

BECAUSE ALBERTA BELONGS TO YOU

The Alberta New Democrat Plan to make
Alberta's Prosperity work for everyone



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Making Alberta’s Prosperity Work for Everyone	5
Quality Public Healthcare	6
Delivering Affordable Electricity	8
Education for Success	10
Protect Our Environment	14
Oil Sands Prosperity	16
New Expenditures & Revenues	18



MAKING ALBERTA'S PROSPERITY WORK FOR EVERYONE



“IN A PROVINCE AS RICH AS ALBERTA, IN NATURAL RESOURCES AND HUMAN POTENTIAL, **EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET HIGH QUALITY HEALTH CARE, A GOOD EDUCATION AND FIRST RATE PUBLIC SERVICES. IT’S ALL A MATTER OF PRIORITIES.”**

- Brian Mason // Leader, Alberta's NDP

This election you have a choice – you can vote for a party that stands with the rich and powerful over the interests of ordinary Alberta families.

Or you can vote for Alberta’s New Democrats – a party committed to fighting for the things that matter most to working and middle income families.

We believe that it’s time that Alberta’s prosperity, drawn from our shared natural resource wealth, worked for all Albertans, not just a select few. And we’re going to spend the election showing how this can be done.

Our platform has 5 key commitments – it’s not a vague shopping list, or a recipe for cuts to public services. These commitments are practical, attainable and would improve the lives of every Albertan. And they could be started the day after the election.

OUR IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES ARE:

- Providing Quality Public Healthcare
- Delivering Affordable Electricity
- Helping Young Albertans Succeed
- Sustaining a Clean, Healthy Environment
- Making Oil Sands Prosperity Work for all Albertans

We’ve priced our commitments to Albertans, and outlined what they’ll cost in our New Expenditures & Revenues. All of our initiatives can be paid for by increasing revenue to the province from bitumen, moving corporate tax rates toward the Canadian average, and asking the wealthiest Albertans to pay a fairer share of their income to provide the public services that all of us need and use.

After 40 years in power the Conservative Government has lost touch with the concerns and problems of most middle income Albertans, and is more interested in what big business has to say. Even after the election of a new Conservative Leader last fall, we’ve seen that it’s still the same old Conservative Party underneath.

The Wildrose Party says that the government should be even more in the pocket of the oil and gas industry. The Liberals are drifting and don’t know who they represent anymore.

We know that with the right priorities we can make Alberta’s prosperity work for everyone. We know that in a province this rich no one should be left behind. We know that we can have both good jobs and excellent public services that meet the needs of Albertans.

And we know that with your help, with your vote, we can turn politics in Alberta upside down, and put our priorities right side up.

That’s what New Democrats are going to work for, every day, for the next four years.

That’s our commitment to you.

BECAUSE ALBERTA BELONGS TO YOU

PROVIDING QUALITY PUBLIC HEALTHCARE WHEN YOU AND YOUR FAMILY NEED IT

The Conservative record shows that they can't be trusted to keep our healthcare system in public hands. Alberta's New Democrats will make an excellent public health care system our top priority and make sure our tax dollars are used only to improve the health of Albertans; not a penny should go to private profit.

We believe that it's time that Alberta's prosperity, drawn from our shared natural resource wealth, worked for all Albertans, not just a select few. And we're going to spend the election showing how this can be done.

Alberta's NDP is committed to a new way of providing health care within our publicly funded and publicly delivered health care system. We want a continuum of care so that our seniors can live in dignity in their own homes as long as possible, and when they can't any longer we must ensure quality long-term care.

We can start today to:

- Keep the cap on accommodation costs for seniors in continuing care facilities;
- Increase funding to homecare by \$100 million in order to improve services for more than 100,000 Albertans in their homes;
- Regulate minimum staff to patient ratios for all caregivers and medical staff; and
- Build and staff at least an additional 1,500 new long-term care beds within the next 2 years, so that seniors get the care they need and hospital beds are available for those who need them.

But the problems in our health care system affect all of us—not just seniors, and those needing long-term care.

