



# **2019 ELECTION PARTY QUESTIONNAIRE: PARTY RESPONSES**

**PREPARED BY:**

**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND  
PRIVATE EMPLOYEES (NAPE)**

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**NAPE**  
Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees  
[www.nape.ca](http://www.nape.ca)

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear sister/brother,

Before the election writ was dropped your union sent a questionnaire to all of the parties with a deadline of May 1.

We did this because we wanted to ensure your union and the members we unite and represent knew where the parties stand on the issues that matter to you, particularly as they relate to your work and working conditions.

The questions cover a range of issues. It was extremely difficult to whittle the list down to a manageable size given the depth and breadth of our membership and the goods and services you create and provide, but we feel that we struck a good balance.

In this package, for your information, we have provided a brief overarching analysis of each party's responses. However, we have also included the responses from each party in their unadulterated and unedited (except for layout) form so you can read them and form your own opinions and, possibly, inform your voting preference based on the responses provided.

We hope you are able to take some time to go through this package and see where the parties stand on a number of important issues.

We encourage you to get active, get informed, and exercise your democratic right to vote in on May 16.

Information regarding the election; how and where to vote, special ballots, candidate list, etc. can be found on the Elections Newfoundland and Labrador website at:

<https://www.elections.gov.nl.ca/elections/>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry", is positioned above the printed name.

Jerry  
PRESIDENT  
NAPE

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**\*NOTE:** Responses are in alphabetical order based on party name



# THE QUESTIONS

## 1. ECONOMY

The recent decline in the price of oil coupled with other strains on the provincial economy has had a negative impact on the province's fiscal situation.

If your party forms the next government, which of the following measures do you see as appropriate solutions?

## 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT

We hear a lot of rhetoric about the size of the public service. Some groups claim it's too large. Others say services are getting harder to access because they're not adequately staffed or resourced in the right places. Does your party think the public sector is too large?

If your party thinks the public sector is too large, what tangible measures would you propose to use to reduce it?

## 3. HEALTH CARE

The healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador is under incredible strain due to a number of factors, including an ageing population and poor health determinants. Often, front line workers in our health care system bear the brunt of this strain, mainly as a result of staffing shortages.

If your party forms the next government, what concrete actions would it take to improve the healthcare system for both patients and those delivering health care services to the people of this province?

## 4. PRIVATIZATION

If your party forms the next government, will you commit to protecting the following public services from privatization?

\_\_\_ Long-term care

\_\_\_ Acute care services, including dietary, maintenance, housekeeping, and security currently provided by the public sector

\_\_\_ Highway snow clearing and maintenance currently provided by the public sector

\_\_\_ NLC

# THE QUESTIONS

\_\_\_ Motor vehicle registration currently provided by the public sector

\_\_\_ Registry services (deeds, companies, and securities)

Please provide an overview and any additional specifics you think necessary on this issue.

## 5. HOME CARE

Our population is ageing rapidly. Current demand for care is placing undue strain on the province's long-term and acute-care systems. Home care allows people to remain in their own homes and their own communities. It saves scarce healthcare dollars. There are currently significant problems recruiting home care workers because of inadequate pay and lack of benefits.

If your party forms the next government, will it commit to providing additional funding to improve pay and benefits for home care workers?

\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_ No

Please provide an overview and specifics of your party's position on this issue.

## 6. CORRECTIONS

Earlier this year, the *Newfoundland and Labrador Corrections and Community Services: Deaths in Custody Review* (the Jesso Report) was released. It made several recommendations about changes to the correctional system in our province that would improve outcomes and the lives of all those involved in the system. The report identifies numerous issues with our correctional system and facilities – issues NAPE has been raising for some time and that have been raised in previous investigations and reports. If your party forms the next government, will it implement these recommendations? Specifically, will it commit to:

\_\_\_ Improving mental health support systems and pathways in the corrections system

\_\_\_ Building a new correctional facility to replace HMP

\_\_\_ Adding health professional staff

\_\_\_ Improving staff training and increasing staff allocations and presence?

Please provide an overview and specifics of your party's position on this issue

# THE QUESTIONS

## 7. HIGHWAY SNOW-CLEARING

24-hour snow clearing has been eliminated on several sections of the province's road system. As a result, safety on some of the most heavily travelled roadways has been jeopardized.

Will your government commit to reintroducing 24-hour snow clearing?

If not, why not?

## 8. LABOUR LAWS

In recent years, the province has had several protracted labour disputes. Most recently, a group of workers was locked out for over 600 days. These disputes have had a negative impact on overall labour relations as well as the province's economy.

If your party forms the next government, would it commit to introducing anti-scab legislation?

## 9. DEBT / DEFICIT

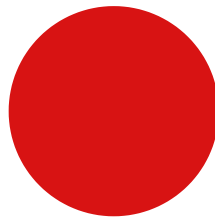
A lot has been said about the size of the province's debt. Some groups claim immediate corrections need to be made through drastic austerity measures. Others, including the labour movement, say any debt/deficit reductions must be done gradually in order not to shock the economy and to protect the public services people rely on.

If your party forms the next government, how does it propose to deal with the province's debt?

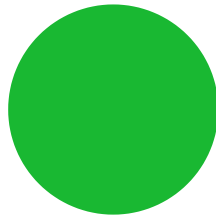
# NAPE ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

While we won't be getting into a detailed analysis of the party's positions on the various issues in their responses, we thought it important to provide some general comments and analysis for each party for your information. Again, the full responses from each party is in this document so you can read the full responses and form your own opinions.

**We have outlined our brief analysis in terms of:**



**"Red Lights"** (negative, possibly negative, or concerning impact on our members, their working conditions, and the goods and services they produce and provide); and



**"Green Lights"** (positive, potentially positive, or encouraging impact on our members, their working conditions, and the goods and services they produce and provide).

There are circumstances where both may be used to highlight both positive and negative (or potentially positive/encouraging or negative/concerning) aspects to the responses.

**REMINDER: This is a brief analysis of certain aspects of the responses from each party from your union's perspective. We encourage you to read the full responses to help form your own thoughts and analysis.**

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## LIBERAL RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 1. ECONOMY



*"We do not see mass layoffs as the key to our future. We demonstrated our commitment to that policy in our last round of collective bargaining, preferring instead to use attrition, where it makes sense, to reduce the size of the public sector."*

*"We have no intention of taking a slash-and-burn approach during the upcoming round of public sector negotiations."*

**ANALYSIS:** We are pleased to see the commitment to no "mass layoffs" (though we would have preferred the word mass to be removed for obvious reasons. A commitment to approaching public sector negotiations without the goal of "slashing and burning" is also welcomed.

### 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT



*"We have worked with unions to identify where savings can be made, but we have also recognized where we need to invest more in things like ramping up the training of LPNs and PCAs at College of the North Atlantic to address chronic shortages."*

**ANALYSIS:** Identifying working with unions in a consultative manner to address problems is welcomed. The commitment to increase training options at CNA for LPNS and PCAs is welcomed as a way to address medium and long term staffing issues in our healthcare system.

There are no firm commitments on size of government but there is reference to a focus on management level positions.

### 3. HEALTHCARE



*"We recognize there is undue strain on our health care delivery professionals, and are committed to closing gaps in our health care systems that may exist, whether Licensed Practical Nurses, Personal Care Attendants, or other groups of health care workers who ensure a healthy province."*



# NAPE ANALYSIS

## LIBERAL RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 3. HEALTHCARE (cont'd)

*"In particular, we are committed to doing whatever possible to fill vacant positions as health authorities are experiencing recruitment issues with Licensed Practical Nurses and Personal Care Attendants. We will fix this."*

**ANALYSIS:** The commitment to work with unions to address issues is good. As previously mentioned, the commitment to address staffing shortages is welcomed.

