

VISION ACTION BAILLIE

May 16, 2017

Sean Cain, on behalf of
John Hanrahan, President
Confederation of Canadian Unions
Via email: media@ccu-csc.ca

Dear Mr. Cain,

I am pleased to respond to your questionnaire as follows:

Political Party Questionnaire for 2017 Nova Scotia General Election

Labour

1. Statistics Canada reports unionized workers enjoy 14 to 20 percent higher wages than nonunionized workers in the same line of work, as well as stronger pensions, superior health and safety standards, longer paid vacation time, better health and drug benefits, and more rights in the workplace. Does your party believe that unions play a positive role in our economy? If so, what policies will your party implement to create a climate that is easier for unions to organize?

The PC Party respects the role unions play in protecting the interests of Nova Scotia workers.

A PC government will repeal Bill 75 and Bill 148 to restore the role of collective bargaining.

Nova Scotians are tired of governments with no vision. Governments that only focus on cuts. They are tired of paying more and making do with less. Nova Scotia is better than that. We can do better.

We have an optimistic, pro-growth agenda that focuses on rebuilding our province, creating jobs and getting Nova Scotians back to work. We will:

- Create thousands of jobs by rebuilding our province's infrastructure.
- Recruit more doctors and invest in mental health care.
- Build an education system that puts kids first and supports our economic needs.
- Treat seniors with the respect they deserve.
- Make Nova Scotia greener and improve our economy at the same time.

- Stand up for Nova Scotia and get our fair share from Ottawa.
- Begin to get the cost of living down.
- Be accountable to Nova Scotians.

2. Will your government respect the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada and the core conventions of the International Labour Organization regarding freedom of association, collective bargaining, and the right to strike for unions?

A Progressive Conservative government will respect the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada. Our goal is to negotiate agreements with unions at the bargaining table and avoid long and expensive court cases.

3. According to the Workers Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, there has been an average of 10 acute and 18 chronic workplace fatalities in our province each year. This makes the per capita rate of workplace fatalities in Nova Scotia among the highest in Canada. What will your party do to guarantee better health and safety conditions to reduce workplace injuries and fatalities? Will your party commit to increasing workplace inspection by department inspectors as an enforcement tool?

Workplace health and safety is a serious concern and will be a priority for a PC government. We will work with employers and unions to improve workplace safety and decrease the number of accidents.

4. While corporate profits, productivity and GDP have all increased consistently during the past thirty years, Statistics Canada reports that both real hourly wages and median family income have been stagnant since 1980. Why do you think this has happened, and what does your party propose to change the situation? Will your party commit to instituting a \$15 an hour minimum wage in Nova Scotia?

We have a vision for a provincial government that brings down the cost of living for the people living in our province. Nova Scotians need a break. High taxes, high power rates, and ever-increasing prices make it impossible for too many hardworking families to get ahead.

A new Progressive Conservative government will give families some much needed relief:

- We will **cut taxes to get the cost of living down** for thousands of Nova Scotians, starting with the Nova Scotians who need it the most.
- We will **freeze the Seniors' Pharmacare cost-share ratio** so governments can't make seniors pay more than their fair share.
- Under a Progressive Conservative government, there will **be no tolls on our roads and highways**.
- Nova Scotians already pay too many taxes. A Progressive Conservative government **will not impose a carbon tax**.

- We will make life more affordable by **raising the Basic Personal Amount** by up to \$3,000 for people with incomes below \$75,000. This one move will cut taxes for 500,000 Nova Scotians.

The Economy

5. According to a recent study published by the Nova Scotia Centre for Policy Alternatives, income inequality in Nova Scotia is at a forty year high. How will your party reverse this trend and reduce the growing levels of economic inequality in the province?

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- The Rebuild Nova Scotia Fund will create thousands of jobs by repairing secondary roads and bridges, twinning our most dangerous highways, replacing the Victoria General Hospital, expanding high-speed internet, and investing more in community infrastructure. This will create jobs while also getting the cost of living down.

