



David Karwacki

and the Liberal Team

ReEnergizing Saskatchewan

ReEnergizing Saskatchewan

Platform Document

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"I believe that the people of Saskatchewan are ready for a positive change in government. The Liberal party has a plan to ReEnergize Saskatchewan by creating careers, not just jobs; keeping Saskatchewan a home for our families; and is offering the leadership and the team to make it happen."

– David Karwacki

A Message from David Karwacki Leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party

Saskatchewan is at a crossroads, and is ready for change. Our team of community leaders offers positive change that is forward-looking and exciting.

We have a plan to build the kind of Saskatchewan we all want and value. A place that offers careers, not just jobs to fulfill our ambitions. We can create those careers through a strategic plan, based on building successful, export-driven industry clusters in every region of our province.

Our plan will ensure we build a home for Saskatchewan families. Quality, universal health care. An excellent, publicly-funded education system. Reforming the education portion of the property tax to take the burden off of homeowners and agricultural producers.

Together we will develop our professional civil service and transform our Crown Corporations into the workplace of choice.

We will bring people together. Not create division or tear things apart. Our team and our plan represents the best of a diverse Saskatchewan. I ask for your support this upcoming election to take our province into a brighter future.

David



Courtesy University of Saskatchewan

What is an industry cluster?

The way to create career opportunities is to develop and promote the concept of industry clusters. The development of regional clusters is dependent on three main components, all of which are workable in Saskatchewan.

First, clusters are focused on a leading edge need - such as pollution prevention and environmental clean-up in mining, the need for improved DNA testing techniques for both animals and humans, or medical applications. Secondly, industry clusters usually start with university or college research.

Thirdly, clusters must involve a public and private sector partnership - to provide specialized training, education, research and technical support, and develop a co-ordinated approach to common barriers to success - such as infrastructure needs.

I - Creating Careers, Not Just Jobs

1. A sound economic development plan – creating industry clusters

We believe that Saskatchewan people deserve careers, not just jobs. Careers will keep people here to live, work, and succeed. Careers also make it attractive for people to come to Saskatchewan from around the world.

We know that an industry cluster strategy will help focus Saskatchewan by

- diversifying our traditional economic base;
- sustaining a critical mass of local knowledge workers;
- and building entrepreneurial spirit.

In pursuing an industry cluster strategy we don't always have to go searching for greener pastures where our talent successfully contributes to society elsewhere. We can "attract and build from within" by focusing on our strengths and talents. If we do this well, people will stay, people will come back, and people will invest. But they need higher levels of government to do what they do best – those things they are in a position to do – build a nurturing environment and supportive public infrastructures.

Building industry clusters means:

a) focusing on our strengths :

The emergence of an agri-science cluster and agbiotech sector, one of the largest in North America, builds on our agricultural heritage and agricultural research capacity. Agrifood nutraceuticals, crop advancements and development of new industries such as fibre flax and livestock nutrient additives are recent advances in the agriculture value-added endeavour; it means marrying the Synchrotron to our excellent mining industry, so that we can be world experts in soil and mine site clean up; it means creating a high end furniture and engineered wood industry in our forest sector. Other examples are presented in graphic 1.1:

An example of successful innovation is Kitchener-Waterloo where there is a great degree of regional cooperation for a high technology cluster and high technology investment. Participation of regional technology and business associations is high and there is a strong interaction between university and business. Their focus is on developing strong local engineering and computing strengths and concentrates on knowledge transfer between universities and small business.



Examples of Saskatchewan's Industry Clusters

- Agrifood, Nutraceuticals, and bio-based products
- Agricultural Biotechnology
- Synchrotron Research including micromachining, nanotechnology, medical and pharmaceutical research, materials discovery.
- Finance and Insurance
- Steel and Manufacturing
- Energy
- Information Communication Technology
- Culture and Entertainment
- Manufactured wood products and furniture design

Illustration 1.1

b) ensuring strategic investment in infrastructure:

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that our infrastructure needs to focus on building *strategic transportation corridors* in support of our industrial clusters and knowledge workers. We need to strengthen Regional Transportation Authorities' policy participation so that the regions can determine the best way to invest in strategic infrastructure with limited funds, to build economies, futures and careers. We need to enhance *planning capacity in communities* to take into account the needs of the environment, develop a learning community, and allow all citizens to participate in the knowledge-based economy. The role of the provincial government is to facilitate exchange of ideas and knowledge from around the world; the movement of goods and services to international markets, and the movement of people to and from our markets, customers, and other centres of knowledge. In essence, we need a transportation corridor policy and the community planning capacity to capitalize on opportunities which lead to employment, and careers.

c) a coordinated and cooperative approach:

All levels of government -- the municipal, provincial and federal -- must work in concert to build a cluster, making it necessary for all levels to implement policies to support and facilitate participation by individuals, businesses and society to generate ideas, business, employment and careers.

Saskatchewan Liberals are poised, under new federal government leadership, to leverage federal funds available through the innovation agenda. Innovation means applying the best ideas in a timely fashion to emerging opportunities. This coordinated approach at the municipal and regional levels can be achieved by adopting a more flexible, multi-level governance, so regional planning and initiatives can flourish.

For example, municipal regions are best able to bring together the players for partnerships, undertake land use and development planning, and to work with school boards, band councils, and social service agencies, always taking into account local conditions. Regions must have the capacity to bring together various stakeholder groups in planning and acting. Our REDAs have the visibility and legitimacy to coordinate public (i.e., Government research councils), private (local business associations) and voluntary sectors. In order to help co-ordinate this cluster, the REDAs will be provided seed money to build capacity for a four-year period. Geographic proximity and local champions to spearhead and drive each initiative are key success factors.

Simply put, it means developing public-private partnerships to supply an infrastructure for collaborating, learning, and for investment.



d) tax competitive:

Saskatchewan Liberals will focus on tax competitiveness with other provinces, which is important to idea generation, human capital, and investment. These three ingredients are key to ensure potential is converted to action in critical industry clusters.

e) assisting research and development:

A cluster requires a strong basic research capacity in each relevant discipline. Graduates of the university and technical schools can supply local firms with a steady stream of knowledgeable workers.

Saskatchewan Liberals have proposed a Saskatchewan Foundation for Innovation (SFI). At the moment, the provincial government only funds university-based research and development after the researcher has been awarded a grant by the federal government. SFI will be funded out of a levy on oil and gas royalties and a transfer of the Science and Innovation Fund. By giving Saskatchewan-based researchers seed money earlier on, they can leverage those funds to enhance their chances in obtaining federal funding. It is important to reap the benefits of successful and groundbreaking ideas, and results which produce goods and services for the economy.

f) strong accountability mechanisms:

All government funding partners would issue quarterly statements to ensure accountability and transparency in dispensing any funds.

g) key indicators to benchmark our progress.

The provincial government must facilitate inter-community sharing of experiences, help pilot demonstration projects, and act as a clearing house for best practices. Provincial government Industry and Resources website should not only host provincial best practices, but also international best practices.

h) create and nurture a culture of creativity.

Saskatchewan is known as a place for culture and the arts. It is an important part of a flourishing community. What is important is the openness to new expression and ideas that culture and the arts provides. This openness not only resides and is nurtured in the culture and arts but in other aspects of society of its patrons. An openness to new ideas in business, research and society fosters dynamic and vibrant communities and economies. A great example of a city transformed by a cultural institution is Bilbao, Spain. A branch of the Guggenheim was designed by Frank Gehry, a Canadian-born architect, to help re-invent the city as a cultural cluster. In Saskatchewan, we have examples of cultural centres and artists who have excelled locally, nationally, and internationally.





2. Crowns



“The stark difference between the policies of the two other parties can be summed up very simply: The NDP’s policy is “buy, buy, buy”; the Saskatchewan Party’s policy is “sell, sell, sell”.

The Liberal Party believes that there must be a third way for our Crowns. A Liberal government’s policy will be to “serve, serve, serve” the people of Saskatchewan for the public good.”

The current debate about our Crowns has been characterized by the NDP ideology of buy, buy, buy; and the SaskParty mantra of sell, sell, sell. We have a middle ground, a “third-way” to value our Saskatchewan Crowns: that is to serve, serve, serve the people of Saskatchewan, by driving our industry cluster strategy.

We reject hit lists or vast privatization. And we also reject using our Crowns for gimmicks, publicity stunts and pet projects for government ministers.

Saskatchewan Crowns in the next decade will serve Saskatchewan people in providing products, goods and services at nationally competitive rates, while at the same time address the looming skilled labour shortage in our province. Our Crowns will play a role in fulfilling the public policy objective of developing a skilled workforce in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Liberals are not going to engage in a wholesale sell-off of the provincial Crowns. Instead, we need to use the Crowns strategically. Unfortunately, the way the Calvert NDP have mismanaged the Crowns, they are giving the SaskParty an excuse to sell them off.

Saskatchewan people feel that they have been well-served by their Crown Corporations over the years. In fact, Saskatchewan people are comfortable having government-mandated corporations involved in providing services such as: natural gas, electricity or telephone service that are essentially monopolies.

Saskatchewan Liberals would transform our Crowns through the following actions:

- decision-makers making decisions – good corporate governance
- appointing independent and effective boards of directors
- establishing an independent ombudsman
- creating an independent regulator
- issuing regular financial statements
- convening annual meetings and performance accountability sessions that any shareholder could attend

a) The Need for Good Corporate Governance

The fundamental issues surrounding the Crowns have become clouded with new governance structures and new schemes for their management. Good governance begins and ends with decision-makers actually making decisions. If decision-makers are not prepared to make the tough calls and communicate their decisions through an organization, it doesn’t matter what governance structure you have in place, the structure will not work.



b) *Independent and Effective Boards of Directors*

The first step in moving Crown corporations forward is ensuring that there is a rational decision making process in place. This means taking the politics out of the Crowns, because partisan politics and business do not mix.

Taking partisan politics out of the Crowns can, in part, be accomplished by creating independent boards of directors. The boards of directors, not executive council, must have the ability to hire and fire the CEO. Performance measures must be more than simple platitudes, and these Boards must be held accountable if they are not met.