- The Conservatives have failed to come near their own targets for emergency rooms wait times

- Since 2002 the number of private operators receiving public funds for health care services has nearly doubled ;
- The NDP revealed queue jumping for special friends;
- \$4 million was wasted when the Conservative government had to bail out the private Network Health HRC facility in Calgary in 2010;
- The Conservatives have consistently reduced services covered by medicare; and
- Alberta is short at least 500 family doctors and 1,000 nurses;

Health is about more than hospitals, and we could immediately improve the lives of young Albertans through basic dental care. Seniors need a Pharmacare system they can afford. More family doctors are desperately needed and enhanced use of clinics would improve access to urgent care and reduce the strain on emergency rooms.

We can start today to:

- Reduce emergency room wait times and free up expensive acute care hospital beds by expanding our homecare and long term care systems and increasing the number of mental health care beds;
- Begin the introduction of a basic dental health plan for all children under the age of 18, to put a smile on their faces and put them on the road to good dental health;
- Give seniors living at home a break on prescription drugs by capping their co-payments at \$25 per month;
- Establish the Alberta Pharmaceutical Savings Agency to lower drug prices by bulk-purchase of prescription medication sold at pharmacies and used by AHS, and adopting a strategy to use less expensive generic drugs when proven to offer equal health outcomes;



- Increase the number of family doctors and nurses by working with medical and nursing schools to increase enrollment, by providing incentives for graduates to work in Alberta, and by improving the process so that internationally educated professionals can work in Alberta;
- Stop the practice of reducing coverage of services by medicare; and
- Expand the provincial government's commitment to preventive health care initiatives.

Privatization and American-style experiments by the Conservatives are no answer to the healthcare needs of ordinary Albertans. It's time to make a real commitment to improving our public health system, to move support out into the community while maintaining our quality hospital services.

“The Conservative record shows that they can't be trusted to keep our healthcare system in public hands. Alberta's New Democrats will make an excellent public health care system our top priority and make sure our tax dollars are used only to improve the health of Albertans; not a penny should go to private profit.”

–Brian Mason

DELIVERING AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY

Ordinary customers – families and small businesses – have seen huge increases in their electricity bills while the power companies have raked in massive profits. Consumers are paying the highest real costs for power in Canada, the price of the stubborn pursuit of deregulation by the Conservatives.

- The average household in January this year paid \$60 a month more than the same time a year ago;
- Meanwhile Enbridge CEO Patrick Daniel earned \$8 million and Epcor's Don Lowry \$2.7 million last year;
- Transalta's net earnings in the first three quarters of 2011 grew 51% to \$201 million, and Capital Power's net earnings rose 24% to \$264 million;
- Small businesses have to send staff home when high energy prices make it too expensive to work;
- Plans to spend as much as \$16.5 billion more in transmission lines in the coming years will drive up the cost of electricity even more;
- The Conservative Cabinet has too much power to make secret decisions on power; and
- The Conservatives have done far too little to help Albertans save energy.

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

We need to regulate electricity prices in Alberta to ensure stable prices and reliable supply.

We can start today to:

