs that bring together access to acute care and general hospital care, to nurses, physicians and specialists.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Create 24-hour urgent care centres adjacent to main emergency rooms.
- Increase personal care home spaces to eliminate the need for the aged to be in ERs.
- Integrate effective care for those with mental health issues and addictions.
- Implement full electronic records for hospitals and ERs to speed access to and ensure accuracy.
- Put more nurse practitioners and doctors into ERs and work to improve staff morale.
- Work to speed registration and identification of ER patients.

Getting emergency rooms working is fundamental to improving health care delivery in Manitoba.

# Improving our Approach

An improved Pharmacare program will speed access to effective new drugs and more quickly remove those proven to be ineffective or even harmful.



## Improve the quality of care and eliminate medical errors

Too often, high cost and poor quality go together, thanks to medical errors, duplication and waste.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- End global budgets for RHAs and base funding on front line services delivered.
- Create a Quality Council to implement best practices and standards.
- Investigate medical errors and institute standards to prevent them from being repeated.
- Introduce mandatory reporting of medical errors.
- Accelerate the implementation of electronic medical records.

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## Improve Pharmacare

There are many problems with our present Pharmacare program. Correcting these problems requires a combination of better access to a wide variety of prescription drugs and a system for monitoring where drugs are being prescribed and used.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Act quickly to add new, effective, approved drugs to our provincial Pharmacare system.
- Ensure timely and effective removal of drugs from support under Pharmacare where they have not been shown to be effective or to cause more harm than good.
- Work toward the right balance between cost to the province and cost to the individual for drugs under Pharmacare.
- Assess the actual use of expensive drugs, to ensure that cost does not prohibit an individual from using a needed drug.
- Approve the use, under Pharmacare, of oral cancer medications, something that will save considerable costs for patients; will be more convenient for patients; and will save some hospital and clinical costs.

**Manitoba Liberals will support a national catastrophic drug program.**

# Health Care for the Future

## Improve mental health care

Too often people with brain issues or mental health problems live in terrible conditions with poor diet and inadequate support.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Develop a screening program for depression and institute care that addresses the problems of isolation and poor nutrition, among others.
- Put resources into better living conditions for people with mental health issues.
- Develop an integrated treatment for addictions and mental health issues.

## Reduce wait times across Manitoba

Stories are legion about our citizens who have waited for diagnosis, treatment and surgery.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Create a Wait Times Standards Council to establish provincial standards, focusing on patient needs rather than on systems limits.
- Create an arms-length Enforcement Council with the authority to order treatment elsewhere if wait times exceed the Manitoba standard.
- Create a Manitoba Patient Bill of Rights with a legally enforceable guarantee to ensure that these improvements are available for future generations.

## Improve elder care

We must improve the quality and cost of services to seniors, the fastest growing segment of Manitoba's population.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Invest in Alzheimer's and dementia research.
- Institute effective provincial standards for care in personal care homes and monitor health outcomes.
- Assess the need for additional, affordable personal care homes, recognizing the need for care homes for immigrant groups with specific cultural practices for elder care.
- Offer increased tax credit support to families to care for their relatives.
- Make it easier to qualify for home care and provide more home care resources.

Manitoba Liberals understand that reducing wait times must be a top priority in order to improve care and reduce costs.





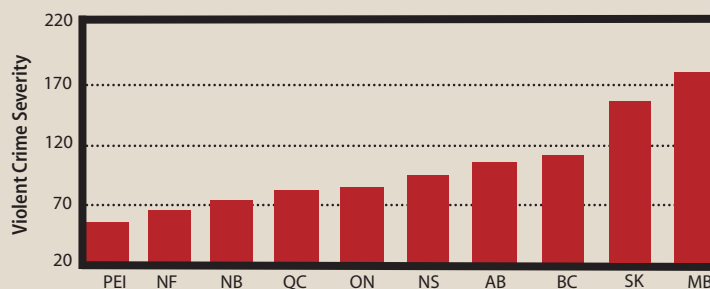
# Justice and Safety

## Escalating crime in Manitoba must stop

Manitoba's record on dealing with crime and in particular violent crime is appalling. Manitoba Liberals believe that those who commit crimes must face punishments that are swift and appropriate. Too often those who commit crimes are released, or have their sentences significantly reduced, because the system has taken too long to deal with them.