These boards of directors should also have overlapping terms to provide continuity from government to government. They should consist of 10-12 people with four on each Crown board elected, each from a different region of the province. Elected board members would fulfill their fiduciary duty associated with being a board member and bring further openness and accountability to the table. This is a good first step towards eliminating the cynicism that citizens of Saskatchewan currently hold for the Crown boards.



c) *An Independent Ombudsman*

Another step to depoliticize the Crowns would be the appointment of an independent ombudsman to oversee their operations. This third-party office would be given authority to access all information on the operation of the Crowns, and have the power to impose remedies, levies, and penalties against Crowns that abuse their position.

To ensure that this system does not get bogged down in administrative shell games, specific timelines for responses and the production of information as requested from the Crowns must be enforced, a practice found in many parts of the United States and Canada. If the matter is not dealt with in a specific timeframe, the complaint is deemed valid and remedies are taken. Customers and competitors of Saskatchewan Crown corporations currently have no avenue through which they can appeal the decisions and the actions of Crowns in Saskatchewan. This proposal goes a long-way to addressing those concerns.

d) *An Independent Regulator*

Another method for taking the partisan politics out of Crowns is to set up an office of an independent regulator that reports directly to the Legislature.

In a free market there are two ways to ensure that goods and services are being offered at the best prices and level of service. The first is through open competition, offering consumer choice and using that choice to demand quality service. The second, in the case of monopolies where the duplication of capital infrastructure is not economically feasible, quality service is ensured by the oversight provided by independent regulation. The consumers of the Saskatchewan Crowns do not have a competitive option; therefore, they need independent regulation.

Saskatchewan continues to be the only jurisdiction in Canada that does not have an independent regulatory authority. Accountability does not mean spreading the responsibility across cabinet ministers. The people of Saskatchewan have the right to examine the cost of producing and delivering the utilities and insurance services they use. They have the right to see how the cost of providing their utility services compare to those of other utilities across Canada and even other parts of North America. This is real accountability.



We believe that the operations of the Crowns should be open to scrutiny, and costs and profit levels be justified to a knowledgeable and independent body. It seems like a simple concept, but this government doesn't seem to get it. A public utility board would establish rates of return, give guidance on levels of equity and debt, and approve the costs and the rates charged to the consumers. The key words in all of this are accountability and transparency, something to which the people of Saskatchewan are entitled.

e) *Financial Statements*

Crown Corporations should file segmented financial statements and should be required to follow the same reporting guidelines that the Toronto Stock Exchange companies are required to follow. If they are partnering with other entities, a condition of partnership must be that their partners also be open and accountable. If a private corporation is benefiting from government money it should meet the same accountability standards as its public sector partners.

f) *Annual Meetings*

Crown corporations should be required to hold an annual meeting for their owners - the people of Saskatchewan. This should be an opportunity for the citizens of Saskatchewan to come and ask questions about their Crowns. These annual meetings and filing of the reports should be spread out over a couple of weeks, as opposed to one day, so citizens have the opportunity to research the various issues and prepare significant lines of questioning. Once again, this is ultimately about providing the people of Saskatchewan with real accountability and transparency when it comes to their Crowns.

g) *Extra-Provincial Investment*

With regards to investment opportunities for our Crowns, we must not be insular or timid, but outward looking in pursuit of new horizons. There is a world of opportunity out there if we are disciplined in our actions. This leads us to the very controversial area of extra-provincial investments by the Crowns in this province. The people of Saskatchewan are tired of the CIC and the Crowns acting as their stockbroker, acting like wheelers and dealers investing all over the globe, or acting as a travel agent. Saskatchewan Liberals do, however, believe that the Crown corporations should be allowed to pursue extra-provincial investments under strict guidelines.

Extra-provincial investments should happen when our Crowns have proven expertise and core competencies in those areas and where these can be readily transplanted into other jurisdictions. These investments should take place when they will lead to new employment and economic returns to Saskatchewan. Extra-provincial investment should only take place when we are operating in jurisdictions that have acceptable human rights practices, competent legal systems, and ethical business practices founded upon the rule of law. And certainly, Crown corporations should have to set out their exit strategy for extra-provincial investing that includes the role of the local partner.

All of these practices must fall under the auspices of standardized investment criteria so that returns on investment, net present value, and dispersal valuations can all be objectively benchmarked. They must not be subject to manipulation by the Crowns so that they artificially create the investment outcome that they want.

h) *Three new roles for CIC*

• Performance Measures

The role of CIC as watchdog, as regulator, as stockbroker, and as the Crown corporation that sets dividend policy would no longer exist. The new role of CIC would be to ensure that the wishes of the owners are being carried out. That means ensuring that



performance measures are being met and that the public policy objective of creating a skilled workforce here in Saskatchewan is a goal that is being pursued. CIC and the CIC board would focus on ensuring that performance measures are applied in an accountable and transparent manner.

• **Venture Capital – The Investment Partnership Office (IPO)**

CIC also needs to play a role in creating a sophisticated venture capital market in this province. CIC has driven the private venture capital companies out of this province, and that must be turned around.

Government needs to indicate what areas Saskatchewan is going to pursue; for instance, ethanol, bio-technology, or new energy. Government needs to provide a pool of venture capital through an entity like the The Investment Partnership Office, which then allows banks and venture capital companies with expertise in those areas to invest, manage, and monetize those investments to Saskatchewan's benefit.

We need to engage venture capital companies to operate in Saskatchewan. Tap into their expertise. Tap into their networks. Tap into their access to global capital. We need government to get out of picking winners and losers in the Saskatchewan economy.

We believe that there is more money chasing good ideas, than there is good ideas chasing money. Government must create an environment where ideas flourish, where entrepreneurs and small business can access capital, and where global expertise can thrive in Saskatchewan.

• **Industry Clusters**

The third objective of CIC must be to ensure that the Crown corporations are promoting and enabling the development of industry clusters around the province and government policy objectives are being integrated into the business plans of the Crown corporations.

REDAs and Regional Transportation Authorities need to be committed to cluster development. Post-secondary, and university institutions, airport authorities, federal, provincial, and municipal governments, as well as professional associations of lawyers, accountants, engineers and others must all be engaged and involved. This integrated approach will encourage entrepreneurs, the catalysts of our economy, to buy in. In summary, everyone will be moving in the same direction to build clusters of industry around the province.

i) Transforming the Civil Service

The civil service must also be a part of this transformation of how our Crowns work. At one time Saskatchewan set the gold standard for the civil service in Canada. Today we still have great people within our civil service, but they need direction.

The government needs a great civil service that is effective, efficient, and professional. A Liberal government will restore the civil service to one that everyone in the province can be proud of. One that is responsive and pro-active, and that will add value to our province.

We must also have a civil service that will be the employer of choice. It should be an employer that will create careers, train those just entering the workforce, and foster a workplace that talented people will be eager to join.

Our Crowns must serve as they have in the past by providing competitive utilities across Saskatchewan while at the same time, serving the public policy objective of developing a skilled workforce. And they will serve Saskatchewan people by being managed in a business-



like fashion, functioning in an independent and professional manner, and accomplishing the clear objectives of the owner – the people of Saskatchewan.

3. Post-Secondary Education and Innovation

a) Creating citizens, and joining the innovation agenda

Our universities, colleges and technical schools are essential to creating citizens, and also to ensuring Saskatchewan can compete in the new knowledge-based economy. We believe Saskatchewan needs to be a part of the innovation agenda or we will get left behind.

Rapid change is a characteristic of our culture. Saskatchewan needs to embrace that change in the new knowledge economy, while at the same time maintaining core values. We live in a global community, which demands that we become “citizens of the world”. We need to ensure that our universities and technical schools are some of the most distinguished post-secondary institutions in Canada and the world.

b) Knowledge benefits all Saskatchewan people

Our priorities include networking between research institutes and small business. Since knowledge is the new currency, our universities must be strategically prepared to develop and transmit knowledge and our technical schools must be prepared to train a highly-skilled workforce, to allow our province to participate in the knowledge economy.

In order to bring focus to this participation, Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to:

- ensure that priority is given to a technology transfer component to the extension division, and continuing skills transfer office at our technical schools.
- work with our universities to establish a university chair to mentor entrepreneurs to bridge between the research and business. For example, we would provide seed funding to establish a Discovery Commercialization MBA with a B.Sc. prerequisite.

Innovation means transferring our expertise and knowledge into our everyday life. And innovation also occurs in our social structures. For example, Saskatchewan should become a leader in teaching how to build co-operatives in our rural areas, so that we can ensure our agrifood community moves up the value chain rather than courting U.S. corporations for ethanol production. We need to support Saskatchewan farmers with innovative business structures.

c) Aboriginal people as full participants

We must ensure that our Aboriginal population is well educated and prepared to enter into the workforce as they are an important factor in expanding our economic base. We must demand that the federal government remove the cap on post-secondary placement for First Nations people and Bands.

The Aboriginal population will benefit greatly from getting equal access to education, so they are able to be full participants in the economic and social life of our province. Also, our First Nations people have a real sense of belonging with the land. We must enhance this natural strength by making the university a centre for Great Plains research, and also explore the scientific richness of the boreal forest.



The financial benefits of achieving a post-secondary education are clear for First Nations and Aboriginal people:

Non-completion of high school prior to receiving a diploma

Life-time earnings: Male: \$344, 781 Female: \$89,502

Obtain a high school diploma

Life-time earnings: Male: \$861,636 Female: \$294,350

Attends technical programs, such as SIAST

Life-time earnings: Male: \$1,191,146 Female: \$646,609

Attends University Program

Life-time earnings: Male: \$1,386,434 Female: \$1,249,246

Source: Prof. Eric Howe, U of S Department of Economics, June 2003

d) Accessibility

We want to ensure our provincial post-secondary institutions remain accessible to all, based on merit, not ability to pay. Therefore, Saskatchewan Liberals make the commitment to benchmark tuition fees, on average, to remain at 30% of overall operating costs of our universities.

e) Recruiting and retaining our students

Student recruitment and retention of those who complete undergraduate programs has become a serious issue in Saskatchewan. The number of students who leave the province after graduation is staggering. Student recruitment and retention of those who complete undergraduate programs has become a serious issue in Saskatchewan. The University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan statistics show undergrads leave the province upon graduation in staggering numbers. Potential employers are also aware of this.