6. According to a recent Vote Compass poll, 71% of Canadians believe corporations should pay more taxes and 77% of Canadians believe the wealthy should pay more taxes. Does your party believe that those who benefit the most should pay their fair share of taxes? Will your party commit to raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy?

A PC government believes everyone should pay their fair share and that those who need it most should be given a break. That's why we are raising the basic Personal Amount for those who make below \$75,000.

Creating jobs will be the top priority of a Jamie Baillie government. Our goal is to put 10,000 Nova Scotians to work rebuilding our province. We will invest in crumbling roads, bridges and buildings. We will lower taxes for all job creators, instead of the old way of hand outs, grants and rebates for a select few.

We will stop handing out grants and rebates to large corporations, like the Royal Bank. Those rebates totalled over \$100 million under the McNeil government. Instead, a new Progressive Conservative government will increase the small business threshold from \$350,000 to \$500,000. We will work to get business taxes down for those businesses that grow and create jobs. That means more businesses will pay less business tax.

7. Over the past several years, the debt-to-GDP ratio in Nova Scotia has compared favorably with that of most of the Atlantic Provinces and Ontario and Quebec. Will your party commit to rejecting an austerity agenda as a regressive economic strategy that has been proven to weaken economies and stifle economic growth?

Jamie Baillie and the Nova Scotia PC party have an optimistic, pro-growth agenda that focuses on rebuilding our province, creating jobs and getting Nova Scotians back to work. Nova Scotians are tired of governments with no vision that only focus on cuts.

Over the next four years, a Progressive Conservative government will invest more in critical Nova Scotia infrastructure priorities. We'll create thousands of jobs in the process and maintain a balanced budget.

The PC jobs plan will grow the economy and create jobs by investing \$1 billion in roads, bridges and other public infrastructure. We will do this while anchoring the province's debt to GDP ratio at the current level. We will work with the federal government and others so our new infrastructure investments are matched to boost the total of the Rebuild Nova Scotia Fund to \$2 billion.

8. Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) have a terrible track record in Nova Scotia as well as other provinces, and are an inefficient, exceedingly costly mechanism to deliver public services. Will your party commit to the delivery of government services without the use of P3s?

A Progressive Conservative government will always look for the best deal for Nova Scotia taxpayers.

The PC platform contains the long-term plan that Nova Scotia needs to finally move ahead. To be effective we also need strong accountability measures. That means a Premier who answers to the people of Nova Scotia.

A new Progressive Conservative government will put in place strong accountability including:

- Fixed election dates within the first six months in office.
- A complete review and public report by the Auditor General of the province's books, six months before the election.
- Increase the per vote funding parties receive by 50 per cent for votes cast for women, African Nova Scotians and Indigenous candidates.
- Independent costing of party platforms.
- An annual review of government promises with annual public reporting on whether they have been kept or broken.

Healthcare

9. There are thousands of people in the province on waiting lists for surgery, home care, and finding a family doctor. What will your party do to fund more doctors, nursing positions and hospital beds throughout the province, and ensure that our health care system is there for us when we need it?

Too many Nova Scotians don't have a family doctor and have lost hope of finding one. We can deliver better care by reducing overhead and bureaucracy within the health system and investing that money in frontline services.

We will work with Dalhousie University, the Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS), Doctors Nova Scotia, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and the health authority to look at the path from graduation to practice-ready to make it easier for qualified physicians who studied abroad to work here at home.

We will double the tuition relief program for doctors and nurse practitioners willing to practice in rural and underserved communities. We will invest \$13.5 million in recruiting new doctors to Nova Scotia. We will work with doctors to get this right.

A PC government will fund at-home cancer drugs and we will hire more nurse practitioners.

We will rein in the Nova Scotia Health Authority by requiring real administrative savings and invest those savings in frontline care. We will ensure they approve new doctors for communities who need them.

10. Increasing drug costs are a significant hardship for many Nova Scotians. What will your party do to improve Pharmacare and ensure all Nova Scotians have access to the medications they need?