The response spends a good bit of time talking about preventative measures to address healthcare issues before they arise; make our people healthier.

The response also spends some time talking about many initiatives that we announced in the recent budget - too many to get into here.

Overall, there are no immediate red lights in this response.

### 4. PRIVATIZATION



*"...we have not privatized long-term or acute care, highway maintenance, the NLC, motor vehicle registration and registry services despite the fiscal pressures facing us as a province. Furthermore, we have no plans to do so."*

*"We remain committed to our Memorandum of Understanding with NAPE on Public Private Partnership Job Security. In fact, we anticipate more such jobs will be created in these new facilities."*

**ANALYSIS:** We are pleased to see the commitment for no plans to privatize any public services. We also welcome the commitment to stick to the P3 Job Security provision negotiated by your union in the last round of negotiations. The note about an increase in public sector jobs in the new facilities is a good one that your union will follow up on for more information.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## LIBERAL RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 5. HOME CARE



**ANALYSIS:** While it was good to see a commitment to a continued focus on the governments "Home First" policy, the specific question about a commitment to increase pay and benefits for home care workers was not addressed.

### 6. CORRECTIONS



**ANALYSIS:** A commitment is made on each of the specific sub-questions in this response. The response commits "in principle" to implementing the recommendations made in the Jesso Report (Deaths in Custody Review) which cover off a number of the sub-questions asked by NAPE (new HMP, training, mental health, etc...)

### 7. SNOW-CLEARING



*"Supervisors in our depots have the ability and the authority to make the call so that when there is a safety concern and we need our equipment on the roads, it is on the roads."*

**ANALYSIS:** While there is no specific commitment on returning to 24-hour snow clearing, the quote above does open the door for "after hours" snow clearing (which currently happens) on a case by case basis - the only issue is, it takes time to get our members back to the depots, loaded up with material, and out on the roads - precious time that could mean the difference during inclement weather. This is not ideal for obvious reasons.

### 8. LABOUR LAWS



**ANALYSIS:** No commitment is made on implementing anti-scab legislation to stave off protracted labour strikes/lock-outs.

A commitment is made to continue with the consultation process already established with unions and employers to find solutions to avoid protracted labour issues in the future.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## LIBERAL RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 9. DEBT/DEFICIT



*"We require a balanced approach to tackling our debt. This year marks the end of the Temporary Deficit Reduction Levy. Budget 2019 included no tax or fee increases. We are eliminating the tax on automobile insurance."*

**ANALYSIS:** The reference to a balanced approach is welcomed. The elimination of regressive, flat taxes will mean money in our members' pockets (so long as the decreased revenue doesn't impact services/jobs). Progressive changes to the tax structure are needed.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## NL ALLIANCE RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 1. ECONOMY



*"We intend on utilizing the front line knowledge of the day to day operations through in depth consultations, to drive efficiency within all aspects of Government operations. We believe their knowledge has been ignored and pushed aside for too long."*

*"While we would prefer to say that we are open to engaging in negotiations that are unrestricted, we must acknowledge our province's spending problem and labour is a significant part of this. As such, everyone has to accept we need to address this and all aspects of labour costs need discussion."*

**ANALYSIS:** We are pleased to see the commitment to consulting with front line workers on the way government and related agencies, boards and commissions operate. However, the comments above about labour costs and approach to negotiations raise serious concerns.

### 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT



*"Labour costs are a significant portion of our spending, which is out of control. So we do believe our workforce requires significant reduction over time."*

*"Our proposal, as we have said publicly, is to do a significant review of all positions above the front lines. Our front line workers have been the scapegoat for cuts way too long. We need to look above the front lines for cuts in the management of all departments. We believe this is where we are now overstaffed and this is where we need to cut."*

**ANALYSIS:** The first part of this response is cause for concern, but the emphasis in the rest of the response appears to be about focusing "above the front'lines". We agree, that front-line workers have been the target for far too long.

### 3. HEALTHCARE



**ANALYSIS:** The focus on consulting and engaging with front line workers is welcomed.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## NL ALLIANCE RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 3. HEALTHCARE (cont'd)

**ANALYSIS:** There are no specifics or details presented which creates pause for concern.

### 4. PRIVATIZATION



**ANALYSIS:** There is no commitment made on keeping public services in public hands.

### 5. HOME CARE



**ANALYSIS:** There is no commitment on pay and benefits for home care workers.

### 6. CORRECTIONS



**ANALYSIS:** While there are no specific commitments or proposals on the majority of sub-questions in this response, the Alliance does commit to building a new HMP and consulting with front line corrections staff.

### 7. SNOW-CLEARING



**ANALYSIS:** While there are no specific commitments to 24 hour snow clearing, there is a general commitment to "increasing snow clearing".

### 8. LABOUR LAWS



**ANALYSIS:** While there are no specific commitments to 24 hour snow clearing, there is a general commitment to "increasing snow clearing".



# NAPE ANALYSIS

## NL ALLIANCE RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 9. DEBT/DEFICIT



**ANALYSIS:** This response raises similar concerns to those outlined in question 2. Details are scanty which also creates some concern.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## NDP RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 1. ECONOMY



*"We have no intention in cutting either the services or the people who provide them, and in fact would enhance services in areas such as health care and long-term care by increasing staffing levels to the point where people get the care they need and deserve."*

**ANALYSIS:** We are pleased to see the commitment to no cuts in public services or to the people that provide them.

The rest of the response focuses, in a general, overarching way, on the party's vision for how to grow and diversify the economy. There is not much in the way of specifics to this plan.

### 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT



*"Whatever the service, health care, long term care, snow-clearing, police and fire protection, people need it to be there for them when they need it. The NDP understands the importance of quality public services, and will not cut — and in many instances will re-instate — the people who provide these services."*

**ANALYSIS:** The comments outlined in the above quote are certainly welcomed by our union. There is also a focus on staffing levels in healthcare.

### 3. HEALTHCARE



*"Our concrete action would be to immediately bring staffing levels up to an acceptable level to meet the needs of people in care."*

**ANALYSIS:** This commitment is welcomed. As per question 1, there is not much else in terms of specifics other than this commitment.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## NDP RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 4. PRIVATIZATION



*"There should be no profit in care-giving, health care, education, snow clearing or any other public service."*

**ANALYSIS:** NAPE welcomes the information and analysis provided on the pitfalls of privatization and the concerns about P3s, in terms of overall cost to the people of the province. The commitment to keep public services safe from privatization is a good one .

### 5. HOME CARE



*"The NDP is committed to investing in home care for seniors and those with special needs. The NDP will reinvest \$5 million to restore necessary home care hours that have been cut since 2016. Home care saves money by allowing people to stay in their homes and communities."*

*"The NDP believes a fully funded public homecare system is a key component in the public health care system. We are committed to creating that service."*

**ANALYSIS:** The overall message and commitments made in this response are positive for our home care members. Moving home care purely into the public system is something we would want more information on, but could certainly be a positive move.

The only concerning aspect of the response is there is no specific commitment on home care worker pay and benefits.

### 6. CORRECTIONS



**ANALYSIS:** The response commits to implementing the recommendations of the Jesso Report (Deaths in Custody) in it's entirety which covers off on the sub-questions asked in our questionnaire. We would need to ensure that front line members are involved in the implementation of the dynamic security model outlined in their response as there are some issues with that model in other jurisdictions.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## NDP RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 7. SNOW-CLEARING



*"We are committed to returning to 24 hour snow-clearing coverage on all main routes in the province."*

**ANALYSIS:** A commitment to returning to 24-hour snow-clearing on all main routes across the province is welcomed by your union.