Saskatchewan Liberals will forgive undergraduate student loans through a tax credit of their cumulative tuition over a four-year work residency period, if they remain in the province. This tax credit would apply for a person's first undergraduate degree or diploma or certificate. Such a tax credit would be available for up to a maximum of six years following the last year of graduation. Such a program will ensure we continue to build the human capital to participate in the knowledge economy.

The tax credit would provide for a total tax credit equal to the tuition paid by the taxpayer at a Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Institution, net of any basic tax credits already claimed by the student or his/her family. The total tuition paid would be recovered over a 4-year time frame. To claim the tax credit, the graduate would need to provide: evidence of tuition paid over the previous five years, and a reconciliation of the basic credits claimed or eligible to be claimed. This tax credit would be applied in place of the post-secondary graduate tax credit currently in place.

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that post-secondary education students should be considered financially independent one year after having left high school. We will negotiate with the federal government to make that change. Too many parents have multiple children in post-secondary institutions making it increasingly difficult to pay for their education. Students must be considered to be independent after a year out of high school, and not wait four years to apply for student loans.

Saskatchewan Liberals will devolve the awarding of grants and provincial scholarships from the province to out-of-province post-secondary institutions, so that grants and awards are tied to provincial institutions..

**Sample tax credit for a qualifying Saskatchewan student**

	Year 1 (graduated)	Year 2 (graduated)	Year 3 (graduated)	Year 4 (graduated)	Total
Tuition paid 1998-2002					\$20,000
Less:					
Basic Sask tax credit	\$2250	\$2250	\$2250	\$2250	(11.25% of \$20,000)
Balance available for Sask. post secondary tax credit	\$17,750	\$17,750	\$17,750	\$17,750	
Claimed		(\$4,438)	(\$4,438)	(\$4,438)	
		\$13,312	\$8,875	\$4,437	
Annual tax credit	\$4,438	\$4,438	\$4,438	\$4,437	
Assumed net income	\$45,000	\$50,000	\$52,500	\$60,000	
Sask. tax before post secondary tax credit	\$4,462	\$5,125	\$5,546	\$6,450	
Tax credit	(\$4,438)	(\$4,438)	(\$4,438)	(\$4,437)	
Net Sask tax	424	\$688	\$1,019	\$2,013	

f) *Renewing our workforce*

Competition for new faculty at both universities and technical schools is going to increase in the next decade. For example, close to half of the University of Saskatchewan faculty will retire by the year 2010. We must provide our universities and technical schools the recruitment tools they require to recruit and retain faculty, who will meet the standard of international excellence. One tool, used successfully in Quebec, is to offer income tax incentives for internationally competitive teaching and research positions to attract and retain faculty. These income tax incentives would apply for the first five years of employment, and would apply to posts as determined by our post-secondary institution: universities, regional colleges, and our SIAST campuses.

To address faculty renewal, we need to ensure our doctoral and post-doctoral programs attract the best and the brightest, and also encourage those graduates to become part of the university faculty. One inexpensive way to attract future faculty is to assist with full doctoral fellowships for four years, and match dollar for dollar any private sector donations for this purpose in order to offer full doctoral fellowships.

g) *Saskatchewan Foundation for Innovation (SFI)*

Our universities have been chronically underfunded. We need to develop matching funds for Canada Research Chairs; provide seed money for NSERC and SSHRC and CIHR grants through a Saskatchewan Foundation for Innovation, and allow for national peer review of provincial research. Then, our provincial researchers would be better able to leverage federal research dollars. For example, we need to ensure that our own Saskatchewan researchers fully utilize the Canadian Light Source synchrotron, and are provided the right foundations to conduct research, rather than having suitcase scientists dominate the facility.

A Saskatchewan Foundation for Innovation would operate as an arm's length agency. Investment decisions for both infrastructure and research support would be made by a board of directors, the majority drawn from the academic and research community as well as the private sector. Research awards and projects would be peer reviewed, taking into account the quality of research, the contribution to innovation, and the potential benefit to Saskatchewan people.



The initial SFI budget would be seeded with a re-allocation of resources from the Science and Innovation fund; also, the SFI budget would be supplemented with one cent a barrel of oil and gas royalty revenue, increasing on a sliding scale after \$25 a barrel oil, dedicated towards the fund.

The SFI would invest in Saskatchewan innovation in the areas of social sciences, and the humanities, health, engineering (in particular new energy), science, and the environment at our universities, teaching and research hospital, regional colleges and SIAST campuses.

h) Leveraging new federal dollars

Saskatchewan is well-known as a pioneering centre for public health. To benefit from that reputation, a health sciences industry cluster would be a natural fit at the U of S. Specifically, Saskatchewan Liberals see the opportunity for a partnership for a national Centre for Disease Control. With many disciplines under one roof, the U of S is well-placed to lead finding solutions for emerging global problems. The University of Saskatchewan is a unique institution that combines human, animal and plant research. It houses the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), a College of Veterinary Medicine, a College of Medicine, and the College of Agriculture with a special focus on biotechnology. In addition, the U of S is home to one of the most sophisticated research tools in the world today: the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron. A partnership node for a CDC would be a great addition to forming a health sciences cluster, and assist the province in leveraging federal funds to build an integrated Health Sciences facility.

Saskatchewan Liberals would commit to providing seed funds to pursue this project.

In addition to striving for excellence in certain research areas, government must also re-dedicate itself to being a stable source of funding for the Universities' and technical schools operating budget. Stable funding will ensure that the infrastructure, support staff and climate will attract great faculty and allow existing faculty to thrive.

Saskatchewan Liberals will allow for marked differentiation between our two Saskatchewan universities, and allow our universities to differentiate themselves from other international institutions. International intensity of competition demands that our premier research facilities must be allowed to pursue novel and innovative partnerships. All programs must strive to be of high quality; however, our universities must be allowed to target select areas where they can excel and attract international attention.

i) International Excellence: Petroleum Technology Research Center and the Synchrotron

The Petroleum Technology Research Center, located on the campus of the Uof R is an internationally recognized innovative leader in the petroleum research and development area that delivers world class research for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan and Canada. Researching new methods for developing energy resources, like the miscible flood in the Weyburn region, has been recognized by the International Energy Agency.

The Canadian Light Source (CLS) Inc. (shown to the right) will be Canada's national facility for synchrotron light research when the huge instrument – much like a super microscope -- is turned on in January of 2004. The Synchrotron is wholly owned by the University of Saskatchewan; and with a capital budget of \$173.5-million, the project is Canada's biggest post-war scientific research facility. This world-class research and manufacturing tool has the potential to make Saskatchewan an international scientific destination.

A Saskatchewan Foundation for Innovation, and a focus on creating centers of excellence, will allow us as province to better access federal funds such as: the Innovation Fund; the Research Hospital Fund; the New Opportunities Fund; the Infrastructure Operating Fund; and the Canada Research Chairs Infrastructure Fund.



j) *Educational institutions working within a cluster strategy*

All our educational institutions – provincial and regional – will benefit from the presence of industry clusters in terms of quality, reputation, and recruitment of students. Each region, in concert with the REDAs and the local business people, must determine the skilled workforce need with the technical school striving for excellence in providing that training.

k) *Building careers: Developing strong co-operative programs*

To provide graduate students with career experience, to give them greater incentive to make Saskatchewan their career location of choice, and also to assist with financing of their education, we will provide seed financing to develop a robust co-op education model with a special focus on engineering and computer science – such as the engineering program at Waterloo University. Academic and research success, such as the Blackberry wireless technology, emerged out of the Waterloo co-op program partnering with Research In Motion (RIM). Such co-op programs must be developed in partnership with the community, industry, government.



Courtesy University of Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to creating citizens – people who wish to stay and build our province -- and a forward-looking, dynamic workforce that can engage the world in the new, knowledge economy.

4. Connecting to the world: Exports and entrepreneurs

a) *Road, Rail and Air*

Saskatchewan has an export driven economy. We must become – once again -- an outward-looking community, one which both welcomes the world, and reaches out to the world. Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to developing an integrated transportation network that serves and builds our regions.

Transportation is our link to the world. We need connectivity as our agricultural producers begin to specialize with identity preserved grains, as our light manufactured goods go to export markets, when we welcome tourists and promote eco-tourism, and as we drive our internal economy and sustain our quality of life.

Regional transportation authorities will be given access to the capacity to make meaningful decisions about regional transportation networks.

We must develop an integrated transportation network that focuses on road, rail and air, and wireless connectivity.



b) Roads

Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to maintaining the current levels of expenditure on roads, bridges and highways, and ensuring increases keep pace with inflation. We will use as a benchmark for this expenditure the equivalent amount of gas tax collected across the province. Liberals will push the next federal government to dedicate 4 cents/litre of the federal gas tax to municipal infrastructure as a steady revenue source.

We believe that the regional transportation strategy must take into account transportation corridors and transportation networks. For example, we would consider the linking road between Fort McMurray and La Loche as a priority for transportation network to facilitate the growth of our Northern economy. A Liberal government would be strategic about investing in key roads, bridges and overpasses to ensure an efficient transportation system, increasing energy, efficiency and reducing air pollution.

Twinning of our main provincial and inter-provincial highways is essential. Recent federal investments have allowed for the acceleration of twinning. But much work remains to be done. To initiate the twinning of key highways, for example, the highway between Saskatoon and Prince Albert, we would embark immediately upon creating passing lane loops at reasonable distances to enable the better flow of traffic to our North.



c) Rail

The emergence of intermodal transport, a vibrant light-manufacturing industry, and the growth of identity preserved grains and crops signals the ever growing importance of an excellent rail system. Choice is necessary. We believe and will push the CTA for the delinking of the rail bed from the rolling stock, so that short lines and producer cars will have greater ability to provide consumer choice in rail. We need to allow the shorelines and the producer cars to plug into the continental network, which companies like CN and Omnitrac are pulling together. We've done it in the long distance market with the rental of transmission systems. We should do the same in rail.

d) Airports

Saskatchewan must increase not decrease our connectivity to the global community. National and international markets require we have excellent air service. In recent years, air service from the remaining national airline has deteriorated, and connectivity has become a serious issue. Saskatchewan needs to focus on an aviation strategy to increase the number of jet service level flights into the province. We had been an aviation servicing base for Canadian Airlines. We were home to Aircraft Maintenance Engineers.



