



Liberal Party of Canada responses to the CTF/FCE election priorities

Poverty

- **What is your party's plan to fulfill the National Poverty Reduction Strategy?**

In a country as prosperous as Canada, all Canadians should have a real and fair chance to succeed. Since coming to office, we've been working to tackle poverty and help more Canadians join the middle class – and our plan is working. We have met our first poverty reduction target a full three years ahead of schedule.

Thanks to federal initiatives, 900,000 Canadians have been lifted out of poverty since 2015, and Canada's poverty rate has fallen by more than 20%. We are taking action to cut poverty in half. We know there is still more work to do and we'll keep investing in Canadians to make sure that, wherever you live or wherever you come from, you have a real and fair chance at success.

- **How does your party plan to work with the provinces and territories in order to reach poverty reduction targets?**

We recognize that to be successful, we cannot act alone. Partnerships will be important. We will work closely with provinces, territories and municipalities, and will forge strong bonds with Indigenous peoples, stakeholders, charities and community groups on the front lines of tackling poverty in communities across Canada, to ensure our programs and policies are aligned and complementary, as Canadians expect and deserve nothing less.

- **Where does your party stand on developing national daycare and lunch programs?**

Parents work hard to support their families and give their kids a good start in life, but as working parents know, the need for good, affordable child care doesn't stop when a child goes to school.

Andrew Scheer's idea of helping families is to give tax cuts to those who attend private schools. Canadian families need high quality, affordable child care solutions, not tax breaks for the wealthy at everyone else's expense. We've already created tens of thousands of new pre-school child care spaces, and will move forward with creating up to 250,000 more before and after school spaces for kids under 10, with at least 10% of these new spaces set aside for care during extended hours. To help families with the high cost of care, we will also lower child care fees for before and after school programs by 10% across the board. More than a million families will benefit from these lower fees. For an Ontario family of four with two kids, it will mean about \$800 back in their pockets.

We will also move forward with more support for our early childhood educators, to ensure that across the country, they are better paid and trained to take care of our kids. This means lower tuition costs for people getting their early childhood educator degree, and extra help to cover the costs for early childhood educators seeking further training.

And to ensure that every parent – no matter where they live – has access to quality, affordable child care, we will work with provinces and territories to create a national secretariat that will lay the groundwork for a pan-Canadian child care system.

Sustainable Climate Action

- **How is your party going to address the adverse effects of climate change?**

Canadians know that climate change is real, and in the last four years, science has made it even more clear that the future of the planet is at risk. Under the previous government, Canadians heard a lot about climate targets but saw virtually no action to meet them. Our government helped to spur global ambition and strengthen resolve by pushing for the 1.5°C objective into the Paris Agreement in 2015, which has guided our climate policy ever since. We know there's much more to do.

Young people understand this – that's why they are marching in the streets, demanding action. We need to take our lead from young people and step up our fight against climate change. And we need to do it now. That's why we have set a target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. We will do this by setting legally-binding 5 year milestones, appointing a group of experts to advise on a path forward, and introduce a Just Transition Act to ensure workers have the opportunities needed to succeed in the clean economy.

We will also continue to lead with a price on pollution and will plant two billion trees to clean our air and protect our communities. To help people deal with the realities of increased climate-related risks and disasters, we will protect homeowners who are at

high risk of flooding and don't have adequate insurance protection, by creating a low-cost national flood insurance program and helping Canadians better understand the risks they face when they buy a home and to assist those dealing with potential relocation because of repeat flooding.

- **How does your party plan to increase climate change education for all Canadians?**

Education falls within provincial jurisdiction.

In the post-secondary space, we continue to help give students access to an affordable education. We continue to advance policies that make Canada Student Grants more generous and make student loans more flexible. We have made historic investments in Canada's scientific research granting councils. And we have made sure that government scientists can speak freely about their work with the public and all Canadians.

To give every Canadian child the chance to learn how to camp by the time they reach grade eight, we will move forward with expanding the successful Learn to Camp program. This will make it possible for 400,000 kids each year to learn basic camping skills. To make sure that our National Parks are accessible to all families no matter their economic circumstances, we will also move forward with giving 75,000 less privileged children and their families an up to four-night trip to one of Canada's national or provincial parks.

This will include camping accommodations and a travel bursary of up to \$2,000 so that families can more easily afford a once-in-a-lifetime trip to more national parks, like Banff, Forillon, Gros Morne, and the Cape Breton Highlands. We will also partner with VIA Rail to make these opportunities accessible and affordable for more families.

- **What can the federal government do to support curriculum dedicated to climate change?**

Canadians know that climate change is real, and in the last four years, science has made it even more clear that the future of the planet is at risk. We will always champion a strong plan to address climate change.