### 8. LABOUR LAWS



*"The NDP is committed to amending the Labour Relations Act so that binding arbitration is triggered in situations where a strike or lockout is protracted..."*

*"The NDP is committed, and has lobbied governments in the House for many years, to enact anti-replacement worker legislation."*

**ANALYSIS:** The labour movement has been calling for these changes for some time and we are pleased to see both of these policies in the response. We believe that such changes would reduce the likelihood of protracted labour disputes going forward.

### 9. DEBT/DEFICIT



*"First and foremost, the NDP knows austerity does not work. Time and again economists have shown deep cuts in spending, especially the cutting of public service jobs, can send economies into a tailspin, hurting the lives of many people."*

**ANALYSIS:** The quote above from the NDP response is welcomed by your union. The rest of the response goes on to lay out a broader vision for how the party would approach the debt and fiscal issue of the province.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## PC RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 1. ECONOMY



*"I believe NAPE and its members have a vested interest in seeing our province grow to its full potential, because that growth will also sustain a healthy public service."*

*"We have to stop focusing on cuts and start focusing on growth."*

*"The stories of burnout among front line workers in our healthcare system are shocking...No one understands this better than front line workers, so they and their unions will be front and centre in leading the reforms that we need to see."*

*The focus will never be on cutting public services. The focus will be on improving public services, taking into account the voices and strengths of the public employees who deliver them.*

*"...negotiations will be frank and collaborative rather than confrontational or manipulative. We need to pay public employees fairly for the work you do...If there are sticking points, we'll keep talking until we work through them."*

**ANALYSIS:** The focus on growth vs cuts, acknowledgement of worker burnout, commitment to consultation and collaboration with unions and workers, as well as the commitment to stay at the table to find agreements in public sector negotiations are welcomed.

There are no firm commitments on no layoffs, cuts, etc... but the language throughout is mostly positive on this front, if not overly specific. There is a specific line item in their Blue Book, which they suggested we look at, regarding \$39M in "efficiencies" in government spending which does cause some pause for concern as no details on this process are mentioned - hence the red light.

### 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT



*"per capita" statistics do not paint a true picture of our needs. With a population spread out thinly over a vast area, and a demographic profile that is "older", our needs are not truly reflected by those "per capita" statistics. Those looking in from a distance might say we need to pare down the size of government to get closer to the national average. But with so many people in our province employed in the public service, imagine the devastating impact of a radical policy like that.*



# NAPE ANALYSIS

## PC RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT (cont'd)

*"In the meantime, a government has to do a better job of managing public services so the workers in the system are not stretched to the breaking point, to the detriment of those the government is supposed to be serving. Everyone in the system – including NAPE's members and leadership – needs to be fully engaged in this. I want to bring you around the table to get a proper understanding of what's not working and what we ought to be doing to fix things."*

**ANALYSIS:** The per capita aspect of the response does not specifically reference layoffs or cuts, but it does lay out a position that we have supported about the pitfalls of basing the size of the public service based on this metric alone when compared to other provinces. The devastating and radical reference with regards to cuts to the public sector are shared by our union. We would have liked to see more clear and defined commitments on this front.

The response spends a good bit of time talking about our relationship with Ottawa which we will not parse out here.

The commitment to work with your union and front-line members on how to improve the public sector for all is welcomed.

### 3. HEALTHCARE



*"Health spending is not going to be decreased; it's going to be spent more effectively, so we can get patients healthier and bring sanity to the working lives of those NAPE represents."*

*"One of the breaking points in the system right now is long-term care. I am committing to conduct a base staff level review of all nursing homes in the province. Your front line workers have a good idea of what this review will find. If the review recommends action, then we will take it – but we'll do it together. I am 100% serious about involving you in making things work better."*

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## PC RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 3. HEALTHCARE (cont'd)

**ANALYSIS:** We are pleased to see the firm commitment on no reduction in healthcare spending. We also welcome the commitment to a staff review of long-term care and the inclusion of the union in that process in a collaborative manner.

### 4. PRIVATIZATION



**ANALYSIS:** There is no firm commitment on not privatizing public services in the response, in fact, the answer seems to open the door to the very real possibility of this happening should the PC Party form government. This is a major red light.

### 5. HOME CARE



**ANALYSIS:** There is no commitment on pay and benefits for home care workers, but a commitment to negotiate fairly. The rest of the answer focuses on personal care homes and other initiatives for seniors that does not relate to home care or the workers that provide this crucial service, which decreases the pressure on our healthcare facilities and system.

### 6. CORRECTIONS



**ANALYSIS:** There is a commitment to replace the HMP with a new facility. However, there is no commitment on any of the other sub-questions in this response. Further, there is no commitment on implementing the recommendations of the Jesso Report.

While the commitment to work with front line members to improve the system, additional inquiries and reviews will only delay the changes that need to be made for which the Jesso Report and others have covered in-depth. The time for action is now, not for further review and analysis.

# NAPE ANALYSIS

## PC RESPONSE BRIEF ANALYSIS

### 7. SNOW-CLEARING



*"I do want to see 24-hour snow clearing reintroduced so roads are passable during the evening hours if emergency vehicles, truckers and travelers need to use them. I want to sit around a table with officials and front line workers to determine what the challenges are and how we can fix them. Whatever the approach, it has to be an improvement on the status quo."*

**ANALYSIS:** There is a commitment on 24-hour snow-clearing and to consult with front-line workers to improve the system overall.

### 8. LABOUR LAWS



**ANALYSIS:** There is no commitment on anti-scab legislation (or binding arbitration for protracted disputes). We welcome the commitment to work together on labour relations.

### 9. DEBT / DEFICIT



*"You will not see drastic austerity from me. That is not who I am or how I operate. I'm here to make our province stronger, not to decimate it. Simply put, you cannot cure the disease by killing the patient."*

**ANALYSIS:** While it is good to see a commitment on no "drastic austerity", the use of the term "drastic" is worrisome. The rest of the answer focuses primarily on the Liberal record and a new deal with Ottawa but we will not get into that here.

The elimination of regressive, flat taxes will mean money in our members' pockets (so long as the decreased revenue doesn't impact services/jobs). Progressive changes to the tax structure are needed.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

## 1. Economy

Our province has indeed faced challenging times over the last number of years. When we were elected in 2015, we inherited a legacy of fiscal mismanagement. In fact, we had an economic crisis laid at our feet. The former government avoided a fall fiscal update before the 2015 election, allowing people (including us) to believe the deficit was at \$1 billion. On December 1, 2015, our first day at work so to speak, we were told the deficit for 2015-16 was expected to be twice that. It was projected it would grow to \$2.7 billion the following year unless action was taken. In fact, unless we did something immediately to address the deficit, we would have had to borrow over \$15 billion by 2020-21. That would equate to borrowing almost \$300,000 an hour to keep the province going.

We also inherited Muskrat Falls from the previous government, and with it, the responsibility for mitigating electricity rates to prevent them from doubling. Money diverted to mitigate electricity rates is money we cannot spend on public services or debt reduction. But we remain committed to ensuring people don't pay more for electricity as a result of Muskrat Falls, and to having a sustainable balanced budget by 2022-23.

It is not our intention to harp on the past, but it is important to provide some background about where we started in 2015 in order to appreciate where we are today. Our deficit for 2018-19 was \$522 million – less than half of what it was when we formed government. That's progress.