But Manitoba Liberals also believe that a long term solution for effectively dealing with crime must be rooted in a sound understanding of the causes of criminal activity, so that these issues can be dealt with head on.

Violent Crime Severity by Province in 2009



To tackle its rising crime rate (and ease the strain on its law courts, below, and jails), Manitoba needs a strong, effective approach to lawlessness.

## Tough on crime — Smart on solutions

Manitoba Liberals believe in a multi-faceted approach to reducing crime and improving safety in our homes and on our streets.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

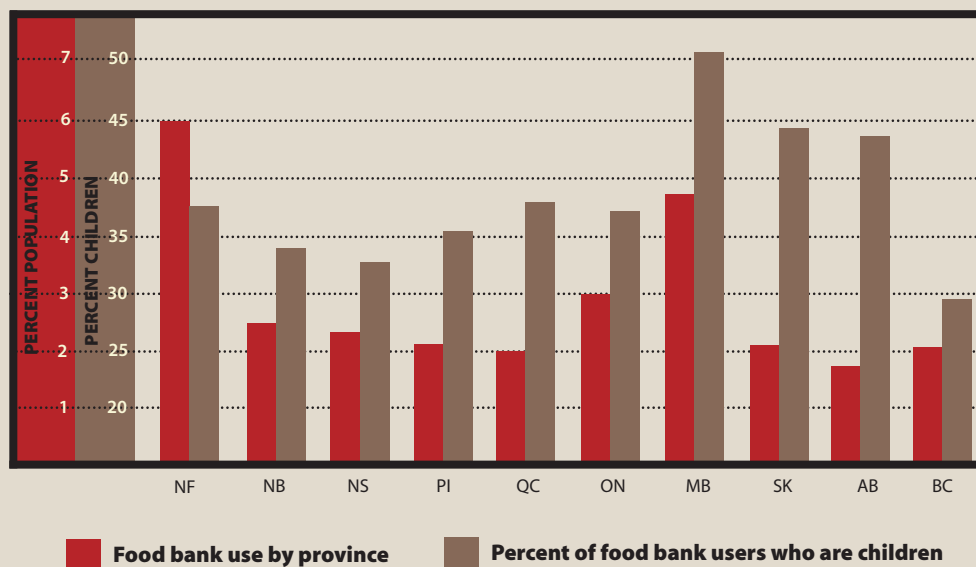
- Develop an effective FASD strategy, including increased resources for education, prevention and diagnosis.
- Implement a dedicated gang strategy in collaboration with law enforcement in our cities and rural communities.
- Use a community-based approach to crime, utilizing more police cadets where feasible and expanding the use of community Youth Justice Committees.
- Initiate collaboration between public schools and local community clubs to ensure that positive activities for youth are available in the evenings, on weekends and throughout school breaks.
- Create a more responsive justice system, including more judges and crown prosecutors, increases to legal aid and funding for a Mental Health Court.
- Better fund and expand effective treatment for addictions and mental health issues. This will include developing more addiction and therapy resources.

# Strengthening our Society

'Our society is only as strong as its weakest member.'

— Dr. Jon Gerrard

In 2010, more Manitobans — almost 5% of our population — used food banks than citizens of any other province except Newfoundland and Labrador. And of those who depended on food banks, more than 50% were children, by far the largest percentage in Canada. Food bank use has increased largely because support for our social programs has stagnated, causing social assistance to fall behind the cost of living.



To some, the situation may seem hopeless, but Manitoba Liberals are ready with plans and policies to deal with today's challenges.

## Breaking down barriers to employment

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Restructure Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) programs to enhance return to work options (e.g. access to a basic phone line).
- Increase the income tax threshold for earnings and reduce the marginal tax rate.
- Support homeowners who need social assistance to maintain home ownership.
- Exempt scholarships and bursaries from taxable income of EIA recipients.