Saskatchewan Liberals commit to creating an aviation service centre right here on the prairies, close to the middle of national flight routes. We will develop partnerships with a major airline to develop an aviation service centre through developing training expertise, employment and career opportunities, and ultimately enhance air flight service. We commit to creating within that partnership an Aircraft Maintenance Engineers training program at SIAST – complementing the existing pilots training course -- to facilitate the creation of a full-fledged maintenance base.

We would work with the private sector, including the Saskatoon airport authority to provide the land, and with the City to provide strategic tax incentives, and with the federal government on a training agreement. We would endeavour to raise \$10 million in venture capital seed funding to create the aviation centre through the new Investment Partnership Office. Our growing mining industry cluster, enhanced by the Synchrotron, will benefit, since many northern charter companies could tap into the service. Many charter companies currently outsource their maintenance and would participate to grow this competitive advantage.

Such an aviation center would put us back in the game and ensure national and international connectivity. We would once again become part of the network. Charter service would increase. Early morning jet service to Calgary would provide connectivity to Vancouver and into California. Air service is essential to our cluster strategy. It is no longer a luxury, but a core activity.

e) *Wireless Data transmission*

In a post-9/11 world, safety is becoming a greater issue for world markets. That includes data safety and data storage. Also in the new economy, the ability to move large amounts of data digitally over wireless networks is becoming essential.

The creation of CommunityNet was a beginning, but it is not sufficient to meet the infrastructure requirements of a wireless world. Saskatchewan Liberals believe our Crowns, in particular Sasktel, must build strategic partnerships with wireless companies, like VComm, to provide wireless highspeed broadband to remote locations all across the province. Also, we must leverage the Synchrotron to become a national centre for computer data storage.

Saskatchewan Liberals are fundamentally committed to creating an outward looking province, connected to the global community.





“We need our Crowns to partner with the private sector and our young entrepreneurs, not act in a predatory fashion.”

– David Karwacki

f) Connecting Entrepreneurs across Canada and around the Globe

To enhance that connectivity, we would establish a Premier’s International Advisory Council, consisting of Saskatchewan expatriates. The Council would foster linkages between Saskatchewan enterprise doing business in a foreign market and Saskatchewan expatriates in those same markets. The Council would enhance market understanding and assist in market penetration. The Premier’s International Advisory Council would work in a similar fashion to the Young Presidents’ Organization, which enables entrepreneurs to tap into corporate headquarters and set up key meetings and contacts world-wide.

We believe that Saskatchewan must recapture the competitive enterprise spirit through entrepreneurship mentor programs, developed and delivered within Regional Economic Development Authorities, partnering with excellent private partners, like Junior Achievement, and the Young Entrepreneurs Organization.

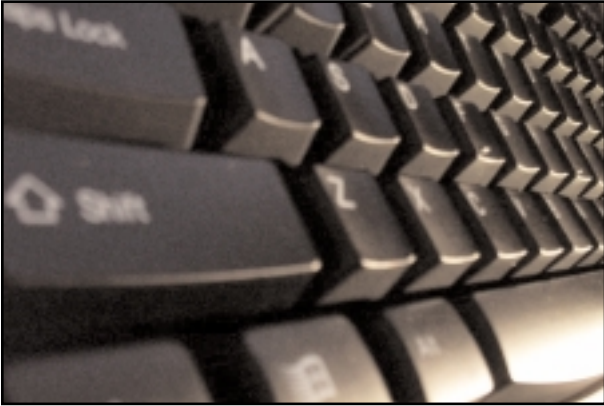
5. New Investment

The Investment Partnership Office – (IPO)

We would work diligently to create a sophisticated venture capital market right here in Saskatchewan. As a start, we would create the Investment Partnership Office (IPO). The office would have the mandate to place investment dollars with private venture capital firms, who would in turn offer public and private venture capital and management expertise to emerging Saskatchewan firms.

We are reminded again that there is more money out there chasing great ideas, than there are ideas chasing money.

The fact remains an abundance of venture capital exists throughout North American and global markets, but venture capital companies continue to be apprehensive about investing in Saskatchewan because of past predatory practices of CIC, and a perceived lack of entrepreneurial and management experience in this province. A



Saskatchewan Liberal government would work with private venture capital firms to fill those gaps, in particular, to help develop a sophisticated slaughter and meat packing industry. We need to continue to support our livestock industry through the creation of a provincial meat packing industry. Ranchers, cow/calf operators, feedlots and hog producers have worked diligently to build up the industry. We need to meet their commitment to our province with equal resolve in making the industry not only survive, but thrive.

We must take the following steps to encourage venture capital companies to invest in Saskatchewan, so that we can create new, exciting opportunities and good jobs for people to stay right here and succeed from Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Liberals will establish incubator management programs to partner with our small- and medium-size enterprises, so Saskatchewan companies develop the management capacity and expertise needed to succeed.

Saskatchewan Liberals would give the IPO a mandate to bring in new capital into rural Saskatchewan to revitalize the regions over a period of ten years, and implement a rural regional industry cluster strategy. This private capital would be attracted using the incentives of tax expenditures, like the tax credit in the Labour Sponsored Venture Capital Funds (20% provincial / 15% federal). This partnership will attract private, patient venture capital into Saskatchewan, rather than competing directly with private venture capital firms.

6. New Energy

We need to transform Saskatchewan into a cutting-edge, international leader for greenhouse gas research, ranging from CO2 capture, to energy conservation technologies, to soil and forest sinks.

We must utilize our Crowns strategically to promote energy conservation, to explore new energy delivery systems like distributive energy, co-generation, off-grid and net metering. We must leverage the Crowns, like SaskPower, to utilize the Synchrotron for clean coal and GHG free research.

The Saskatchewan Foundation for Innovation, as an arms-length agency, will also have an initial mandate to explore new and next energy sources, and energy delivery systems, and the full host of energy options. We will continue to build upon the reputation of PTRC for petroleum research.



We will continue the GreenPower alternative, managed through SaskPower, giving consumers an alternative to support renewable wind generated power.

Saskatchewan Liberals will encourage the development of "GreenPower" generation projects in all areas of Saskatchewan, including biomass from bark and wood chips in the North; methane capture from agriculture and municipal waste sites; run-of-river hydro; and wind power in the southwest corridor. We will continue to enable consumers to pay a small premium if they wish to choose GreenPower.

We would also begin to plan a sustainable development corridor from south to north in the province, which would act as a carbon sink and enhance biodiversity for future generations.

7. Agriculture

Saskatchewan has some of the best and most efficient farmers in the world. A tradition of exporting our product to the world and looking to the next horizon has made farmers very entrepreneurial and ready to compete. But they need a level playing field.

In the face of a subsidy war between the United States and European Union, Saskatchewan farm families deserve our collective support. Saskatchewan must demand from the next federal government a greater role at the table at international negotiations. We need to deal with the international subsidy war in a meaningful way.

A Saskatchewan Liberal government would move immediately to ensure the long-term survival of our livestock industry which has been affected by BSE. We would take immediate steps to ramp up a local slaughter and packing industry, and bring together all the stakeholder and private investors from across this integrated North American market to map out a rational growth strategy for a value-added livestock industry. The new Investment Partnership Office, backed by CIC and the private venture capital industry, will take a lead role in spearheading the funding of this initiative.



Saskatchewan Liberals would also work with the federal government and the livestock industry on developing protocols to regionalize and contain any future disease outbreaks. Saskatchewan Liberals will also push the federal government to remove disaster assistance for issues like BSE out of the APF risk management umbrella.

In order to make the transition from shipping out our raw commodities to moving up the value chain, we must:

- Support a market driven approach in agriculture, with a focus on maximizing revenue, moving up the value chain to produce high-quality processed food required domestically and for export. We support the

general principles of the new APF, but believe that large disaster assistance packages must fall outside the current risk management framework.

- Commit to pushing the next federal government for a greater share of national poultry production within the supply managed system. Saskatchewan must be promoted as the most cost-effective place in all of North America in raising grain-fed poultry.



- Engage the federal government to assist the Prairies develop a leveraged venture capital fund devoted specifically to agricultural development to assist in the rapid expansion of value-added agribusiness on the Prairies. Access to agriculturally-targeted, long term risk capital is needed for the development of agriculture and the development of industry clusters in agrifood. Our benchmark will be to attract \$12 billion in outside investment into rural Saskatchewan to pursue a regional industry cluster strategy.

For example, the flax industry could be a billion dollar a year industry in Saskatchewan. We have the perfect micro climate on the forest fringe to grow the high quality flax that the runways of Paris want for linens.

- Venture capital for agribusiness must be accompanied by professional business, management, and entrepreneurial planning assistance.

- Negotiate a federal-provincial infrastructure program to renew the rural infrastructure, particularly water systems, without an undue burden on the rural tax base. This infrastructure is critical for value-added industry, particularly to bridge drought periods, for intensive livestock feeding, and other value-added agri-food business.

- Show leadership in the formation of a "Pulse Institute" in order to help coordinate the growth of the pulse (lentils, peas and beans) industry on the Prairies, focusing on further production improvements and providing guidance in developing a mature marketing system with value-added opportunities. We will also focus on promoting and facilitating the development of intermodal transport facilities for pulses and for identity preserved grains such as the one recently opened in Moose Jaw.

- Develop a "Saskatchewan Brand" food initiative, focusing on food safety and reliable, value-added product for world consumption.