Mental Health

- **What does your party plan to do in order to improve knowledge and access to mental health resources, supports, and services to assist students, teachers, and education support workers in publicly funded K-12 public schools in Canada?**

Liberals know that our health care system is a point of pride for all Canadians, and we're making significant investments to keep it that way. This year, we will provide over \$40 billion in health transfers to the provinces and territories to support our system – over six billion more than the Harper Conservatives final year in office. This is thanks to the new Health Accord that our government signed in 2017, guaranteeing a decade of stable, predictable and growing health care transfers. The new accord is accompanied by our \$11 billion investment in mental health and home care services – the largest such investment in Canadian history. These transfers are helping provinces and territories maintain and enhance the health care system Canadians rely on.

- **How can your party make mental health a greater priority for all Canadians? How can government work to dispel the myths surrounding mental health?**

Over the past four years our Liberal government has taken many steps to ensure mental health and suicide prevention get the attention and resources they deserve. This starts with the largest investment in mental health services in Canadian history and the Federal Framework for Suicide Prevention. Our goal is to raise awareness, fight stigma and save lives. These efforts include connecting people to resources like a pan-Canadian suicide prevention service, which offers crisis support by calling, texting or chatting 24/7 in English and French.

Gender Equity

- **What does your party plan to do to provide greater economic opportunities to women?**

Gender equality benefits us all. When women and men have equal opportunities to work, to care for their families, and to contribute to their communities, we build a stronger economy – and a stronger country.

In the last four years, we have made advancing gender equality and diversity a priority. That's why we invested in sustainable and predictable funding for a range of women's and equality-seeking organizations. We created the new department for Women and Gender Equality, established a new federal LGBTQ2 secretariat, and prioritized the use of Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) as a driving force when developing federal policies and programs. We believe in fairness, including the belief that women deserve equal pay for work of equal value – which is why we moved forward with proactive pay equity legislation. We also know that women have an essential role to play in building strong companies and creating more good jobs – so we invested in helping more women entrepreneurs, created more accessible and affordable child care spaces, and moved forward with more flexible parental leave, to

make it easier for new moms to go back to work. During the Harper years, women's workforce participation rate declined. And the gender pay gap in Canada increased.

We will always be focused on policies to keep women healthy, financially secure, and safe.

- **Where does your party stand on implementing a national, universal daycare program?**

See above for response to same question in poverty section.

- **How does your party plan to increase acceptance and understanding of gender diversity?**

Gender equality benefits us all. We moved forward with protections for gender identity and expression in the Canada Human Rights Act – because it's important that the laws that govern our country reflect the diversity we see in our communities.

Strong Unions and Labour Rights

- **How does your party see unions as central to helping solve many of our societal challenges?**

We value and respect the labour movement in Canada. Unions matter. They represent people who work hard, support their families and contribute to their communities and our economy. Unions fight for the middle class, and have been the driving force behind historic progress for all workers.

We are committed to being a real partner to labour. Whether it was through NAFTA negotiations, the most significant enhancements to the labour code and the CPP/QPP in a generation, or banning asbestos, we will always stand with unions and continue to listen to their priorities.

- **What will your party do to ensure that Canadians are empowered through union membership?**

The labour movement deserves fairness, not a government that sees it as the enemy. That's why one of the very first things we did as a government was to repeal Stephen Harper's anti-union legislation: Bill C-377 and Bill C-525. We want to make it easier for workers to participate in unions, not harder.

- **What will your party do to protect pensions?**

After a lifetime of hard work, Canada's seniors have earned a secure and dignified retirement.

Our government has invested in seniors to ensure our loved ones can enjoy a better quality of life in their later years, by:

- Enhancing the Canada Pension Plan to raise the maximum CPP benefit by up to 50%;
- Increasing Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, putting up to \$2,000 more dollars in the pockets of the most vulnerable single seniors compared to the Harper Government; and,
- Restoring the age of eligibility for OAS and GIS to age 65 from 67, which Andrew Scheer voted against.

Budget 2019 proposes new measures that will make insolvency proceedings fairer, more transparent and more accessible for pensioners and workers. This will be accomplished in part by requiring everyone involved to act in good faith, and by giving courts greater ability to review payments made to executives in the lead up to insolvency.

To make life more affordable for people as they age, we will move forward with increasing the Old Age Security benefit by 10% for seniors when they turn 75, and will continue to raise it along with inflation. This will help to lift more than 20,000 seniors out of poverty – two-thirds of whom are women – and will give greater financial security to more than three million seniors every year. For most seniors, it will mean up to \$729 in additional financial help every year once they turn 75.

We will also move forward with more help for seniors who have lost their partners. Most often, the surviving partners are women. We will work with the provinces and territories to give even more support to survivors, by increasing the CPP/QPP survivor's benefit by 25%. This increase, worth up to \$2,080 in additional benefits every year, will give more than 1.2 million seniors more money and greater peace of mind at a time when they need it most.