## Minimum wage

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Review and adjust the minimum wage every four years, based on the provincial Consumer Price Index.
- Develop a loan fund for small business startups and ensure EIA recipients are not penalized for participating.
- Initiate a skills training strategy to assist with the success of these new businesses.

An average family of four in Manitoba pays **\$2,317** more in taxes than it would in Saskatchewan.



# Addressing Poverty

## Social services funding

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Commit to multi-year funding for social services organizations.
- Assist with retaining employees with competitive salaries and benefits.
- Improve efficiencies by sharing services (accounting, advertising etc) and infrastructures.

## A basic right to food and housing

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Apply the Habitat to Humanity template to our Home Renovations Program, allowing people to assist with renovations and home ownership.
- Develop a housing strategy to provide affordable housing and reduce homelessness.
- Support a universal price for milk across Manitoba.

Below: Innovative planning can be seen at the Family and Community Wellness Centre on the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation near Thompson.



## Community gardens and food cooperatives

### Manitoba Liberals will:

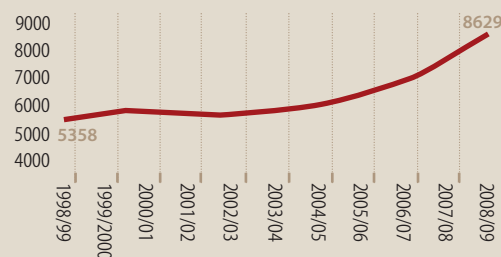
- Support community gardens, cooperative buying from local farmers and the central delivery of fresh produce.
- Encourage grocers to support people in need and Manitobans to provide transport to local markets.

## Building families and supporting children

For years, Liberals have called for major changes in the child welfare system. Children must be protected first, but that protection can be significantly improved.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Focus on reunification of families and better support foster families.
- Reduce the caseloads of Child and Family Service workers and improve communication.
- Assist parents with faster access to addictions and anger management counselling.
- Explore ways in which children are not necessarily the ones taken from troubled homes. Removing a parent can allow a child's life to continue in a relatively undisturbed manner while living at home.



The number of children in provincial care in Manitoba rose by more than half — from 5,389 to 9,120 — between 1999 and 2010. Better planning and new ideas can reverse this trend, securing the futures of hundreds of children.

# Boosting our Economy

Manitobans deserve better economic leadership. Innovation, new ideas, new products and new services are vital for Manitoba companies to advance and prosper. Our government must provide responsible leadership to build that success.

Our government must also work with the business community to develop more effective marketing approaches.

## Underwater hydro lines the way of the future

Manitoba is blessed with bountiful hydro-electric power. But the construction of a new high-voltage transmission line from dams in Northern Manitoba to customers in the south has been the subject of great controversy. To date, proposals have been put forward for land lines down the west side or the east side of Lake Winnipeg. No one has looked seriously at the possibility of putting the line UNDER the lake, though underwater lines are used in many places (see information at left).

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Promote the viability of a future underwater transmission line, as well as the research and exploration of this technology, so long as it is feasible and affordable to do so.
- Develop a long-term plan for Manitoba Hydro into the next decade with more accountability for and input from Manitobans.
- Expand our energy infrastructure, using clean, renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal.

## Long-term solutions to flooding and water management

With Manitoba's vast number of lakes and rivers, and its position at North America's low central heartland, we have an urgent need to find viable, long-term solutions to water management and flooding.

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Focus on reclaiming wetlands, on innovative research and development and on implementing a provincewide water management system that will be the most innovative in the world.
- Ensure no net loss of wetlands, develop a water management program that will financially support projects to create wetlands and balance the present emphasis on drainage.

### Underwater hydro transmission makes sense in Manitoba

In Europe, the NorNed Line runs under the North Sea from Norway to the Netherlands, a distance of 580 kilometres. And here in North America, a 536-kilometre line running under Lake Champlain and along the bed of the Hudson River is being considered to transport hydroelectric energy from Quebec to New York.