We are exceeding the forecasts of the Progressive Conservatives in their 2015 budget on a number of fronts:

- There are more people working in Newfoundland and Labrador than the Conservatives projected.
- Employee compensation (pay) is nearly a quarter of a billion dollars higher than forecast in 2015.
- Project investment is one billion dollars higher than projected in Budget 2015.
- Retail sales are higher than projected.

February 2019 also marked the eighth consecutive month of employment gains, showing growth this province has not seen since 2013. The Conference Board of Canada and Atlantic Provinces Economic Council have both forecast that Newfoundland and Labrador will be among the leaders in economic activity this year.

We are targeting both traditional and emerging sectors to diversify the economy and grow employment. We continue to promote new and existing business activity and increase private sector jobs for residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, including in the agriculture, aquaculture, technology, oil and gas, mining, forestry, and oceans sectors. Our Cabinet Committee on Jobs is collaborating with industry leaders and the business community. Through our efforts, we are already seeing success across many sectors.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

Public sector workers play a vital role in running the province – in caring for people, in developing and delivering vital programs and services, and in helping to identify and nurture opportunities to diversify the economy. We value the work NAPE members and other public sector workers do.

Unlike our Progressive Conservative colleagues, your Liberal government is not interested in cuts for the sake of cuts. We are, of course, always interested in new and better ways to deliver public services and to save money – and welcome suggestions from our front-line workers.

We do not see mass layoffs as the key to our future. We demonstrated our commitment to that policy in our last round of collective bargaining, preferring instead to use attrition, where it makes sense, to reduce the size of the public sector.

We have no intention of taking a slash-and-burn approach during the upcoming round of public sector negotiations.

## **2. Size of Government**

It is possible for government to be too big and, at the same time, for it to be hard to access services because they're not adequately staffed or resourced. It can be as simple as having people and resources in the wrong places.

We have worked with unions to identify where savings can be made, but we have also recognized where we need to invest more in things like ramping up the training of LPNs and PCAs at College of the North Atlantic to address chronic shortages.

In 2017, our government announced the implementation of a flatter, leaner management structure for core government departments. We also made similar reductions in our agencies, boards, and commissions. We introduced legislation that improves our ability to work with government entities to identify cost-savings and address staffing levels through attrition. One particular area of focus is organizational change at Nalcor Energy to reduce duplication and find savings.

## **3. Health care**

We recognize that union members are health care users as well as health care providers. As a government, we are wholeheartedly committed to better services and better outcomes.

We will achieve better health outcomes through our health-in-all-policies (HIAP) approach. Endorsed by the World Health Organization, HIAP integrates health considerations into policy making across sectors. HIAP is collaborative, systematic, and evaluation driven. Such an approach is vital to health promotion, prevention, and early intervention. Improving the health of a population cannot be achieved overnight – it requires a long-term vision and concerted, collaborative action that has at its heart an understanding of the socio-economic factors that determine people's health.



# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

We will invest in things like increasing access to early childhood education and improving educational outcomes, investing in safe, stable, affordable housing, and supporting seniors in their efforts to stay in their own homes and communities. These are the kinds of things that have a significant impact on people's health and wellbeing.

We will also increase public health promotion and prevention measures to bring further awareness and education to areas such as smoking cessation, chronic disease management, healthy eating, and increased physical activity.

We have set a number of targets aimed at improving health outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and at bringing indicators more in line with Canadian averages by 2025. These targets are to:

- Increase breastfeeding initiation rates by seven per cent
- Reduce the obesity rate by five per cent
- Reduce the smoking rate by four per cent
- Increase the physical activity rate by seven per cent
- Increase the rate of vegetable and fruit consumption by five per cent

We know that for each health care decision, we must endeavor to understand the full impacts and avoid unintended consequences so that we make the right decisions for the health and wellbeing of our people and of our province. Our future, and that of generations to follow, depends on it.

Some concrete examples:

We are lifting the age cap for those currently enrolled in the Insulin Pump program.

We are creating a Navigation Network in the Regional Health Authorities to help clients navigate the health system better. The network will see the creation of at least three navigation roles: a Kidney and Transplant Systems Navigator, Disability Systems Navigator, and Community Support Systems Navigator. The Network will complement the existing Mental Health and Addictions Patient Navigator and Cancer Patient Navigator roles.

We are also creating Community Advisory Councils to break down silos in the RHAs and improve communication between communities and the health authorities, Department of Health and Community Services, and members of the Board of Trustees.

We are taking significant action on advancing mental health care and addictions services through the Towards Recovery initiative. We are committed to building a new mental health and addictions facility for the province, as well as a new hospital in Corner Brook, two new 60-bed long-term care homes in central, a six-bed mental health unit in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and eight new long-term care beds at the Dr. Charles S. Curtis Memorial Hospital in St. Anthony. We are also undertaking a 20-bed expansion of the protective care unit in Botwood.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

We will increase the number of nurse practitioners in our health facilities to provide better primary care to communities. We will also enhance the use of paramedics and advanced care paramedics in our communities to use their skills to enhance pre-hospital care. We will implement an Advanced Care Paramedic Training Program in Newfoundland and Labrador by using the curriculum already being delivered at the CNA Qatar Campus. These actions will support the overall health system, especially in rural areas of our province.

We will strengthen the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) to drive innovation, efficiency, and patient care by continuing its progress toward a digitized health care system.

We will continue to focus on building our highly integrated Electronic Health Record so that all patient health information is available to providers in one place. We will build on our success by continuing to expand our TeleHealth and Remote Patient Monitoring services so people can access their health care providers without having to leave their community.

We will use e-prescribing and e-consultations to allow residents to receive modern care. We will also increase the use of electronic appointment notifications to ensure fewer appointments are missed, and to better enhance wait-time management through the use of e-referral systems and things like centralized intake.

We are continuing to improve primary health care services to increase access to the right care, from the right provider, in the right place. Building on the success of primary health care teams on the Burin and Connaigre Peninsulas and in Bonavista, Gander, Botwood, Corner Brook, Sheshatshiu, and downtown St. John's, we will support more primary health care teams across the province. We have identified and are working to establish teams in Stephenville, Bell Island, the Northeast Avalon, and the Deer Lake/White Bay area. Since primary health care transformation has begun, we have seen a reduction in costly emergency department visits for non-urgent care.

We recognize the value of introducing regulated midwifery services in the province, and we are establishing the first location in Gander with a team of three full-time registered midwives.

We have introduced a new and improved financial assessment process for long-term care and community support services that is easier, person-centred, client-friendly, open and transparent.

We have adopted a Home First philosophy where diverse teams of health professionals work together to provide timely access to home support, rehabilitation, nursing, and social work services at home. This should reduce strain in our hospitals and long-term care facilities.

A \$1.7 million investment in the Home Dementia Program supports individuals living with moderate or advanced dementia and their caregivers so that they can receive support at home from a physician or nurse practitioner through remote monitoring technology.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

This is not a complete list by any means, but it is proof that the health of our people is a top priority for our government.

We recognize there is undue strain on our health care delivery professionals, and are committed to closing gaps in our health care systems that may exist, whether Licensed Practical Nurses, Personal Care Attendants, or other groups of health care workers who ensure a healthy province.

In particular, we are committed to doing whatever possible to fill vacant positions as health authorities are experiencing recruitment issues with Licensed Practical Nurses and Personal Care Attendants. We will fix this.

We are committed to improving access to Practical Nursing and Personal Care Attendant programs and educating additional people. A Workforce Planning committee is working to fast-track the Practical Nursing Program to ensure this happens as soon as possible.