- Put forward a long-term plan for the future of railway branch-lines, and initiate a plan, with the agreement of all stakeholders, for opening access to the rail bed for all railways. The railbed could function in a regulated fashion like the telecommunications industry, ensuring regulated access to competition on an established infrastructure. For example, SaskTel must allow Sprint to use its fibre-optic network. As Premier, David Karwacki will promote this plan to the Canadian Transportation Authority and fight for its adoption.





- Provide political direction for a rational plan for the placement of processing plants for grains, oilseeds and pulses within a feasible transport network. We commit to providing capacity within the regional transportation authorities to participate in transport investment decisions for a coordinated approach in building transportation networks and corridors. As a government, we would commit to greater investment and greater provincial responsibility for high traffic areas.
- Assist in the coordination of the public and private intellectual capital (like seed varieties, value-added processes and other inputs) at Saskatchewan's universities –and around the province – so that farmers and the agricultural products processing industries have a substantial competitive advantage in exporting to the global markets.
- Fight for our share of federal program funds that will support wireless, broadband internet access to all farm families, providing them with market and business information, Cyberschools, and an enhanced quality of life. We would also utilize Sasktel in a strategic partnership with private firms like VCom, to provide wireless, high speed internet access for market information to the farmgate.
- Ensure that the substitution of fossil fuels by bio-fuels, such as ethanol and green diesel, is competitive over the long-term in order to encourage the necessary investment in an emerging bio-fuels industry; and thus lowering input costs, and adding income through the sale of farm residues to an emerging bio-fuels industry. We would also provide a model and template to initiate New Generation Cooperatives and other small business structures so that farmers can participate and add to their bottom lines through these ventures, like ethanol and biodiesel plants. Provincial government fleets would be converted to e85 and also utilize biodiesel to create demand pull and purchase from our farmers.
- Facilitate farmers to feed into the energy grid any excess power produced from wind-turbines or from cogeneration facilities that use methane.
- Put forward a plan to deal with succession issues – owing to an increase in the average age of farmers – and work force training issues on the farm. Change the law that currently places restrictions on Saskatchewan farmers from selling their land to those from outside the province; ease restrictions on farm families that choose to sell their land to do so at the highest price available. Such sales would continue to be restricted to individuals to a maximum of five sections.
- Encourage, and where necessary assist, the various farm commodity sectors to produce and market the products demanded by the market, and to develop protocols that will allow primary producers to capture more of the benefits from the value chain. Producers must adjust their practices in order to develop products of the exact quantity and quality required by the market and then retain control part way up the value chain.
- Work with communities, the federal government, and the financial sector to promote a greatly expanded, economically and environmentally sustainable intensive livestock industry. That means also directing a concerted effort in research and development to deal with odour and ground water issues in communities. Support an even more rapid building of rurally owned and managed barns in order to ramp up hog production; encourage the development of feedlots for beef production, developing specific weight beef for the preferred market in order to gain market leverage. Then, livestock owners must be provided incentives to retain ownership as far up the value-chain as possible. We will not abandon a growing livestock industry.
- Encourage the development of small fruits market, increasing volumes and developing markets and commercial level processing for export markets. Saskatchewan grown preserved fruits and jams are a perfect product from an agrifood industry cluster to export to the world.



- Work in partnership with the federal government to re-establish a pasture renewal program across the prairies for marginal lands (Class 5 & 6 lands); there is added income potential from marginal lands by replacing low value grain with high value cattle production.
- Support an expanded conservation cover program in concert with private companies and foundations (like Ducks Unlimited) to take only marginal lands out of production, enhancing carbon sequestration and increased biodiversity.
- Encourage the growth of Agriforestry on marginal lands, investing in R&D in fast growing species (in concert with PFRA); develop risk management and annuity contracts between farmers and forestry companies in order to supply local engineered lumber mills.

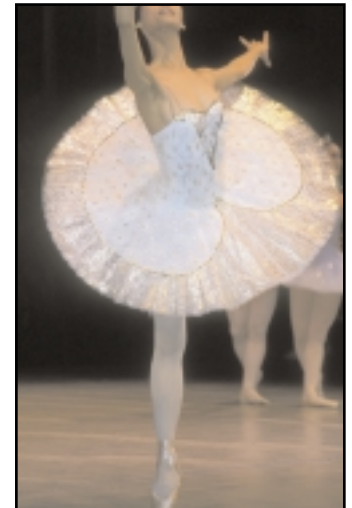
8. Arts and Culture

Investment of public funds in arts and culture are investments in our quality of life. The arts create public value by increasing educational, social, civic and economic opportunities. Arts and culture also nourish our sense of civic pride, and responsibility to our own community.

Arts and culture bring people together. They help us understand and appreciate the environment in which we live, and develop an appreciation for our fellow citizens; and they connect with different ideas, helping appreciate diversity of opinion. They are important in a political context as a response to social, economic, cultural and political issues faced by a community.

There are important linkages to safe communities, strong communities, fulfilling career ambitions, and the arts. It has been demonstrated that the arts help increase academic performance, improve behaviour, reach at-risk kids who might want to drop out of school, improve self esteem, and build creative skills that are transferable to our workforce.

Also it has been demonstrated that the arts – on a large scale at Bilbao; and on a smaller scale at a venue like the Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan in Saskatoon or the Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival or the Emma Lake School of Art – are an anchor of attraction and make a significant contribution to the economic vitality of communities. We would continue to fund arts and culture initiatives as generously as possible through a portion of lottery and gaming profits. In consultation with stakeholders, we would look at funding levels through the lottery licensing agreement to better support arts and cultural activities. Saskatchewan Liberals commit to support the Film and Video and new media industry in a open, transparent and even-handed fashion. We would continue the Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit, and enhance the marketing of Saskatchewan as a place to produce film and video.



SaskCulture, Inc. would continue to be the delivery mechanism for these funds. Further assistance -- with the consultation of the community -- would come from Crown Corporations, sponsorship of community arts and culture initiatives. Our Crowns would also be encouraged to match private sector fund donations to arts and cultural events.



Saskatoon/Eastview candidate Rob Norris and his family see a bright future for Saskatchewan.

II - Ensuring a Home for Saskatchewan Families

1. Building a Saskatchewan Home

Stable, affordable housing is a crucial – but often missing factor – in the life of Saskatchewan families. A stable home will affect health outcomes, education levels, and build strong, safe communities. It will ultimately lead to strong individuals who can fulfill their personal ambitions.

Lack of adequate, stable housing causes children to have attendance problems at school. Attendance problems often start with frequent school changes and subsequent interrupted schooling, leading to “dropping out” from formal schooling. Such a lack of education will lead to greater social assistance rates. The fact is, a majority of social service recipients have not completed Grade XII.

Also, those who drop out of school in our current economic and social system have a greater chance of becoming involved with the justice system. Nearly 80% of youth charged with property crimes were not in school. We can save millions of dollars that will be spent on youth custodial facilities, if we can find ways to keep kids in school. A stable home is a great beginning.

To start building those strong communities, we need to strive for residential stability.

a) Well-maintained rental housing

First, we need to ensure that we have a good, well-maintained stock of rental housing within Saskatchewan.

Rental stock that is well-kept and well-maintained will lead to safer communities. The strengthening of the rental ombudsmans office, and increasing inspections will help curb the proliferation of “slum-lords”. Far too often, damage deposits are collected without an inspection of the premises, and tenants move in without appropriate repairs having taken place. Such practices would be curbed by the triggering of a provincial inspection of all social services rental properties, when a move-in damage deposit is required, and an increase in the number of provincial inspections.

We must also strive to build the lifeskills and capacity of those who receive social assistance. That includes being able to budget, pay bills on time, and make responsible purchases. Community resources would begin to issue cheques to recipients every 2 weeks to assist with better budgeting.



b) Building a Saskatchewan Home

The "Build Saskatchewan" program will enable low and moderate income families to fulfill the dream of owning not just a house, but also creating a home. The ability to create a home embodies the dream of many Saskatchewan families, yet it is out of reach. Home ownership will allow people to take pride in their individual property, increase personal independence, and pride in their community.

Building strong individuals and building strong communities is a priority for Saskatchewan Liberals. We must all work together to ensure a successful Saskatchewan. Low income areas are becoming more pronounced in core neighbourhoods in Saskatchewan urban centres. Our core neighbourhoods have an extremely high mobility rate, providing very little critical mass for the development of community building skills, and healthy supportive networks. Each move disrupts a child's education. We need to focus upon increasing the rate of owner occupied home ownership in our core neighbourhoods.



To enroll in the Build Saskatchewan program, qualifying requirements would be as follows:

- open to a first-time homeowner or members of a housing co-operative;
- families who have not owned or had an ownership interest in the past 5 years;
- a minimum income requirement;
- an employment requirement. One or more of the adults in the family who own the home would need to be employed, and be continuously employed for at least one year before eligibility for the program;
- the family must attend home ownership workshops.

Build Saskatchewan would not lend money directly to home buyers or take possession of properties. It will work with private lending institutions to ensure they can offer mortgages at great rates to low- and moderate- income Saskatchewan residents. The company would work in the secondary mortgage market, buying mortgages from a variety of financial institutions that do lend money to low and moderate income Saskatchewan home buyers.

Participants in the program, in addition to applying for the innovative mortgage package, would be required to attend workshops on home ownership offered through Build Saskatchewan:

- budgeting and money management workshop, including budgeting for: mortgage principal and interest, mortgage insurance premium, property taxes and home insurance, utility charges, routine maintenance costs, future second mortgage or loans to finance major repairs.
- credit counseling workshop;
- how to buy a home workshop;
- ongoing home maintenance workshops.

These workshops would be public/private partnerships, engaging lenders, home repair companies, realtors to provide practical, non-branded information to potential home buyers.



Families who attend these workshops would demonstrate that they are committed to make the time and effort to achieve the goal of home ownership. The requirement that the family must attend each workshop is vital to a family's success at home ownership. At the end of the workshops, programme coordinators would meet with the family to determine the kind of innovative mortgage package the family would receive. This mortgage "certificate" would allow the family to go to a lender of choice – banks, credit unions, and mortgage companies would all be invited to participate in the programme -- and then they would receive a pre-approved mortgage before going in search of a home within the designated price range. These "skills development" seminars will help Build Saskatchewan maintain lower default rates and develop a more active management of their portfolio.