Manitoba Liberals will work to find solutions to the devastating flooding that hit many parts of the province in 2011.

This included the farmland adjacent to the Hoop and Holler Bend on the Assiniboine River, below, which was breached to ease flooding elsewhere.

Other water management issues include drought and the lack of clean drinking water that plagues many northern communities.



# Valuing Innovation

Innovation is central to improving productivity and the key to how our high wage economy can compete globally. We believe Manitoba has the potential to be a leader in many areas.

## **Manitoba Liberals will:**

### **Transportation and infrastructure**

- Invest in an effective rapid transit system for Winnipeg. This is a key component of growth for our provincial capital.
- Improve roads and highways with investments in research and construction.
- Continue to support the development of Centreport.
- Move quickly on the feasibility of Winnipeg and Manitoba as a centre for the development of new technology such as the aerospace industry, and alternative transport methods to northern and remote communities.
- Review funding to municipalities in order to provide a stable transfer of dollars and quality standards for infrastructure and maintenance.

### **Environmental industries**

- Revise the Sustainable Development Fund funding to focus on research partnerships with the universities and industry to develop new products and services.

### **Research and development**

- Establish a Manitoba Science and Engineering Research Council to stimulate research.

- Establish a Small Business Investment Research Program to provide grants to facilitate the commercialization of technologies developed here.
- Enhance access to broadband services throughout Manitoba.
- Work collaboratively with the business community to better attract investment.

### **Tourism**

- Initiate a Tourism Infrastructure Fund to promote partnerships with municipalities, local businesses and public organizations.
- Establish Lowlands National Park and a World Heritage Corridor centred at the International Peace Gardens.

### **Entertainment and digital media**

- Support sustainable increases in culture and heritage funding.
- Work to enhance and build the digital media industry in Manitoba.

Manitoba has long been a leader in air and ground transportation. The Liberals will invest in renewing and expanding this legacy, once again making our province a crucial transportation hub and a centre of technology.



# Manitoba's First Nations,

## **Jordan's Principle**

Five-year-old Jordan River Anderson was a child from Norway House First Nation who suffered from Carey Fineman Ziter Syndrome, a rare muscular disorder that required years of medical treatment. After spending the first two years of his life in a Winnipeg hospital, doctors felt he could return home. Jordan waited for two more years in hospital, while federal and provincial governments argued over who was paying for what services. Sadly, Jordan died without ever having had the opportunity to return home.



## **Manitoba's First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples**

In the 141 years since Manitoba became a province, Aboriginal people have often suffered.

Today, while many First Nations, Métis and Inuit people with university degrees achieve considerable success, those without an education all too often live in poverty. In addition, Aboriginal citizens are plagued with preventable health conditions like FASD and diabetes, and also make up a high proportion of the people in Manitoba's jails. Clearly, there need to be fundamental changes to our approach.

## **Consultation and collaborative decision making**

Manitoba Liberals support the right to consultation provided to Aboriginal people under the Canadian constitution.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Establish a consultations office to scrutinize all government departments and ensure a strong Aboriginal voice in provincial decision making.
- Involve First Nations, Métis and Inuit Manitobans in the decisions required in the move toward equalizing government services.
- Fully implement Jordan's Principle (see left).

## **Health issues**

Aboriginal communities have been significantly affected by skyrocketing rates of FASD, tuberculosis and diabetes.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