Further, we remain committed to providing a \$5000 bursary to students actively enrolled in the Practical Nursing Program and the Personal Care Attendant Program in exchange for a two-year service commitment in selected, difficult-to-fill positions.

As we have always done, we will negotiate issues that arise as put forward by labour unions, including those in the health sector, in good faith.

## 4. Privatization

As a government, we have weathered one of the worst economic crises the province has seen. We are rectifying years of mismanagement and squandered opportunities to create a positive legacy for the next generation. In this very difficult climate, we have made a lot of tough decisions, but we have not privatized long-term or acute care, highway maintenance, the NLC, motor vehicle registration and registry services despite the fiscal pressures facing us as a province. Furthermore, we have no plans to do so.

The Leader of the Progressive Conservatives, Mr. Crosbie, in a Telegram article dated April 11, 2017, openly mused that the privatization of NLC “needs to be looked at very carefully, and with a will to do it.” He further mused in a Telegram article on March 26, 2017, that “collective agreements are meaningless” in some situations and “all options are on the table.”

We take a different approach. We have partnered with the private sector to design, build, finance, and maintain new health care facilities in order to increase access to critical health care services while maximizing value for taxpayers. The new hospital in Corner Brook, for example, will be complemented by a long-term care home already under construction in the region and is expected to be operational in 2020. This facility will provide employment for 200 public service employees.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

WE are using a similar approach for the construction of two new 60 bed long-term care homes in Grand Falls-Windsor and in Gander.

We remain committed to our Memorandum of Understanding with NAPE on Public Private Partnership Job Security. In fact, we anticipate more such jobs will be created in these new facilities.

## 5. Home Care

Home support or home care is an important component of our “Home First” approach to health care: providing better supports that help people remain in their homes for as long as possible.

In December 2015, HCS contracted with Deloitte Inc. to review the Provincial Home Support Program. The final report was received in May 2016 and included a current state review, key findings, and 25 improvement opportunities.

All recommendations made in the Deloitte report were accepted. We will continue to support improvements in home and community care through continued implementation of recommendations from the 2016 Provincial Home Support Program Review, including the introduction of service level agreements with home care agencies to improve service quality and accountability.

As with any policy, we are willing to work in a collaborative fashion with public sector unions to advance progress on home care.

## 6. Corrections

Our government commissioned the report “Newfoundland and Labrador Corrections and Community Services: Deaths in Custody Review” to improve the delivery of services and practices within adult custody. We have accepted in principle the recommendations of the report, and work is ongoing to address the issues identified.

We are committed to ensuring equity in health care access for inmates and a system that integrates their health needs through all stages of custody.

We are committed to implementing restorative justice initiatives to help repair the harm caused by crime, and to implementing alternative approaches within the justice system. In fact, our government is one of, if not the most, progressive in our province's history on this point.

Last fall, our government opened a new Drug Treatment Court, which employs a problem-solving, therapeutic approach and alternative to traditional criminal justice responses by addressing the underlying issues that contribute to crime. Budget 2019 is investing \$242,000 in this court, which will be offset by federal funding.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

We are also advancing initiatives such as adult diversion, bail supervision, and electronic monitoring in an effort to reduce system pressures while improving outcomes. Budget 2019 is investing \$254,000 in electronic monitoring and \$100,000 for a bail supervision program.

We recognize that while there is significant work already happening on these fronts, much remains to be done to improve the system.

Further, as announced as part of Budget 2019, we are committed to building a new correctional facility in St. John's with Requests for Proposals for external procurement, technical, and fairness advisors to begin this summer. We understand it is vitally important to the health, safety, and well-being of both the staff and inmate population to replace HMP.

## 7. Snow clearing

As in previous years, when weather conditions warrant, snow removal will continue to take place 24 hours a day on the 13 busiest routes in the province. With the opening of the Team Gushue extension, that number has climbed to 14. Having said that, equipment and operators cannot be everywhere at once. And there are times when it is not safe for our equipment operators to be on the roads.

We have made tremendous advancements in our snow clearing fleet and approaches.

We remain committed to utilizing tow plows – an effective piece of equipment that clears snow and spreads salt on two lanes at the same time. Further, we've purchased new brine tankers to

spread salt effectively. We've also launched the Provincial Plow Tracker application, which provides real-time locations of equipment on our busiest routes.

We are continuing to expand our highway cameras network and are using social media in an effort to increase real-time access to information for drivers on road conditions.

We have a stellar team of 700 who work long nights and early mornings on our highways to keep us safe. We are thankful for the services they provide, often in poor weather conditions.

Supervisors in our depots have the ability and the authority to make the call so that when there is a safety concern and we need our equipment on the roads, it is on the roads.

## 8. Labour Laws

Last spring, our government adopted a motion introduced by a member of our Liberal caucus to begin consultations with unions and employers to identify measures that would support the collective bargaining process while avoiding prolonged work stoppages. The goal is to respect the rights of unionized labour while protecting the long-term sustainability of various industries for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

# LIBERAL PARTY RESPONSE

While we have a proven history of stepping in where necessary, such as in the situation with DJ Composites in Gander, we believe bargaining discussions should be happening between unions and employers, not in the Premier's Office boardroom. In the case of DJ Composites, however, dispute resolution was necessary. We recognize more must be done to prevent prolonged labour disputes and look forward to these consultations.

Our government is committed to promoting a stable and constructive labour relations climate and fostering productive workplace relationships, and we see these consultations as a measure to ensure we are meeting the needs of today's labour environment in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## 9. Debt/Deficit

As a government, we have made tremendous progress on tackling our deficit and, consequently, our debt. This has been achieved without massive layoffs, which would hurt families and our economy, or cuts to services, which would negatively affect residents.

Having said that, the province's fiscal situation when we formed government in 2015 required immediate actions we found difficult to take in order to address the deficit we inherited from the previous PC government. Without taking those measures immediately, we would have been unable to cover payroll.

Our deficit for 2018-19 was \$522 million – less than half of what it was when this government took office – and lower than we projected for the year.

We are still projecting deficits in 2020-21 and 2021-22, but we remain diligent and focused on our plan to returning to a sustainable surplus in 2022-23.

We require a balanced approach to tackling our debt. This year marks the end of the Temporary Deficit Reduction Levy. Budget 2019 included no tax or fee increases. We are eliminating the tax on automobile insurance.

Had we not taken action on the deficit and mounting debt in 2016, we would have had to borrow over \$15 billion by 2020-21. That would equate to borrowing almost \$300,000 an hour to keep the province going. As a government, we cannot allow our children and grandchildren to inherit billions in debt and debt servicing.

# NL ALLIANCE PARTY RESPONSE

## 1. ECONOMY

Newfoundland and Labrador is without a doubt facing one of the toughest economic times in our history. This is, in part, because of our reliance on the price of oil and several years of unsustainable spending by past administrations.

NL Alliance believes that we must look to the public service sector to assist in finding efficiencies in spending and opportunity for new revenue generation. We must work hard to diversify our economy and decrease on dependency on commodities that have unpredictable prices.

We intend on utilizing the front line knowledge of the day to day operations through in depth consultations, to drive efficiency within all aspects of Government operations. We believe their knowledge has been ignored and pushed aside for too long. We must be open to listening to first hand knowledge that will improve the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

While we would prefer to say that we are open to engaging in negotiations that are unrestricted, we must acknowledge our province's spending problem and labour is a significant part of this. As such, everyone has to accept we need to address this and all aspects of labour costs need discussion.

However, we are of the belief this starts from the very top and we feel there will be significant savings above the front lines to ensure the minimal effects to our already strained front line.

