

Questions for Provincial Election Candidates

From Poverty Free Saskatchewan, Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry and Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger

Background:

Poverty is a human rights violation. In 1976, Canada with the approval of all provinces, signed the United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Article 11 of this covenant recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family including adequate food, clothing, and housing and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. Article 7 of the Covenant recognizes the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure all workers with fair wages for a decent living for themselves and their families as well as equal remuneration for work of equal value. This means that issues such as adequate income security benefits, a living wage, quality and affordable housing and childcare and pay equity are not just social policy concerns. These are basic human rights. When federal and provincial governments do not ensure these rights, they contravene international law. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has been very critical of Canada and the provinces for not ensuring these rights in such a wealthy nation. In this context we ask the following questions:

1. Will your party implement legislation that will ensure that a provincial anti-poverty strategy upholds the social and economic rights Saskatchewan has committed itself to protect under the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights?
2. What are your party's plans to increase benefit levels for the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) and the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID)? What are your intentions to ensure an adequate income for all?
3. What are your party's plans to increase wage and other exemptions for those receiving SAP or SAID?
4. What are your party's plans to move the minimum wage to an actual living wage?
5. What are your party's plans to expand quality affordable and social housing?
6. What are your party's plans to expand publicly subsidized childcare spaces?
7. How will your party support a food security strategy for Saskatchewan residents?
8. Provincial governments across Canada are implementing sustainable food procurement policies to support local farmers and local economies. Will your party ensure that local, healthy and culturally appropriate food is being served in all provincial facilities (schools, hospitals, long term care, etc.)?
9. What are your party's plans to ensure greater equity of opportunity and remuneration for women, Indigenous people, visible minorities and persons with disabilities?
10. What are your party's plans to address wealth and income inequality?

For further information contact:

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