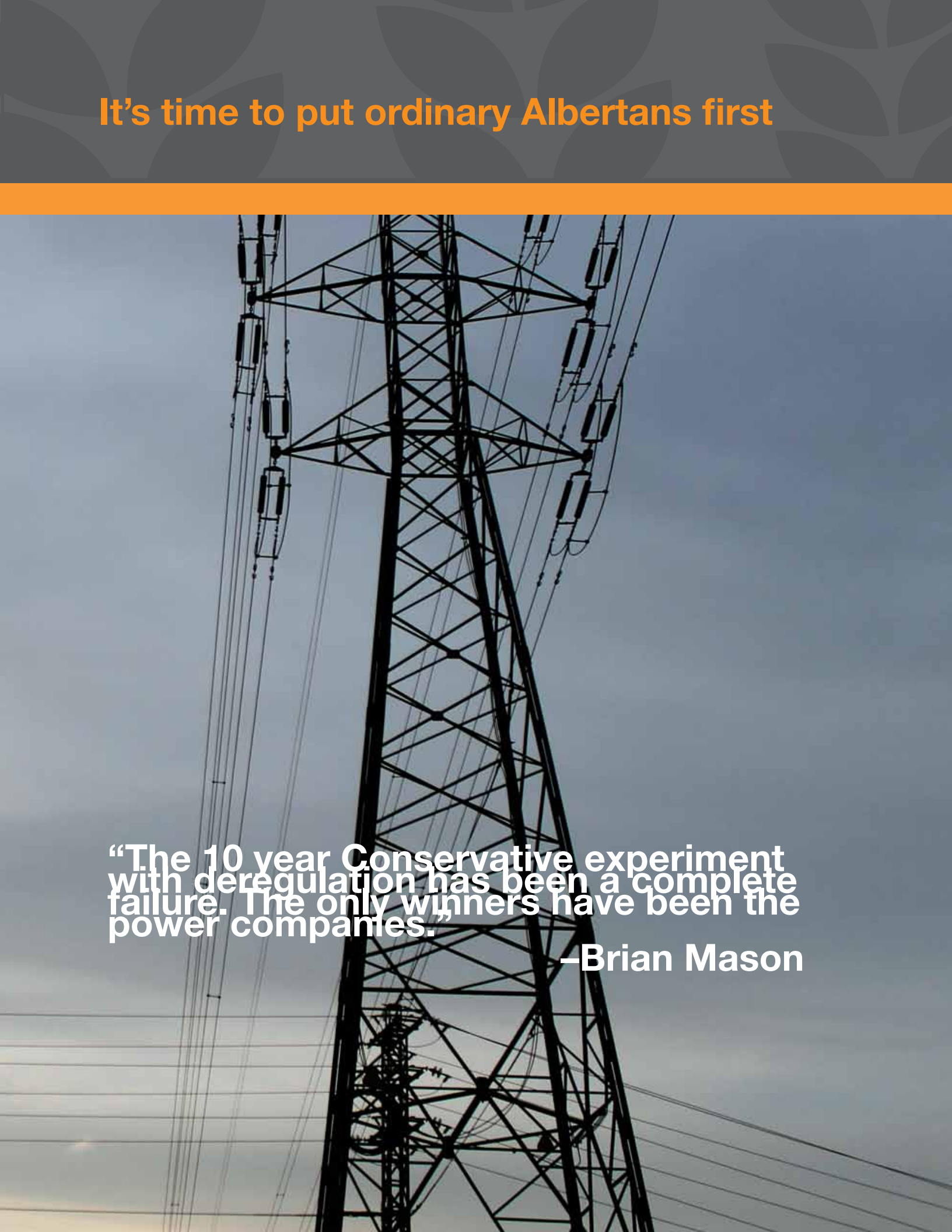
- Make the Alberta Utilities Commission independent from industry with a mandate to protect consumers and ensure that the system is operating for the public good;
- Regulate electricity rates so that we have stable prices that are as low as possible.
- Remove cabinet power to approve utility projects – examine all projects through full public hearings
- Make power corporations pay for transmission lines and make all transmission infrastructure projects subject to open, transparent regulatory approval;
- Encourage local power generation to cut the need for expensive power lines; and
- Make bills easy to understand.

All together, these changes will make a big difference.

They could start working tomorrow.

The Conservative deregulation of power means that we now pay the highest real costs for power in Canada, that ordinary Alberta families are feeling the pinch every month, and that Albertans on low or fixed income are being forced to choose between paying their electricity bills or feeding their families.

It's time to put ordinary Albertans first



“The 10 year Conservative experiment with deregulation has been a complete failure. The only winners have been the power companies.”

—Brian Mason

HELPING YOUNG ALBERTANS SUCCEED

CHILDCARE

Every child deserves a good start in life – excellent, safe care and a stimulating environment. Too many families can't find childcare spaces that meet the needs of their children at a price that they can afford. And too many children aren't getting the care they need to get a good start in life.