## 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT

The size of the public service increased from 25,000 to 45,000 during the significant influx of cash flow from the oil industry when oil prices were well over \$100 a barrel. As you are aware, the cash flow from oil has decreased substantially but our workforce has not. Labour costs are a significant portion of our spending, which is out of control. So we do believe our workforce requires significant reduction over time. This process can not happen overnight, but it needs to happen.

Our proposal, as we have said publicly, is to do a significant review of all positions above the front lines. Our front line workers have been the scapegoat for cuts way too long. We need to look above the front lines for cuts in the management of all departments. We believe this is where we are now overstaffed and this is where we need to cut.

## 3. HEALTHCARE

We have completed a cursory analysis of the spending under the health boards throughout our Province. Through this analysis it has become quite apparent there are significant labour issues related to burnout and sickness and it shows in our expenditures. This, we believe, stems from the constant downloading of cuts to the front lines.



# NL ALLIANCE PARTY RESPONSE

It is our intent to open communications between Government and front line workers. It is these people who hold significant knowledge on all aspects of delivering an efficient and effective health care system and we need to understand their concerns and desires for a better delivery. We want to hear directly from them, We want true collaboration, every voice will count, all suggestions will be examined in detail and together we can find a way to remove the significant strain on our health care workers while improving the service to the public.

We want our Health Care providers to enjoy going to work, knowing their contributions are appreciated and recognized by not only management but the public as a whole. We have witnessed for many years how past governments have made decisions pertaining to our healthcare system and many working within the system have wondered why they were not consulted.

This has been a problem for a long time. NL Alliance believes that by collaborating with those who work every day in the system, the experts, efficiencies can be found in the proper ways and areas. Any of these workers will agree that we need to cut spending and by having them in on the discussions will insure that savings are found properly and most effectively.

## **4. PRIVATIZATION**

As we are all aware, we are in a financial crises. The number one commitment NL Alliance has made is to put people first. We are committed to providing the most effective services to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. However, we must also be able to provide these services in an efficient manner. We will engage in collaboration with all stakeholders when reviewing how to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. No privatization of any aspect of government will be considered if it is not to the benefit of the residents of NL. It is our intent to look for and implement efficiency and effective spending in all Departments, Crown corporations, Associations and Boards. It is through this detailed analysis we become more accountable and effective in governing.

## **5. HOME CARE**

NL Alliance is committed to the care and well-being of our seniors and believe it must be priority. We believe that home care provides benefits to individuals in both mental and physical health.

However, we are also aware that we are currently borrowing significant dollars annually in the operational and capital expenditures in our Province. The budget for 2018/2019 estimated approximately \$2.6 Billion dollars.

It is through consultations with the many levels of care providers that we can properly assess the right direction for spending.

# NL ALLIANCE PARTY RESPONSE

It would be imprudent for us to say that we will absolutely increase spending in any area of Government. What we will commit to is a detailed analysis of the current system to determine its effectiveness and efficiency. Once this is complete, it is only then can we assess the proper way to address the strain and funding of home care.

We can say that you can be rest assured NL Alliance will never sacrifice the dignity of our seniors in evaluating the allocation of funds.

## 6. CORRECTIONS

We first and foremost would like to offer condolences to all of the families that have been gravely impacted by the lives that have been lost inside of provincial correctional facilities.

As an Alliance for the people of this province, the safety and well-being of each person is of utmost importance to us. There are indisputable concerns and needs facing our correctional facilities in this province; concerns that are yet to be properly addressed. The NL Alliance hears and recognizes the ideas brought forth by NAPE and other such concerned entities. As made visible by our Guiding Principle Two, our Alliance operates on the four pillars of Honesty, Transparency, Accountability, and Open Government. As such, we will work alongside Corrections and Community Services and other affiliated and concerned groups to firstly improve safety for correctional staff and inmates alike in an honest and open manner.

NL Alliance has committed to building a new correctional facility to replace the HMP. This facility has gone beyond its expected service life and does not provide adequate living conditions or rehabilitation services to be effective in corrections. The focus for funding in this regard needs to be providing the necessary infrastructure and resources to properly rehabilitate inmates to become contributing members of society through proper programs and mental healthcare.

## 7. HIGHWAY SNOW-CLEARING

One of the most vital focuses of the NL Alliance is the safety and well-being of all Newfoundland and Labradorians. As such, we feel it is in the best interest of everyone in the province, especially those commuting on roadways more frequently, to increase snow clearing.

## 8. LABOUR LAWS

It is important that every worker in this province feels appreciated and respected. It is important that workers are able to discuss concerns they have with both employers and unions. We understand that, at times, parties come to an impasse and they feel job action is necessary. As we have seen in the recent past that this can have dire consequences for employees, families and employers. It is very important that a dispute-resolution process be in place whereby all parties involved can come to a resolution quickly to lessen the impact.

# NL ALLIANCE PARTY RESPONSE

## 9. DEBT / DEFICIT

It is NL Alliance's plan to deal with our growing debt problem through a significant review of all spending throughout each and every department. We aim to remove significant wastage in the budgeting process, we aim to reduce the various levels of Management throughout Government and compensation packages including pensions while reducing overhead required to maintain these levels. This would include all elected officials compensations and pension. We aim to open up the the transparency of Government and reduce the need to maintain secrecy and reduce the associated costs.

We aim to review all Crown corporations, agencies and Boards to assess the efficiency and effectiveness. Where efficiencies can be found actions will be taken immediately. We aim to allow the public bodies to do the work they would normally undertake rather than using taxpayer dollars.

# NL NDP RESPONSE

## 1. ECONOMY

The public service provides services the people of the province need and depend on, services which enhance quality of life for us all. The NDP is dedicated to maintaining these high quality services. We have no intention in cutting either the services or the people who provide them, and in fact would enhance services in areas such as health care and long-term care by increasing staffing levels to the point where people get the care they need and deserve.

Our plan for the economy is to develop sustainable, long-term employment that provides stability for people who wish to stay in this province and raise families. Good paying, sustainable jobs broaden the tax base and create new revenue.

We must work to become less dependent on boom and bust resource extraction projects, and lessen our fiscal dependence on resources, the prices of which we have no control over.

Non-renewable resource revenue must be used to develop sustainable industries that will serve the people of the province better — industries like the fishery and forestry, which, if properly managed, can be a long-term source of good employment. The key word here is properly managed. Value-added industries for resources such as fish and forest products are where the revenue and good jobs lie. We cannot continue the past practice of shipping out raw materials.

Diversification can free us from the rise and fall of world market prices of oil and other non-renewable resources, is the key to a better stronger and richer economy.

Countries such as Iceland and Norway show us what ingenuity can accomplish. We must foster this ingenuity in our province.

## 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT

The NDP is concerned with the low levels of staffing in areas such as health care and long term care. People are finding it hard to ensure their loved ones get the care they need. This is no fault of the front line staff, who are over worked and stressed in their jobs.

It is imperative that our vulnerable — seniors, patients, and others — get the care they need. The NDP will ensure staffing levels are returned to a proper level to ensure people get good quality care.

Whatever the service, health care, long term care, snow-clearing, police and fire protection, people need it to be there for them when they need it. The NDP understands the importance of quality public services, and will not cut — and in many instances will re-instate — the people who provide these services.

# NL NDP RESPONSE

## 3. HEALTHCARE

As we have stated earlier in this questionnaire, the NDP recognizes the challenges in our health care system. Cuts to front line staff may make a difference in health care budgets, but it has a heavy toll on the lives of the people needing care, and the overworked stressed out staff trying to provide that care.

