

October 20, 2011

Poverty Free Saskatchewan  
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Dear Members:

Thank you for your October 14 e-mail. I am pleased to provide the following response outlining the Saskatchewan NDP's extensive plans to reduce poverty in Saskatchewan.

Thanks to our abundant natural resources and hard-working people, Saskatchewan continues to be prosperous. However, not everyone is benefiting from our Province's prosperity. On the doorstep during this campaign, NDP candidates have met many people who are struggling amid this prosperity. The New Democratic Party puts people first, and we have a plan to make life more affordable for all.

### **Housing Access and Affordability**

Our economic growth has brought opportunity, but also challenges that the current government is failing to address. An NDP government will introduce an Affordable Homes Plan that will deal with skyrocketing rents and the high cost of home ownership. We will:

- provide a property tax rebate of \$500 per year to senior homeowners and renters.
- encourage more starter homes that people can afford by rebating the PST on materials input costs for new houses to be priced under \$280,000, and rebating the PST on the first \$10,000 in repairs to homes more than ten years old.
- invest \$20 million into co-operative and community organizations to buy land for housing.
- provide a \$2000 grant to first time homebuyers to cover closing costs and other related expenses for homes purchased for under \$280,000.
- offer no-interest loans to co-operatives and community organizations building new housing stock.
- end unfair rent increases through next generation rent control. We will introduce legislation based on a fair rents model that makes allowances for new construction and non-corporate landlords.
- invest \$50 million to create 2500 new public rental units, with 1000 units dedicated for student accommodation, and upgrade existing units by working with community organizations and co-operatives.

## **Income Security for Equity-Seeking Groups**

An NDP government will:

- increase the income payments to citizens with disabilities living on their own to achieve a fair standard of living, starting with a \$200 per month increase.
- double to \$400 a month the level of working income that recipients can keep while receiving assistance, so they can better make the transition out of poverty.
- Increase the basic income supplement for low-income working families by \$100 a month.

## **Education, Training and Early Childhood Learning and Development**

Saskatchewan's NDP has a plan for early childhood learning and development. An NDP government will:

- invest in 10,000 new early learning and childcare spaces in our first term.
- work with families, childcare providers, and other professionals to develop a long-term childcare strategy.
- cap fees at \$12 a day for school-age children and \$22 for infants and toddlers. The cap will be subsidized, ensuring that these facilities have the funding necessary to provide high-quality service.
- provide an online registry for parents to find licensed care.
- expand training of childcare providers at our post-secondary institutions.
- establish a \$1,000 fully refundable tax credit for families choosing at-home childcare.

If we're going to have a new generation of trained and educated people, we need to make sure they can afford that education. An NDP government will:

- fully fund a tuition freeze to help students who have had tuition increases in the last three years. At the same time, the province will fully fund the difference so that Saskatchewan's institutions continue to offer high quality education. The province will also regulate the fees institutions can charge.
- raise the maximum allowable family income level for student loans.
- establish a relocation subsidy for students moving for their studies.
- increase training opportunities at all post-secondary institutions by 10,000 in four years.
- extend the income tax tuition rebates to Masters and PhD students.
- fund 100 new graduate student bursaries.
- commit to next-generation rent control and the building of 1,000 new spaces of student accommodation.

An NDP government will also commit \$2.5 million annually to a four-year plan developed with First Nations and Métis communities for a 50 per cent increase in the number of aboriginal students graduating high school.

We will invest \$5 million over four years to work with First Nations and Métis organizations to offer more courses on reserves, in remote locations, and in other areas where they are needed. An NDP government will provide regional colleges with an additional \$2.5 million in annual funding to offer more certificate, diploma, and degree credit courses so that students can stay in smaller centres and still pursue their post-secondary education. We will also enhance the current distance-learning infrastructure for online or televised classes so that more people can learn in their own communities.

### **Enabling and Rewarding Work and Participation in our Communities**

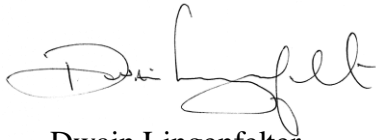
A Saskatchewan New Democratic Party government has a plan to immediately set a fair minimum wage to bring it over the poverty line, and then index it annually to the cost of inflation. We will create new job opportunities by helping small business thrive and grow by eliminating the small business tax in the first term of an NDP government. In addition, we would also provide new job prospects by creating a Northern Economic Strategy to expand opportunities in tourism, forestry, mining, aquaculture and processing. Furthermore, an NDP government will work with businesses to provide on-the-job skills training programs for new jobs or where retraining is required to retain jobs.

### **Other NDP Plans to Make Life More Affordable for all Saskatchewan People**

- add 750 new subsidized affordable assisted-living units.
- provide a property tax rebate of \$500 per year to senior homeowners and renters.
- introduce the Credit for Caring refundable tax credit of up to \$1,000 per year to individuals providing care to elderly or disabled relatives or friends.
- guarantee Saskatchewan residents the lowest-cost bundle of utilities in the country.
- bring chiropractic care back into covered health services.
- establish a children's dental health program to provide free dental care to children aged five to twelve.
- establish a refundable tax benefit of up to \$1,000 per individual for private special care home fees.
- invest \$10 million over four years in recreation and fitness programs to ensure that access is not limited by income.
- work with community-based organizations to expand the availability of nutritious food programs to children.

Thank you, again, for providing the Saskatchewan NDP with this opportunity to share our plans for ending poverty with your membership. Stay tuned for more exciting announcements as the campaign progresses.

Sincerely,



Dwain Lingenfelter  
Leader