Build Saskatchewan would be a private corporation, and be provided initial seed funding from Saskatchewan Savings Bonds issues. Build Saskatchewan would provide liquidity to the housing market for sub-prime mortgage products, targeted to low and medium-income families.

CMHC and GE Capital currently do the same thing, but for medium- and high- income Canadians with a lower credit risk. There is very little liquidity or will of private banks to engage in lending to lower and moderate income families. The risk gets mitigated by building human capital and skill through Build Saskatchewan skills-building programs.

The Build Saskatchewan program will combine innovative mortgage instruments with skills development to expand home ownership opportunities. The administrator of this private corporation will have experience in real estate and the mortgage industry to develop the public and private partnerships to make the program a success. The Build Saskatchewan corporate structure would be accountable to the legislature through the provincial auditor. Over time, the goal would be to grow the company through further private investment.

The Build Saskatchewan program would be supplemented by our commitment to reform the education portion of the property tax, lifting the burden of property tax for first-time home buyers, and also low to medium-income earners. The carrying cost of a home would be reduced. Also, we stand for maintaining strong, publicly held utilities, and a fully functioning public utility rate review board, so that we can avoid any wild utility rate swings for consumers.

We will also create a Building Your Equity Fund within Build Saskatchewan to assist designated families with their down payment and closing costs. Contributions would be shared through the federal homelessness initiative, Saskatchewan Employment and Community Development, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, the municipality, and the prospective homebuyer. Further, qualified families would pay up-front costs on their own, including application fees, inspection fees, tests, and homeowner insurance. Following the close and transfer, any costs exceeding \$500 would be matched, dollar-for-dollar, to qualified families through the Building Your Equity Fund.



2. Education

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that people have been well served by a strong, publicly funded education system. Our education system must continue to be seen as a province-wide good that benefits all. Saskatchewan Liberals vigorously oppose a voucher scheme and a charter school scheme, which are a direct attack on our current education system.

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that education must be student-centred and focused on developing strong individuals, so we can create equality of access and equality of opportunity for all our children. In this interconnected global culture, we should focus on creating “citizens of the world.” Our education system must demand a lot from everyone, because everyone benefits: Students must come to school prepared to learn; we must have top-notch, respected teachers, who are engaged in their own continuing education and professional development, and we must have a supportive community that expects and receives a benefit from this investment in creating strong individuals.

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that there is a direct relationship between the support of publicly-funded schools and the transformation of both our economic and our social institutions. We can’t be stuck in the past or long for the good old days, because Saskatchewan faces many challenges today: responding to rapid change in the world beyond our provincial boundaries; the emergence of a knowledge-based economy; swift social transformation of old institutions; demographic shifts; global interconnectivity in a wireless world; and the trend of rural depopulation. Liberals believe our publicly funded school system is sufficiently resilient to create equality of access and equality of opportunity for our children and our citizens.

a) *School Plus*

Saskatchewan Liberals endorse the recommendations of the School Plus approach, which was developed after extensive consultations with parents, students, educators, trustees and the broader Saskatchewan community. But it is still the primary role of the school to educate our young people, and to get them to perform to their ability. The delivery of social, health, recreation, justice, culture and other services for students and families can be delivered from a “virtual platform” that wraps around the school. Each appropriate provincial government department must provide sufficient financial support for program delivery, so that these services don’t deplete school budgets. While that is happening, teachers’ primary focus must still be to teach our children, and those services must support that effort. These services must deliver practical results, and be flexible enough for each community that the school serves. A full decade



after recognizing at-risk students require human services delivery in the school, the NDP have no implementation of a plan of action. The provincial auditor recognized this need. "Overall the Department of Learning estimates that up to 40% of Saskatchewan school age children are at risk of doing poorly in school due to circumstances that threaten their ability to learn and develop into contributing adults." – Provincial Auditor 1999 Fall Report Volume 2.

For that reason, Saskatchewan Liberals fully support the early childhood development initiative and would continue to fund this program.

Learning in the classroom cannot occur if there is not a readiness to learn: if a child is hungry because their parents didn't get up to make them breakfast or pack a lunch; if a child is suffering from verbal or physical abuse in the home; if our children are out of shape or suffering from obesity. Readiness to learn will affect the skills necessary for future success: communication skills, learning to think critically, developing self-confidence, engaging others in a social manner.

b) Liberal education commitments

Saskatchewan Liberals believe:

1) There must be a commitment to reasonable class-sizes at all grade levels, including benchmarking class size at 24 for grades K-3; development at early stages is critical to future success in life. We need to address poverty in a meaningful way, and that includes ensuring kids have the best educational start possible to break the cycle of dependence. We have a 29% poverty rate for children who are seven years and younger. Many of these working poor families must rent homes, and therefore lack stability in the community, with each move disrupting the child's education development.

2) Partisan politics should be taken out of building new schools, as pre-election gimmicks. Our kids are not voting bait. New schools and school renovations should occur where numbers warrant. The role of schools must also be recognized in building strong regions beyond our major cities. In each region, Saskatchewan Liberals recognize there must be a commitment to a modern school facility, with attached community centers, if we are to attract and retain young families, who are employed in new industry clusters.

3) Our teachers must be respected as professionals and given opportunities for professional development; we must have a renewed commitment to freeing up "master teachers" to assist our good, younger teachers to become great teachers.

4) The autonomy of boards of education to make decisions must be maintained.

5) Having a core curriculum is a good idea. So no matter where you are in Saskatchewan, your children will have equal access to future opportunities. Saskatchewan Liberals commit to maintaining and strengthening our core curriculum.

6) A Liberal government will not introduce standardized testing schemes, so that students are forced to learn to the test, and that teachers are forced to teach to the test. And a Liberal government would not introduce a voucher system or private charter schools, which would bleed funds away from our publicly funded education system.

7) A Liberal government would recognize that with the increase in resource-based learning, more demands are put on our teachers to acquire class supplies from their pocketbook. We are committed to working with boards of education to provide adequate funding for these out of pocket expenses, which would in turn allow teachers to submit a maximum \$200 expense claim to their board.



Saskatchewan Liberals believe in a long-term plan to reform the way we fully fund our publicly supported education system. Liberals will take a reasoned and sustainable approach. Over a ten year time frame, our government commits to contributing 70% of the local residential and agricultural taxpayers portion of the operating costs of our schools, with local residential and agricultural taxpayers contributing the remaining 30%.

c) *Collective Bargaining*

Saskatchewan Liberals believe in free collective bargaining. Saskatchewan Liberals believe that the current bi-level bargaining system has worked relatively well over the last thirty years in the education sector. This is not to say that there have not been differences. However, compared to many provinces in Canada, collective bargaining in education has been relatively harmonious and could serve as a model for labour relationships in Saskatchewan. Any attempts to change the current bargaining structure, such as trying to introduce compulsory arbitration or final offer selection, would destroy relationships and free collective bargaining. Any changes to the current collective bargaining structure, in education, should have the support of all stakeholders.

d) *Property Taxation*

The present funding formula for education does not reflect the principle that education is primarily a provincial responsibility. Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to properly funding our K-12 education system. The Calvert NDP contributes about 40% of the “operating grants” for school boards with about 60% of the “operating grant” being generated by the local taxpayer.

Saskatchewan Liberals believe in a long-term plan to reform the way we fund our publicly supported education system. Liberals will take a reasoned and sustainable approach. Over a ten year time frame, our government commits to contributing 70% of the local residential and agricultural taxpayers portion of the operating costs of our schools, with local residential and agricultural taxpayers contributing the remaining 30%.

The commercial industrial contribution ratio will remain the same. The provincial contribution will grow to provide relief to individual property owners and to our agricultural community. This shift would underscore the provincial role and responsibility to be the major contributor to education. Saskatchewan property taxes are the highest in Canada. Excessively high property taxes erode public support for education. A Liberal government is not interested in funding voucher programs or charter schools or other schemes that would divert public funds from our publicly funded school system.



3. Health Care

Saskatchewan people value their universal health care system. They believe that it is the role of government to ensure that high quality care is available to those who need it, when they need it. Because of the slowness of pace of reform and the missteps by the current Calvert NDP, we risk creating by default a two-tier American-style system: one set of services for the well off, another for those who are not. We do not want to move towards an American-style health care system where they check your bank balance before they check your pulse.

As Roy Romanow put it in the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada: "If Canadians come to believe that their governments will not honour their part of the bargain, they will look elsewhere for answers. And the grave risk we will face is pressure for access to private, parallel services – one set of services for the well off, another for those who are not. Canadians do not want this type of system."

Saskatchewan Liberals stand for protecting our universal health care system. We agree with the five tenets of the Canada Health Act, and maintain a commitment to a universally accessible, publicly funded system; and in particular, we agree with Mr. Romanow's recommendation for a sixth tenet: accountability.

- We need to transform our health care system, and rapidly work through change, not tear it apart.
- Saskatchewan Liberals stand for protecting our universal health care system. We agree with the five tenets of the Canada Health Act, and maintain a commitment to a universally accessible, publicly funded system; and in particular, we agree with Mr. Romanow's recommendation for a sixth tenet: accountability.
- Saskatchewan Liberals support a national quality council. In 2001, there was an injection of \$23 billion of new, federal cash into the health care system, but no improvements into the system. Most of the new money simply went to increase salaries and not to increase the services delivered. Some of that money went to things like lawnmowers and ice machines.

All the NDP does is study. We've had Podiluk, Fyke, Mazankowski, Kirby, and Romanow, but the NDP have not made substantial changes to improve the system.