Seniors should never be asked to pay more than their fair share. A PC government will freeze the Seniors' Pharmacare cost-share ratio to ensure no future government will download additional costs to our seniors.

11. There has been significant media coverage of recent funding cuts to senior's homes. Is this necessary as a matter of policy? What are your party's policies and commitments in this area?

Nova Scotian seniors built our province. But after all their contributions, seniors are not getting the respect or support they deserve from the McNeil Liberals. Millions of dollars of Liberal cuts to nursing homes mean many seniors are eating on less than \$5 per day. That just isn't right. We will immediately reverse the cuts.

We will enshrine in law the Seniors' Bill of Rights to affirm our commitment to the health and well-being of Nova Scotians living in long-term care facilities, now and in the future. This new law will confirm our commitment to provide quality care and accommodation that is safe, comfortable and supports a high quality of life for seniors in nursing homes.

In addition, we will increase funding for programs to help seniors repair and stay in their own homes by \$4.5 million.

Education

12. According to Global News, tuition increases for post-secondary students in Nova Scotia in 2016 were double the national average, making Nova Scotia the second most expensive province in which to study. Young people are our future, and they simply deserve much better. What will your party do to reverse these large scale tuition fee increases and make post-secondary education accessible to all Nova Scotians?

To make Nova Scotia an easier place to earn a quality education and to make our province more attractive to newcomers, we will enter into a new Memorandum of Understanding with our universities so we can get tuition back down to the national average.

A PC government will work with students to replace the Graduate Retention Rebate cut by the McNeil Liberals.

13. The educators in our public school system are vital to our economy and the future prosperity of our province, yet the government has attempted to create a surplus from painful cuts to public education. What will your party do to recognize the commitment and contribution of teachers and educational support workers in our province? Will your party repeal Bill 75?

We will repeal the Liberal Bill 75 that imposes a contract on teachers, saving taxpayers millions in legal fees. We will also repeal Bill 148 and allow for fair collective bargaining.

We all want the next generation of Nova Scotians to have the best chance to succeed. As Progressive Conservatives, we understand that a quality education system and a strong economy go hand-in-hand.

Our education system needs real action. That's why we will use the \$20 million the Liberals set aside for a committee and invest it directly in classrooms. We'll hire more Educational Assistants and put hard class caps in place.

We will work with teachers to improve learning conditions with an enforceable attendance policy, real discipline policy and by scrapping the "no fail" policy.

Environment

14. What policies will your party implement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment, and how will you pay for them?

As Progressive Conservatives, we're proud to have passed the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA). It was ground-breaking legislation that set our province on the path to a greener, more successful future. Now, we must build on that success. A Jamie Baillie government will modernize EGSPA and set new targets for the next 30 years.

These actions will have a more positive impact on our environment than any form of Liberal carbon tax. We oppose Liberal carbon taxes that make life more expensive for Nova Scotians and don't protect our environment.

15. One of the best ways to reduce our carbon footprint on the environment is public transportation. What will your party do to make public transportation throughout the province more affordable and accessible to Nova Scotians?

Nova Scotia is known for its beautiful natural attractions and its pristine shoreline. That reputation is critical to tourism and other businesses that employ thousands of Nova Scotians. More importantly, our environment impacts the daily lives of all Nova Scotians.

We will pass a Clean Air Act to set enforceable standards for emission control and hold polluters responsible for noncompliance.

Progressive Conservatives understand that a healthy environment contributes to a healthy economy and to our long-term prosperity. We will launch the Environmental Reclamation and Community Enhancement Fund to clean up polluted areas.

First Nations

16. Where does your party stand in relation to Indigenous rights? How are you going to help with social issues facing Indigenous people on reserves across this province? Will your party adopt and implement the proposals set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

The Progressive Conservative Party fully support the Canadian Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We also fully respect decisions of the Supreme Court. The federal justice Minister is working to determine how the UNDRIP will be applied in Canada and we will respect the outcome.

Sincerely,



Janet Fryday Dorey
Campaign Co-Chair
PC Party of Nova Scotia