The Conservative record on childcare just isn't good enough.

- Alberta spends less per capita on childcare than any other province;
- While Albertans struggle to find childcare spaces, large, profitable corporations like Edleun, the largest childcare provider in Alberta, are getting public grants to subsidize their operations; and
- Every dollar invested in childcare pays back up to \$2.54 to the economy.

Other provinces have made real commitments to make childcare a priority for families and children. We should do no less.

We can start today to:

- Introduce a childcare system that moves towards a maximum daily cost of \$25 per child, with a \$9 per day cap for after school care; and
- Increase the number of spaces available.

EVERY DAY THAT WE WAIT IS A LOST OPPORTUNITY FOR THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

There's no more important an investment in our future than the education of our children. It's how we make sure, no matter where a child is from, how much money their family might have, what their other opportunities might be, that they have a chance to grow to be the best that they can be and contribute fully to our province.

And the Conservatives haven't made the grade.

- The Conservatives have refused to guarantee school boards adequate funding to enable long-term planning;
- There are hundreds fewer staff, including 700 fewer teachers in classrooms than two years ago;
- The Conservatives have failed to respond to the challenges of early childhood education, increasing class sizes, changing demographics and communities, and the hardship of school fees for many families.

Alberta's NDP believes that it's time to make the oil industry, big corporations and the richest Albertans pay their fair share so that we can make sure that our children get the education they need and a fair start in life. It's time to make our children's future a priority and to get serious about making education a foundation for Alberta's future.

It's time that we put Alberta's prosperity to work for our youngest Albertans.

We can start today to:

- Commit to working with school boards to ensure adequate and stable funding for the next four years;
- Implement the recommendations of the Learning Commission to reduce class sizes in Grades 1-9;
- Introduce voluntary full day kindergarten;
- Ensure adequate funding of special needs students (inclusive education) and English as an additional language;
- Prohibit school instructional fees;
- Phase in a targeted school lunch program for elementary students;
- Revise funding formulas for schools to ensure vital schools in mature neighbourhoods are not closed; and
- Create a \$50 million New Beginnings Community Fund that would work with schools, municipal governments and other partners to support effective ideas to bring new life, energy and activity to mature neighbourhoods.



EDUCATION FOR SUCCESS

For far too long, Conservative governments have treated oil companies like first class citizens and our children second class. Conservative governments think that it's fine to cut corporate tax rates and let oil companies have our oils sands at fire sale prices, but when there's a budget crunch educational programs are cut or frozen.

We can do better.

WE CAN GIVE OUR CHILDREN, ALL OF THEM, A FAIR START IN LIFE.

POST-SECONDARY

No young Albertan should be prevented from continuing their education because they don't have the money now or can't face a future of debt. Too many of our best and brightest students have been discouraged from continuing their education, or have been saddled with debt for years, because of the Conservative government's failure to invest in our future.

At a time when corporations are making massive profits from our resources, many young Albertans are going deeper and deeper in debt to get the skills they need to be successful in today's economy. It's a case of the rich getting richer and the young getting poorer.

- Each year as many as 10,000 Albertans graduate from post-secondary education with an average debt load of \$20,000;
- Tens of thousands of young Albertans trying to start their lives struggle to pay off student debt; and

- While pretending to cap tuition fees, the Conservatives have allowed post-secondary institutions to use non-instructional fees to make up for underfunding by government.

It doesn't have to be this way, and it shouldn't. Alberta's NDP have a plan to make sure that students get the education they need at a cost they can afford.

We can start today to:

- Immediately freeze tuition fees;
- Remove all non-instructional fees collected by post-secondary institutions for operating revenue;
- Starting Fall 2012, reduce tuition fees by 10%;
- Help students who graduate from Alberta post-secondary institutions, and who are living in Alberta, by forgiving up to \$1000 per year until student loans are paid off;
- Replace the revenue lost from reducing tuition fees and ending the charging of non-instructional fees; and
- Work with trade unions to increase apprenticeship training.

More of the same old Conservative policies are never going to help young Albertans get a good start in life. And more of the same will never help those young people who can't afford to continue their education beyond highschool.