Every day in this province hard-working dedicated staff struggle to provide care and find it a near impossible task. We cannot continue to save money on the backs of over-worked staff and vulnerable people needing their care.

Our concrete action would be to immediately bring staffing levels up to an acceptable level to meet the needs of people in care.

## 4. PRIVATIZATION

Public-Private partnerships, so favoured by the other two parties, are not the best choice for the people of the province. Auditors-General from all across Canada, when asked to review public-private partnerships in their provinces, have found without exception that they are more expensive than traditional government-built projects.

Services provided by P3's are also found to be poorer, paying workers less and giving far lower value to the public.

Private companies are motivated only by profit. That is what they do. There is no place for a profit motive in providing quality public services. There should be no profit in care-giving, health care, education, snow clearing or any other public service.

Each of the examples you have given are areas where tending to the public good is, and should remain, the highest priority. Do people want the quest for a profit to override long term care, acute care, or snow clearing?

Do people really want to worry about a corporations focus on its bottom line when a loved one needs their care?

The Newfoundland Liquor Corporation provides, clean safe and well-stocked store for the public while paying good wages to its employees. Aln while retuning \$177 million to the treasury last year.

Privatizing this corporation would see much of the profits, and the money "saved" by paying their employees less, go into the pockets of the owners, instead of to the treasury and the communities where these employees live.

Ontario's auditor general, in her review of P3s and privatization, cites what happens when snow clearing is privatized:

# NL NDP RESPONSE

*"The bottom line is that the Ministry has been successful in reducing and containing escalating winter maintenance costs, but this has been achieved at the expense of a reduction in the timeliness of ensuring Ontario highways are safe for motorists in the winter."*

The NDP believe the travelling public does not want to compromise their safety on the highways of the province to save money. Snow clearing would remain a publicly funded essential service under the NDP.

## 5. HOME CARE

The NDP is committed to investing in home care for seniors and those with special needs. The NDP will reinvest \$5 million to restore necessary home care hours that have been cut since 2016. Home care saves money by allowing people to stay in their homes and communities. The NDP believes a fully funded public homecare system is a key component in the public health care system. We are committed to creating that service.

## 6. CORRECTIONS

The NDP commits to implementing all these recommendations, as they are long overdue in our corrections facilities. The safety and well being of the inmates and the correctional staff is paramount to a better, more rehabilitative corrections system.

In addition we commit to developing a female offender strategy. Superintendent Jesso says the prison system is designed for men, not women. A female offender strategy will better suit the needs of both the inmates, and the corrections staff by reliving tensions and stresses encountered by female offenders in the current system.

We will also commit to a dynamic security model, which has been proven at the federal level, and in other provinces, to be a better system for inmates and corrections staff. It makes for a safer environment, something NAPE workers certainly want to work towards.

In addition, the NDP commits to providing mental health first aid training to all correctional staff, which they have long been asking for.

All these new commitments will require training of staff, and the NDP will commit to providing staff training and upgrading to ensure the professional development of correctional staff is of the highest caliber. They need it, they want it and they deserve it. The NDP will make sure they get it.

## 7. HIGHWAY SNOW-CLEARING

Many people have to travel the highways in all kinds of weather to get to work, get to clients in need, or to deliver supplies. First responders in particular need to be able to get where they are going quickly and safely, regardless of the time or weather conditions. They have no choice but to drive the highways. They have the right to expect those highways to be safe.

# NL NDP RESPONSE

We are committed to returning to 24 hour snow-clearing coverage on all main routes in the province. The Liberal government saw savings in cutting round-the-clock snow-clearing, New Democrats do not believe in compromising public safety in order to save money. Dire as our financial position may be, we can afford to provide basic services to keep the motoring public safe.

## 8. LABOUR LAWS

After a long and bitter 18 month strike at the Voisey's Bay mine between Vale and Steelworkers, government struck an inquiry to examine ways labour relations could be improved in the province.

Recommendation 5 of the report that came out of the Inquiry calls for amending the Labour Relations Act to impose binding arbitration in cases when a company has bargained in bad faith, collective bargaining has failed or when it is in the public interest to do so. This has not been done, and that provision was not in legislation to protect the workers at DJ Composites, as that dispute dragged on for two years.

The NDP is committed to amending the Labour Relations Act so that binding arbitration is triggered in situations where a strike or lockout is protracted, or a company is found to be bargaining in bad faith. In the case of DJ Composites, the Labour Relations Board ruled twice that the U.S. owned company was guilty of bargaining in bad faith.

Specifically, we commit to amending the Act to ensure:

- o After 90 days of a strike or lockout, the Labour Board must appoint a special mediator with the power to compel the parties to meet and negotiate in good faith with the assistance of the mediator;
- o Either party may apply to the Board for an order requiring the resolution of the a strike or lockout by binding arbitration and providing the Board with specific authority to make such an order, when the board is satisfied that:
  - § a review of the bargaining history indicates the parties will not be able to conclude a collective agreement;
  - § or where one of the parties has committed an egregious unfair labour practice relating to collective bargaining.

Another contentious issue that has plagued strikes in this province is the ability of employers to use replacement workers. This undermines the right of workers to effectively negotiate with employers.

The NDP is committed, and has lobbied governments in the House for many years, to enact anti-replacement worker legislation.

# NL NDP RESPONSE

## 9. DEBT / DEFICIT

First and foremost, the NDP knows austerity does not work. Time and again economists have shown deep cuts in spending, especially the cutting of public service jobs, can send economies into a tailspin, hurting the lives of many people.

There is no simple cure for the debt which the two other parties have saddled us all with.

There is good news, however. We are not a poor province; we are a poorly managed province. We are rich in resources and in our people.

Creating employment and creating the conditions where jobs are created widens the tax base, and generates revenue which can be put towards retiring public debt. We are committed to creating these conditions.

In other jurisdictions, such as Quebec, it has been proven that investing in child care boosted the economy, by freeing up more women for the work force, more people who got jobs and started paying taxes.

The best jobs are green sustainable long term jobs which will bring financial stability to the province. We have to wean ourselves from the extraction of non-renewable resources such as oil and gas, and use revenues from those activities to invest in long term sustainable jobs, like the fishery and forestry.

The greatest problem facing the debt burden we carry is the ruinous and unnecessary Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project, which was sanctioned by the Progressive Conservative party and mismanaged by the Liberal government. It will cost hundreds of millions yearly to avoid ruinous power rates, money which will not be spent on programs, services, or debt servicing. This is a huge problem.

The debt under which this province struggles can be alleviated, but it is a long term process.

That particular financial burden, and the burden of rate mitigation which government will have to carry, is going to have to be addressed by the federal government. Regardless of what party is in power, the federal government owes it to the people of the province to help carry the burden of Muskrat Falls — a project they helped sanction and finance.



# PC PARTY RESPONSE

## 1. ECONOMY

**Economic Challenges:** Too many governments have seen public sector employers and unions as adversaries in the pursuit of economic growth. I don't think that way. I believe NAPE and its members have a vested interest in seeing our province grow to its full potential, because that growth will also sustain a healthy public service.

**Cuts:** For the past four years, Newfoundland and Labrador has been managing decline, trying to figure out what to cut next. No wonder the province is declining in jobs, people, disposable income and opportunity when an attitude like that prevails in the highest offices of the land. It's got to change, or the downward spiral will eventually reach the point of no return. We have to stop focusing on cuts and start focusing on growth.