In the 1990's, the NDP shut down many nurse training spaces. They shut down the nursing diploma program with no foresight to creating more spaces. Because of this shortsighted change, there is a shortfall in supply of nurses of between 105 per year to 330 per year, depending upon recruitment and retention strategies. In similar way, the LPN shortfall of supply is between 64 per year and 129 per year. We will approach this shortfall in a rational manner. If we implement a well thought out, reasonable retention strategy Saskatchewan can work with approximately



130 training spaces per year. That means offering up to new recruits full-time employment, creating a workplace of choice, offering first time signing bonuses, forgiveness of student loans through the tax credit, continuing education bursaries, and assistance to ensure sufficient Aboriginal participation in the health care work force.

The big issues in the health care system are:

- 1) retention of specialists – Retention of specialist will occur if there is sufficient care and attention to maintain the balance between research, teaching and clinical work; building teams of health practitioners and creating a workplace of choice. Also, we must ensure new physicians adequate surgery times in the O.R. Saskatchewan Liberals propose to develop a retention model based on the highly successful local practice of recruiting and retaining anaesthetists in Saskatchewan. Specialists must be able to work in an environment of mutual respect; be able to plan for their future career; see co-operation among different health centers; and most of all, have a sense of pride in their workplace.
- 2) dealing with the waiting lists – NDP commitment in 1999 was to guarantee, at the most, a 15 minute wait at emergency rooms for service. Just this year, they finally came out with a province-wide waiting list for surgeries schedule: No kidding. The NDP has fumbled the ball with the lack of trained technicians to operate MRIs and CT scans in the province. Many of our MRIs only operate for six hours a day, and sit idle the rest of the time. Saskatchewan Liberals propose to reduce the backlog of surgery times by implementing a diagnostic, analysis, and surgery time model across the province that was developed at RUH in cardiology.
- 3) accountability within the health care system (i.e., how the money is actually spent). Saskatchewan Liberals believe that health care districts must be accountable to the public on how public health care dollars are spent. That means opening the health regions' books to the provincial auditor.
- 4) Saskatchewan Liberals believe that we must take action on the Fyke report and on the Romanow Commission, in particular primary health care clinics. For example in Toronto, the Albany Clinic (www.albanyclinic.ca) on the Danforth provides community-based health care. Family physicians provide comprehensive primary care, while the walk-in clinic ensures urgent problems are dealt with. It's open early, and stays open late. 365 days a year. Such primary clinics will actually save the system money, since people will no longer go to emergency wards of hospitals to address the less grave health care issues. The time to study is over.
- 5) We agree with a regional approach to health care; however, medicare was born out of communities and municipalities, as described in Stuart Houston's *Steps on the Road to Medicare*. We need communities to participate. How can Tony and Margaret in Eston have a say in their health care, when their district is controlled by Rosetown, 100 miles away. Therefore, Saskatchewan Liberals propose that we move back to blended boards -- part elected, part appointed -- to find the right mix of community participation.
- 6) Health care dollars need to be spent strategically. How can the Calvert NDP endorse a system that only runs MRIs six hours a day, while sending SGI and Workers Compensation Board (WCB) patients to Medicine Hat, Alberta to private MRI clinics? Saskatchewan health care dollars are flowing out into Alberta rather than creating service delivery here. Saskatchewan Liberals believe our current diagnostic equipment should now be run longer, and more efficiently in order to reduce wait lists, and stop queue jumping, and stop our Saskatchewan health care dollars paying for Alberta-based, private MRI clinics.



“Governments should reconsider the current practice by which some workers’ compensation agencies contract with private providers to deliver fast-track diagnostic services to potential claimants.”

- Roy Romanow, Building on Values, The Future of Health Care in Canada, xxv.

7) To create the workplace of choice for specialists, they need to be able to research, teach and practice – if they desire – so that they can remain world-class, and create clusters of specialists, and centres of excellence. Saskatchewan should leverage federal dollars to carve out a niche as a partner in a national Center for Disease Control, as the nexus point of plant, animal and human science. For great health care workers, we need to create the workplace of choice, and a culture of mentors and of community belonging.

8) Our commitment to new mothers

- 48 hours of rest and instruction within the hospital before being sent home with your baby.
- Begin licensing mid-wives and assigning mid-wives to expectant mothers who might be at risk of bearing a child with FAS or FAE to provide instruction and support.

9) EMS –

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that an great emergency medical service response system is necessary for rural residents to have confidence in their health care system. The NDP has allowed chronic wage inequity between the private providers and the public (50% administered through Regional Health Authorities, and 50% contracted out by Regional Health Authorities) to eat away at the system. Further, the NDP has allowed a shortfall in funding for vehicle replacement. We need to remedy this shortfall, and we need to improve response times.

Saskatchewan Liberals believe in a rural medical services vision that allows for mobile services to be part of the primary health care formula, and administer health services particularly in rural Saskatchewan. For example, blood pressure clinics, diabetes monitoring, drug therapy, could be administered through the EMS system.

10) Standardized fees

Most of all for rural residents, Saskatchewan Liberals would commit to standardize ambulance fees across the province for a flat rate of \$250. For example, the current trip from Meadow Lake to Saskatoon is \$1500.00. This fee schedule would encourage assessment at regional health centers.



- 11) Saskatchewan Liberals would continue to build on regional reciprocal agreements, in particular for high prices diagnostic services, and complex surgeries requiring large capital outlays for state-of-the-art equipment.
- 12) Saskatchewan Liberals believe that individuals must take responsibility to live a healthy lifestyle and make healthy choices. Liberals would transition 2% of the health budget to health promotion. Studies have demonstrated that the largest impact on health outcomes are: income, level of education, diet, adequate housing, sufficient exercise, and also quitting smoking. Liberals would: encourage school boards to stop the sale of junk food with high fat content in elementary and high schools; encourage school boards to ban smoking entirely from any school property; mandate exercise time for all students, from K-12; ensure families have adequate housing through the Build Saskatchewan program, and fully implement an industry cluster strategy to create careers, not just low-wage McJobs in the Saskatchewan economy.
- 13) Health Information - Saskatchewan Liberals support the creation of a pan-Canadian, electronic health care record, which would also take into account real privacy concerns of Saskatchewan citizens. (Romanow, Recommendation 9, p. 249). The NDP has wasted tens of millions of dollars on SHIN. Rather than utilizing a local company, like BDM Information Systems, they chose a U.S.-based firm out of San Diego. Awarding the contract to a local, Saskatchewan firm could have saved tens of millions of dollars, and actually produced a product that works. SHIN never fulfilled its original mandate to produce an electronic health care record; now, the Calvert NDP have quietly rolled SHIN into SaskHealth to conceal costs.
- 14) Homecare – Homecare transfer

When federal funds become available through the Home Care Transfer, we will support the expansion of the Canada Health Act to include medically necessary home care services in the following areas:

- Home mental health case management and intervention services
- Home care services for post acute patients
- Palliative home care services to support people in their last six months of life should be included under the Canada Health Act.

Saskatchewan Liberals will offer a commitment to Seniors who enter long-term care facilities that any yearly nursing home fee increases would not exceed rate of increase in the cost of living. In 2002, the Calvert NDP tried to introduce a huge increase in long-term care fees to 90% of a resident's income, taking RRSP funds and mutual fund dividend income, going after Seniors' life-savings. The Calvert NDP change to long-term care fees would have meant an increase by as much as 148% in one year. Under the Calvert NDP fee structure, residents of a long-term care facility would pay 90% of monthly income over \$949 to a maximum of \$3,875 per month. The increase also would have led to long-time married couples agreeing to an involuntary legal separation, and also the working disabled, who must live in care facilities, having most of their employment income being clawed back.

We also believe in taking preventative action. That is why we will fund the Health Regions to distribute spiky shoes to Seniors, age 65 and older during late fall and winter months. This measure will save money through reduced hip replacements necessitated by hip fractures. We will endeavour to find other such cost-saving investments throughout the system.

We believe that a new, integrated health sciences facility should be part of a larger strategy. Saskatchewan could be home to a national Centre for Disease Control, which would leverage federal funds and extra-provincial funds to create a world-class health facility. Such a facility could be in concert with healthcare dedicated diagnostic beamlines at the Synchrotron, and the convergence of our Vet Med College, College of Agriculture, and the Vaccine Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO).



4. Safe Communities

Safe communities begin with prevention, building partnerships, and a strong anti-gang strategy.

Children who live in safe neighbourhoods have access to civic resources such as well-lit parks, libraries and youth centers which are opened every day of the week with staff and mentors, and access to green space do better in physical, social and intellectual development. Children in our core neighbourhoods are even more concerned about personal safety than they are about food and housing. We would mandate Crowns to sponsor weekend opening of such facilities.

In order to build safer communities, we need to ensure residential stability. The Saskatchewan Liberals "Build Saskatchewan" plan is the first step in ensuring those in low to medium income brackets will be able to build equity in a home, and eventually take ownership in their home.

Saskatchewan Liberals will encourage municipalities and developers in the province (much like Dundee Realty does in Calgary) to offer mixed housing developments, so that no one area of our cities become run-down or a fragmented community.

Safe communities means having rental stock that is well-kept and well maintained. The application for a damage deposit by a landlord, in particular on social service renters, will trigger a provincial inspection visit. Far too often, damage deposits are collected without an inspection of the premises, and tenants move in without appropriate repairs having taken place. The quality of rental stock and communities subsequently declines.

The Cities Act must be changed to allow for greater local levies in enterprise zones, and in core neighbourhoods, so that these core neighbourhoods could ensure the provision of community centers, grocery stores and green space to meet particular needs and demographics. A specific tax levy revenue would be co-administered by the City and a designated local community organization.

A successful graffiti prevention program must include education in schools, public and street-level strategies to target high-risk youth who might not be in school. A graffiti strategy must stress that graffiti is illegal, damaging to our community. Such vandalism must be treated more seriously and with consequences.



The Cities Act must be changed to allow centers to regulate the sale of spray paint. For example, in New York City, which has had great success in curbing graffiti, the sale of spray paint is restricted to those over 18 years of age, and accessible to purchase behind the counter. And a database of tags is available to law enforcement.

We recognize that inequities for staffed policing exists across the province with different rates, fee structures, and coverage. Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to consulting municipalities about a renewed policing agreement which would address inequities of funding and of coverage.