It's time for programs that recognize by helping young Albertans get the skills they need we're all richer – our province, our communities and our families.

It's all about the values we hold, and the priorities we make.

“It's time we recognized that the most important investment we can make is in our children and young adults. They deserve an early childcare and education system that's the best in Canada, and we're committed to making sure that's what they get.”

-Brian Mason

**IT'S TIME THAT
THE WEALTH OF
TODAY'S ALBERTA
WAS INVESTED IN
PROGRAMS FOR
TOMORROW.**



SUSTAINING A CLEAN, HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

The Conservative government's cozy relationship with the oil and gas industry, and their reliance on industry political donations, has put Alberta's environment, and international reputation, at risk. Rather than making industry pay its fair share today and investing in a sustainable future, the Conservatives have treated Alberta's environment like a get-rich-quick scheme for a wealthy minority.

And our environment has been paying the price.

- Since 2009, under the Conservatives, funding for the Ministry of the Environment has been cut by \$21 million;
- Alberta's portion of greenhouse gas emissions has increased more rapidly than Canada's overall emissions, which have increased 24% since 1990;
- The dangerous growth of massive tailings ponds endangers the environment in North East Alberta, and has created an international black eye for the province;
- The Conservatives want to change the Water Act to expand the market for water across the province—selling water to the highest bidder—while it has cut water monitoring by 25% since 2007; and
- Approximately \$1.6 billion has been given to big business through the Carbon Capture and Sequestration Fund, without reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1 kilogram. For research, industry should be funding itself.

Alberta's New Democrats know that we have to use today's wealth to invest in tomorrow's environment. We're committed to introducing constructive, practical programs to help Albertans reduce their energy use and costs, invest in alternative energy,

make companies live up to their responsibilities under environmental law, and improve our nature reserves.

We can start today to:

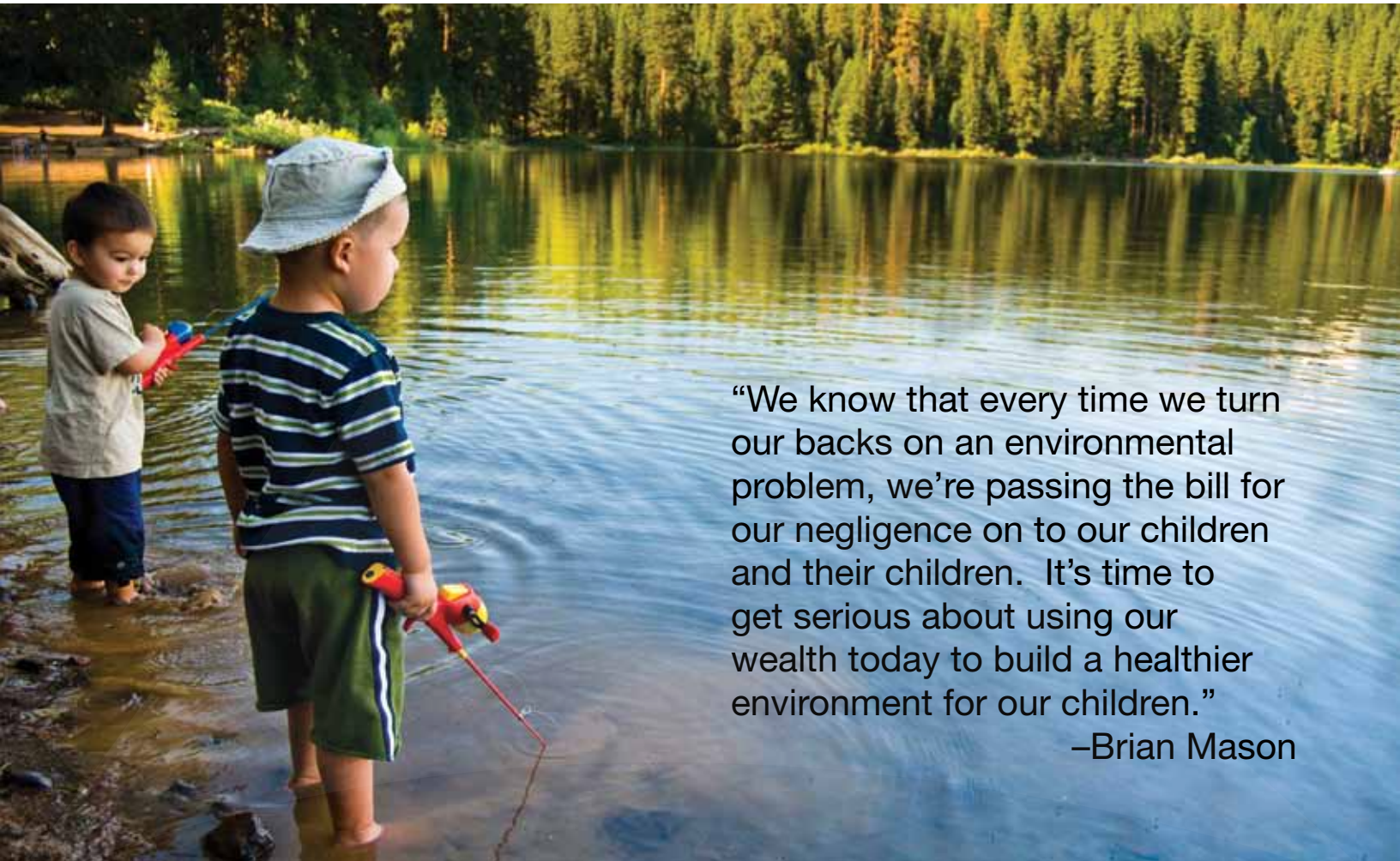
- Immediately end the Carbon Capture and Sequestration Fund's handouts to the oil industry and invest the remaining \$400 million in ways that have more immediate benefit;
- Provide interest-free loans up to \$5,000 to help Albertans retrofit their homes for energy efficiency and revise building codes to ensure speedier movement towards energy efficient building;
- Stop the expansion of water markets and make human and ecosystem needs the priority for water allocation;
- Develop science-based deadlines for the clean-up of all existing tailings ponds, as a cost to the companies and not the public;
- Create a Renewable Development Fund, with an associated research centre, to support activities to make Alberta a leader in energy efficiency and renewable energy generation;
- Increase funding to municipalities to strengthen the GreenTRIP program for public transportation;
- Double the monitoring and enforcement activities of the Ministry of the Environment to make sure that industry lives up to its environmental obligations under the law;
- Immediately appoint an independent scientific panel to review and make recommendations on hydraulic fracturing;

And you can make this happen, because Alberta belongs to you.

- Expand Alberta's network of parks and protected areas aiming for the target of 12% of the province as conserved land in order to preserve habitat for species like caribou and grizzlies;
- Establish the Castle Special Place as a protected wild land park; and
- Eliminate all camping fees in provincial parks and protected areas.

Albertans have always felt that they live in one of the best places on earth, and have had a justifiable pride in their province. But often, we've let the interests of industry dominate when it comes to the interests of ordinary Albertans and our environment.

We can have a prosperous economy and a clean and healthy environment; we can use the wealth we are creating today to invest in a clean and healthy environment for our children.



“We know that every time we turn our backs on an environmental problem, we’re passing the bill for our negligence on to our children and their children. It’s time to get serious about using our wealth today to build a healthier environment for our children.”

–Brian Mason

MAKING OIL SANDS PROSPERITY WORK FOR ALL ALBERTANS

The oil industry, including natural gas and the oil sands, has been a great source of prosperity for Alberta, developed with the hard work of Albertans. It is an industry that depends on resources that belong to all of us and should benefit all of us. The huge resources of the oil sands should be used to provide both a fair return of revenue to the Alberta treasury and create good jobs and economic activity inside Alberta.