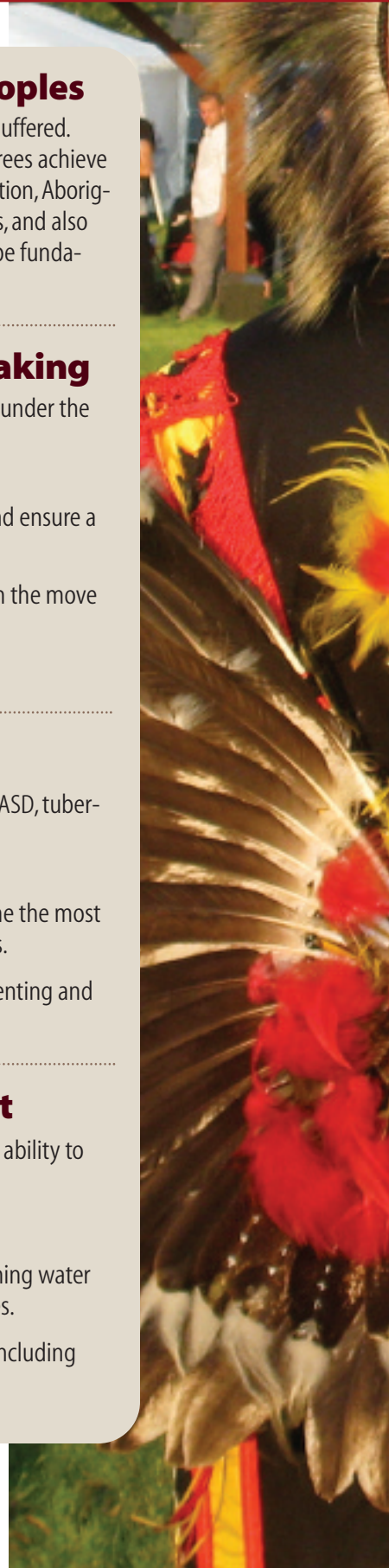
- Undertake research, in partnership with Aboriginal Manitobans, to determine the most effective community-based approaches for the prevention of those illnesses.
- Establish a provincial diabetes centre to ensure provincial standards in preventing and treating the disease.

## **Community economic development**

Hiring Aboriginal staff is good business and can significantly enhance a company's ability to sell products or services to Aboriginal communities.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Work to ensure that improved community services such as roads, clean running water and good quality sewage systems are available in all Aboriginal communities.
- Continue efforts to build entrepreneurship among Aboriginal Manitobans, including support for small business development.



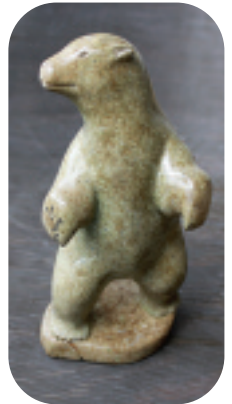
# Métis and Inuit Peoples

## Education

The issues of quality child care, early childhood education and improving graduation rates from grade 12 are significant in many Aboriginal communities.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Ensure access to high quality early childhood education programs, especially in remote communities.
- Collaborate with the Aboriginal community to improve the graduation rate.
- Improve post-secondary options.
- Introduce a provincewide First Nations, Métis and Inuit education fund.



## Justice

Far too many Aboriginal Manitobans are involved with the criminal justice system.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Improve the prevention and diagnosis of disorders such as FASD, which are a leading cause of involvement the criminal justice system.
- Develop more opportunities for access to cultural and recreational activities for children and youth.
- Expand and better coordinate addictions treatment programs.
- Collaborate with Aboriginal communities to minimize youth involvement with gangs.

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## Future governance and sharing resources

Aboriginal people in Manitoba need a stronger voice.

### **Manitoba Liberals will:**

- Enlarge the current legislature to provide four representatives elected solely by Aboriginal Manitobans.
- Initiate discussions about the potential sharing of tax revenues from natural resources.



# Environmental Stewardship



## Manitoba Liberal vision

Manitoba Liberals believe we must be vigorous stewards of our environment. Our vision first is to provide Manitobans with an unparalleled quality of life, with clean air, high quality water, a magnificent natural environment that we treasure and respect, and opportunities for Manitobans and others to enjoy the great outdoors.

Manitoba Liberals realize that we need to improve our approach to caring for and cleaning up our great lakes, to setting and living up to critical greenhouse gas emission targets, and to protecting our environment with effective short term and long term strategies.

Manitoba Liberals are committed to a green economy, a green government, and green communities. We are also committed to improving our lakes and waterways, to sustaining our parks and fisheries, and to contributing to an effective plan for climate change.