To prevent young people from even thinking about getting involved in gangs, we believe in an integrated and coordinated gang strategy. Justice, social services, our police, our teachers... all must part of the solution. Boot camp will only make better criminals. The Liberal plan is not just about punishment – but a skills camp with curriculum which includes: life-skills, positive decision making, anger management, setting of personal goals, conflict resolution, and building self-esteem.



We believe that it is essential to deal with the root causes of crime. Although a short-term de-tox facility has federal funding, there has been no visible provincial support. Saskatchewan Liberals believe we must treat the whole individual. Peoples' addictions often lead to encounters with our justice system. The de-tox facility is still waiting. Liberals will act before any more deaths, before any more inquests.

An inter-sectoral approach to dealing with gangs should be taken, which would encompass prevention, intervention and suppression of gangs and gang-related activity.

Prevention occurs at the school level with education; intervention within the justice system; and suppression at correctional facilities. All three elements would seek to be coordinated, and not act in isolation.

The Interim Report of the Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform contends that gangs exist in Saskatchewan and are beginning to affect First Nations and Métis people:

"Gangs involving First Nations and Métis youth began to appear in the early 1990's. Most were active in larger urban centres, particularly in Regina and Saskatoon. Gangs in Saskatchewan are criminal organizations that lead to increased crime such as: escalation of violence, damage to property, intimidation, sexual exploitation, prostitution, and drugs... immediate action must be taken by all levels of government working together to reduce gang involvement."

We must also develop strategies to direct youth away from gang-related activity, such as youth sexual exploitation, once they have been associated with a gang. One important action has been to set-up safe houses, like Rossbrook House in Winnipeg, to act as a haven for youth. Many of the safe houses in Winnipeg are set in core neighbourhoods, and often staffed by former gang members. A similar program would work right here in inner cities.

We must also try to divert young people away from incarceration and to culturally appropriate programs and services that will develop good citizens. We must also develop standards for youth facilities so that we are developing citizens, not hardened criminals.



5. Strong Communities and sustainable communities

Saskatchewan Liberals believe that we need to protect our air and our water. Our water must be safe to drink. We cannot afford to cut back on environmental protection or on pursuing a growth agenda without concern for sustainable development.

We are committed to increasing the amount of GreenPower available to consumers while at the same time adding to the bottom line of municipalities and agricultural producers. The transmission grid must stay in public hands, but we should also allow companies and our agricultural sector to feed into the grid through non-GHG emitting generation. Municipal governments along with our other public institutions are best poised to increase energy efficiency, reduce waste, and protect our natural environment. Liberals are committed to extending the benchmarks and knowledge of building a sustainable community – being piloted in Regina and in Craik -- throughout the province.

We will benchmark a goal for SaskPower of having 10% of our energy supply produced by non-GHG emitting sources by 2010. We can move to cleaner alternatives like co-generation, run-of-river hydro, municipal landfill and agricultural methane capture, and windpower. This initiative will increase our energy supply, create new careers for our rural economy, increase our ability to create clean, sustainable communities.

Increasing energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption make solid economic sense and is good for our natural environment. Using our Crowns strategically to increase energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption is a good idea. SaskEnergy and SaskPower will continue to promote energy efficiency measures within the home, in the workplace, and at all levels of government, including our municipalities.

Our municipalities must also be given the tools to plan regional transportation, and make the strategic investments necessary to upgrade their infrastructure. We are committed to pushing the next federal government to transferring 4 cents/litre of the federal gas tax to municipalities. We are also committed to revisiting the municipal sharing agreement, so that our Cities, Towns, and Villages have a secure sense of funding and make rational planning decisions over a four year period.

Saskatchewan Liberals would work hard to renew the Canada Saskatchewan Infrastructure program, which has worked well to renew sustainable infrastructure with a renewed focus on creating a safe, secure water supply and also reducing greenhouse gas emissions within our communities. Safer. More energy efficient. It makes sense.



6. Seniors

Commitment to Health Care

Saskatchewan Liberals offer a commitment to Seniors who enter long-term care facilities that any yearly nursing home fee increases would not exceed rate of increase in the cost of living.

Commitment to Safe Communities

We commit to an integrated anti-gang strategy that will curb the illegal sex and drug trade, in particular in areas where our Seniors have lived their entire lives and have chosen to retire.

Also, we would promote programs and services which would allow Seniors to live in their own homes for as long as possible, and work with real estate developers to develop a new stock of grouped Seniors homes, where 10 to 12 Seniors could live together sharing common areas, and some assisted living.

7. First Nations and Métis People

- We support a provincial housing initiative to enable individual families to own a starter home.
- We will work to remove short-sighted policy of the funding cap on post-secondary education for First Nations people that was imposed in the late 1980's.
- We will engage in active health promotion programmes culturally appropriate for First Nations people.

We believe that our resources should be pooled when it comes to serving First Nations people and their health care in particular in our North. We would adopt a recommendation in the Romanow report that "the funding for Aboriginal health services provided by the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Aboriginal organizations should be pooled into single consolidated budgets to used to provide health care services, improve access, and provide adequate, stable and predictable funding." (Romanow, 223)

We must utilize our public Crowns in a strategic fashion to develop a highly skilled workforce. We will build linkages between First Nations and our Crowns, our co-operatives, and the private sector. We want to develop the Crowns and the civil service as the workplace of choice for Saskatchewan's



aboriginal people. We will develop internships within the Crowns the Crowns to build that skilled workforce.

We also believe we need to build capacity in our young people, through having the Crowns as the platform for: leadership development skills; mentoring in the workplace; skills preparation; building linkages with educational institutions.

Saskatchewan Liberals are committed to:

- Put in place policies and make available programmes to create culturally sensitive workplaces.
- Pilot a mentorship programme in the public service, school boards, municipal departments, in emergency services departments and through private sector partnerships, so that there is interaction between aboriginal youth and non-aboriginals.
- Create a safe neighbourhoods programme, so that young people don't believe they need to join a gang to belong. That means a) piloting a safe-house project, modeled upon Rossbrook house in Winnipeg
b) apportion funding for art, culture, athletics for youth to build self esteem, identity and sense of self worth.
- Focus on industry clusters which would enable aboriginal partnerships on a go-forward basis. For example, indigenous tourism, resort & entertainment, an emergency services training and staffing capability, ethanol and biodiesel production, a cluster on the forest fringe based on woodlots, wood processing, manufactured wood products, and designer furniture manufacturing.
- Work in partnership with the federal government to deliver urban services to aboriginal people.





III - Building a Team of Community Leaders

1. Ensuring transparency and accountability

The growth of Saskatchewan's accumulated deficit (net debt) under the Calvert NDP to \$9.3 billion has placed the province at risk. People deserve to know the true state of our finances. We will not try to hide the true state of the provincial finances through misrepresenting budget items like the true nature of the fiscal stabilization fund.

Saskatchewan Liberals commit to present a summary financial plan for the entire Government as part of our budget package.

We also commit to releasing Crown annual reports in a staggered fashion so there is not a paper flurry at fiscal year end. Our major Crowns will be mandated to hold open, annual public meetings to remain accountable to their stakeholders: the Saskatchewan people. Further, we would commit to establishing a truly independent public utility review board.

All facets of the Saskatchewan government must be open to Freedom of Information requests. These measures will improve confidence in public figures.

2. Increasing democratic participation

David Karwacki became involved in public life to prove that his generation of community leaders could engage in public life, and make a real difference. Saskatchewan Liberals commit to increasing democratic participation through greater respect of the legislature, empowering committees of the legislature to review public appointments and to initiate legislation.

We also believe that people have a responsibility to become more informed about public policy issues at a younger age. We will encourage elementary and high schools to have "virtual votes" during actual civic, provincial and federal election campaigns. We will also make greater use of electronic bulletin boards and discussion rooms to engage citizens in public debate.





3. Celebrating Diversity and welcoming new Canadians

We are committed to strengthening an immigration accord with the federal government in order to address the increasing dependency ratio and lack of enterprise in the province. New immigrants to Saskatchewan can provide new exciting ideas, hard work, and the capital to create exciting opportunities for the people of Saskatchewan.

New Canadians also help remind us of our diversity. We need to celebrate diversity as a strength, not something to be feared. Saskatchewan Liberals will also negotiate an agreement with the new federal government to improve support for settlement services and language integration for immigrants.

We will work with community-based organizations, lending them human services capacity, to assist new Canadians, and ease the transition into Saskatchewan life and values.

Most importantly, we will work with professional associations and trades certification to ensure new Saskatchewan residents have timely access to practice their trade or profession for those who have qualified outside of Canada.

The fact remains that far too many barriers prevent immigrants from gainful employment in their area of expertise. We will take action to ensure new Canadians can fully participate in the economic and social life of our province.



4. About David Karwacki

David Karwacki believes in creating careers for Saskatchewan people, ensuring a home for families, and building a team of community leaders across the province for good government. He was elected Leader of Saskatchewan Liberals in October 2001, and will be seeking election to the legislature as the member for Saskatoon Meewasin.

David Karwacki grew up in Saskatoon, and has been a lifelong resident of Saskatchewan.

Educated in Saskatoon, David attended the University of Saskatchewan, graduating from the College of Commerce in 1989. He also has engaged in continuing business education at M.I.T. in Boston.

In 1990 David Karwacki and three business partners founded Star Produce, Ltd., an international fresh produce distribution company. David has served as Chief Operating Officer of the company, and as its CEO. The Star partners have grown the company to over 200 employees across North America with revenues of over \$100 million per year. His business has enabled him to connect with the global marketplace, and with agricultural producers around the world.

David Karwacki has been an active member of the Saskatchewan community. During his university studies, David was a member of the University of Saskatchewan Huskie basketball team, which represented Saskatchewan at the national level, competing in the national championships. He has served as the President of the Huskie Basketball Alumni Association; was a founding board member of the University of Saskatchewan Athletic Endowment Fund; and participates as an active member of the St. Anne's faith community.

David is married to Laurie Karwacki, an educator; they have chosen to live in Saskatchewan, and raise their family of four children: Jonathan, Alix, Sarah and Luke.