For far too long Conservative governments have set the rules so that oil companies prosper while Albertans have been getting too little from resources we all own. For far too long the Conservatives have refused to introduce royalty rates for the oil sands that would put Albertans first, and meet the recommendations of their own “blue ribbon” panel of experts.

It’s time to make sure that we get a fair return on the resources we all share as Albertans. It’s time to invest in the public services – like health and education – that we all need today, and to invest in our future.

And the Conservative government’s willingness to see huge volumes of bitumen shipped out of the province for upgrading and refining comes with a price tag of tens of thousands of good jobs.

- In 2010, Alberta allowed 42% of all bitumen produced to be exported without upgrading, and by 2017 we will be producing 2,880,000 barrels of bitumen/day and exporting half without upgrading;
- As recently as this past February the Conservatives abandoned support for the Alberta First Nations Energy Centre upgrader, a project that would have processed 125,000 barrels of bitumen a day;

- Four upgraders, with full capacity of 550,000 barrels/day, were planned for Alberta and put on hold since 2008. These four projects would mean 4300 to 5300 good, permanent jobs in Alberta, plus tens of thousands of jobs during construction, which would inject over \$30 billion into the economy; and
- By not proceeding with these upgraders we lost over \$400 million in corporate income taxes—every year—that could have been used to provide first class public services, like health care and education, for all Albertans.

Only the Alberta NDP will create the foundations for long-term economic development in Alberta by actively encouraging upgrading of our bitumen. It’s time to end the get-rich-quick sale of our natural resources, and make Alberta jobs a priority now and in the future—and a recent poll showed that more than 80% of Albertans agree.

We can start today to:

- Develop a differential royalty system on bitumen and upgraded products that encourages value added upgrading in Alberta;
- Require all new oilsands developments to have plans for upgrading in Alberta.

We have an unique opportunity to lay a permanent foundation for prosperity for everyone in Alberta—good jobs and the highest quality public services.

It’s time to make Alberta’s wealth work for us; it’s time to make fair royalties and jobs priorities.

It’s time to act like owners.

“Albertans own our non-renewable resources and get to set rules that will deliver a fair return to all Albertans for them. The Conservatives have allowed the big oil companies to ship our bitumen, and jobs, where they please. It’s time to act like owners of our resources and make this prosperity work for all Albertans.”

–Brian Mason



NEW EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

Alberta's New Democrats have a plan to make Alberta's prosperity work for you – not just big corporations, oil sands companies and the richest Albertans.

It's time for everyone to share fairly in our province's prosperity, and it's time that businesses and individuals with the greatest wealth pay more to support the services we all need.

And it's also about a balance – guaranteeing excellent public services, opportunities for our children, jobs from value-added industries, protecting our environment and helping small businesses get a hand up by reducing the small business tax. And we think that part of that balance is about starting to use today's wealth to save for our future.



Program expenditures (thousands of dollars)

	2012-2013
Expanded home care services	100, 000
More long term care spaces	300, 000
Dental care for children	50, 000
Seniors pharmacare	60, 000
Hiring of doctors & nurses	56, 560
Increased mental health care	50, 000
Better child care	50,000
Ending school instructional fees	44, 000
School lunch program	25, 000
Optional full-day kindergarten	30, 000
Increase to inclusive education and E.A.L.	75, 000
Class size reductions	183, 000
New Day Community Fund	50, 000
Tuition reduction	100, 000
End to post-secondary institution non-instructional fees	75, 000
Grants to post-secondary institution graduates with debt	31, 000
Environmental monitoring and enforcement	60,000
Interest free loans for home upgrading & retrofitting	400, 000
Renewable Energy Development Fund	50, 000
GreenTRIP expansion	100, 000
End camping fees in provincial parks	7, 500
Sub-total:	1,897,060
Reduce the small business tax (loss of revenue)	165,000
TOTAL	2,062,060

Tax and Royalty Changes (thousands of dollars)

Changes to personal income taxes	812,000
Changes to corporate tax rate	796,000
Changes to bitumen royalties	1,400,000
Total	3,008,000

The balance of \$945,940,000 will be used to strengthen the Heritage Trust Fund.