## Greening our province

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Introduce a green energy plan.
- Work with Manitoba businesses to build green industries.
- Support initiatives to green research and workplace transportation.
- Commit to being a carbon neutral government within three years.
- Support composting programs in communities across Manitoba.
- Eliminate plastic bags at retail checkouts.
- Support community gardens and local green initiatives such as Peg City Can-Coop.





# Sustainable Development

## Sustaining our natural resources

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Save Lake Winnipeg and all Manitoba lakes and waterways by significantly reducing or eliminating the use of phosphorous in dishwasher detergent, fertilizers, drinking water and sewage treatment.
- Ensure sustainable forestry practices.
- Collaborate with all boreal forest stakeholders to preserve this natural legacy for our children and grandchildren.
- Establish the Lowlands National Park.
- Implement a water management system to address ongoing concerns regarding increasing wet weather in the spring and dry weather in the late summer and fall.
- Tackle the loss of income and employment due to mismanagement of the Lake Winnipegosis fishery.
- Promote mine reclamation research at places such as Lynn Lake and Kississing Lake.
- Implement a Manitoba Climate Change Working Group to construct a real plan for meeting Kyoto targets, focusing on agriculture, transportation and energy efficiency.

Lake Winnipeg stretches to the horizon at Lester Beach. This magnificent remnant of glacial Lake Agassiz is the world's 11<sup>th</sup>-largest and Canada's sixth-largest freshwater lake. Its fishery constitutes a major part of Manitoba's fishing industry, worth about \$30 million annually.

Despite its size, however, Lake Winnipeg is gravely endangered, the result of an overabundance of phosphorous and nitrogen, which pour into the lake from its vast watershed.



# Agriculture and Agribusiness

The agriculture industry plays a key role in our province's prosperity and its future. Manitoba Liberals support government funded, cost-shared incentive programs and will work with producers to seek a major breakthrough in finding effective, long-term water management solutions.

## Water management and water storage

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Support a comprehensive, multi-level government water management strategy, including drainage, water retention and irrigation.
- Improve water management to decrease the risk to farmers from periods of excessive wet or dry weather.
- Introduce legislation to provide farmers with the legal right to drain land zoned for crop production, while retaining crucial wetlands.



Wetlands do more than serve many species of wildlife. They also play a major role in both flood control and drought reduction.

## The cattle industry

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Implement proposals introduced by the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association such as:
  - a provincewide ecological goods and services program;
  - a price and basic insurance program;
  - and testing of beef and cattle products for toxins, hormones and chemical residues to ensure that imports meet Canadian standards.

## Local, family and organic farms

### Manitoba Liberals will:

- Assist producers in marketing locally by reducing bureaucracy and improving transportation systems.
- Collaborate with producers to build effective marketing systems.
- Work with producers to ensure the long term viability of family farms.
- Develop strategies to enable producers to shift to organic farming.



Manitoba Liberals will also work with agriculture researchers to produce food products with improved health benefits for sale at home and abroad.

# Governing with Integrity

The Manitoba Liberal Party, under the visionary leadership of Dr. Jon Gerrard, is the only party with the integrity to ensure the citizens of Manitoba the government they truly deserve. By electing Manitoba Liberals to the next legislature, you will be electing representatives who will be accountable to the people of Manitoba in many ways.

We're committed to governing with integrity and will promote the following principles:

- Institute a new, fairer method of voting, in which voters can vote their preference in order. When no candidate has more than 50% of the vote, such a ballot would allow the transferring of votes from the candidate with the least support to the voter's second choice, until one candidate has more than 50% support. In this way, every MLA would be elected by a majority of those voting in each constituency.
- Ensure more accountability in government by implementing mandatory screening of all appointments to the boards of crown corporations.
- Review the system by which Regional Health Authority boards are appointed and explore the possibility of having a number of representatives on these boards democratically appointed by the citizens of the regions they serve.
- Provide RHAs with greater autonomy and use key performance indicators to hold them accountable to the province.
- Make the operations of government, such as Legislative Chamber debates and Legislative Committee meetings, available on-line to the citizens of Manitoba.

**Manitoba Liberals  
stand for commitment, integrity and trust.**