**Revenue:** It's been said time and again that a province so rich in resources and skilled people should be booming, just like its neighbours. Why is a partner in one of the wealthiest countries in the world having to cope with endless decline and austerity while our fellow partners expand? Something is fundamentally wrong. The smaller we get, the weaker our voice will become, and the less our chances of getting the attention we need. We have to act now to bring the federal government to the table in a serious, joint application of Section 36 of the Constitution, which was written to address the very circumstance we find ourselves in. That section obligates Ottawa to address disparity and ensure comparable services at comparable rates of taxation. We are witnessing a widening gap of disparity and bearing up under excessive taxation while services suffer, outcomes suffer and public employees suffer.

On my watch, this will be an early and constant and overriding priority. Ottawa will hear us on this, because we will ensure that they do. I will call on NAPE and all groups and people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to join me in a single-minded campaign to address the circumstances we find ourselves in. It won't be a campaign for a handout. It will be a campaign for fairness and strategic intervention, so we can put our strengths to work for our own prosperity. We can stand on our own, if only the inequities and barriers were dealt with.

The Ball Liberals sought to create new revenue streams from the pockets of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. No wonder things got worse! We need lower taxes – which is why my Blue Book includes two significant cuts that will take effect immediately, along with other investments like subsidized child care that will help families stretch the dollars they already have. A family living on a minimum wage income will pay zero for child care, and even those earning more will pay far less. That frees up a substantial amount of disposable income. Circulating money will fuel consumer spending, small business hiring and investing, and all the other benefits that come from that.

In delivering services, we still have to find ways to do things differently. The stories of burnout among front line workers in our healthcare system are shocking. Obviously, things have to change. Finding the right path to change will have to be a collaborative effort.

# PC PARTY RESPONSE

No one understands this better than front line workers, so they and their unions will be front and centre in leading the reforms that we need to see. I've been accused by my opponents of having a slash-and-burn agenda, but it's simply not true. I define myself by the word "progressive" in "progressive conservative", and that's why I see our public sector unions as partners rather than adversaries in this. We have the same goal: delivering better services under better conditions so the people we serve have better outcomes and the system is sustainable over the long term. Around a common table, we will collaborate on solutions, and then we'll put them into action so it's not just talk. We'll keep the lines of communication wide open as we proceed so we can adjust quickly whenever problems arise. The focus will never be on cutting public services. The focus will be on improving public services, taking into account the voices and strengths of the public employees who deliver them. We need to build a true partnership based on honesty and trust so we can remove the element of fear that naturally takes hold when one party has a suspicion about the other's motives and intentions. I want you to be able to look me in the eyes and say: this is a Premier I can trust, a Premier whose agenda is laid bare on the table and whose goals are the same as mine. When I talk about honesty in politics, that's what I mean. It's a new way of doing things, and I'm prepared to stand or fall based on my commitment to that approach. If I let you down, fire me.

**Public sector negotiations:** On my watch, our negotiations will be frank and collaborative rather than confrontational or manipulative. We need to pay public employees fairly for the work you do. We need pay equity. We need a healthy working environment. These are matters for us to talk about around the collective bargaining table, fully respecting the integrity of the process. If there are sticking points, we'll keep talking until we work through them. The government is not the 8th floor of Confederation Building. It's all of us, working together. We are all employees of the people. They are the employer. Their needs and demands will determine our choices. Whatever we do will be focused on delivering what people need. When we deliver, we will all share the credit for a job well done. And if from time to time we fail to deliver on something, then we will put aside blame and get back to the table until we work out a solution.

**Diversification:** I will lead Partnerships for Jobs in various sectors of our economy to identify barriers to growth and address them so we can see some real job creation in our economy. Job growth will lead to population growth, which will create the revenue stream needed to cover the public services people require. The recent McKinsey report repeated many of the things we have been saying: that we have to build on our natural strengths and strategic advantages in resource sectors, tourism, technology and so forth. We should be angry about losing air access and our lead in ocean technology to Nova Scotia, and we should get our edge back. Full credit to Nova Scotia for fighting, but we have to fight too. It's our future that's on the line. We need this growth to sustain our communities. Once we get this growth happening, the challenge of sustaining our public service becomes a smaller challenge.

I will say more about this in the answers that follow. But I strongly encourage you to download our Blue Book and read it through for yourself. [<https://crosbie2019.ca/blue-book/>] There's a lot more that will interest you. Only with your partnership and full participation will we be able to do that. The ultimate goal is to get our people's province growing to the full measure of its potential.

# PC PARTY RESPONSE

We had a taste of that – enough of a taste to convince us that it isn't a pipe dream. It isn't out of reach. It's achievable. All we have to do is stand together, as we've done before, and make it happen.

## 2. SIZE OF GOVERNMENT

When Newfoundland and Labrador leaders make the case to Ottawa that our transfer payments are inadequate to meet the need, Ottawa always roll out the "per capita" statistics. They will tell us our funding on a "per person" basis is higher than that of some other jurisdictions. The same stats are rolled out to judge the size of our public service relative to the size of our population. Ironically, the more our population declines, the better those statistics appear to be. But these "per capita" statistics do not paint a true picture of our needs. With a population spread out thinly over a vast area, and a demographic profile that is "older", our needs are not truly reflected by those "per capita" statistics. Those looking in from a distance might say we need to pare down the size of government to get closer to the national average. But with so many people in our province employed in the public service, imagine the devastating impact of a radical policy like that.

We need to see the situation with a clear vision. Instead of constantly paring down services to manage decline, we need to grow our population to fit our potential. Public services would not be spread as thinly if our communities were to fill up with families employed in growing industries. Why should Newfoundland and Labrador tolerate massive population decline when the rest of the country is growing and our growth potential is so strong? The Constitution of Canada obligated the federal government to take action to reduce disparity in our country. When we are spiraling downwards while the rest of the country is growing, that disparity is widening.

That is why I am calling for a joint federal-provincial renewal initiative to get our province back on the path to growth, using all the levers that governments can apply to the problem. That's the first and overriding priority when it comes to addressing decline. The current government is not doing enough on this front, if indeed it's doing anything at all. If nothing is done and our population decline reaches a critical point, the province would be unsustainable. We cannot and will not allow that to happen – not when our resource potential is so enormous.

In the meantime, a government has to do a better job of managing public services so the workers in the system are not stretched to the breaking point, to the detriment of those the government is supposed to be serving. Everyone in the system – including NAPE's members and leadership – needs to be fully engaged in this. I want to bring you around the table to get a proper understanding of what's not working and what we ought to be doing to fix things. Let me give you a specific example in my answer to your next question regarding healthcare.

## 3. HEALTHCARE

Yes, the healthcare system in our province is under great strain. Yes, our front line workers are bearing the brunt of this strain.

# PC PARTY RESPONSE

The working lives of some NAPE members are terrible. And patient outcomes are not what they ought to be. Whose fault is this? I'm not interesting in the blame game. I want to fix what's broken, bring sanity to the healthcare work place and better serve our patients so we have a healthier province.

The model I'm proposing for the health care system is the Premier's Task Force on Health Care. For political reasons, others are describing this as a wolf in sheep's clothing – a smokescreen for a cost-cutting exercise. That is not what I am about. Health spending is not going to be decreased; it's going to be spent more effectively, so we can get patients healthier and bring sanity to the working lives of those NAPE represents.

Here's what I state in the Blue Book: "A Crosbie government will establish the Premier's Task Force on Health Care to work with all health care stakeholders including residents, frontline workers, health care providers and health care administrators, with a mandate to improve the way health care is delivered in this province. The Task Force will be, not top-down, but consultative. It will bring a level of independence and a broad perspective on the best practices in the country."

One of the breaking points in the system right now is long-term care. That's hardly surprising, given the aging demographic profile of our province. It is seniors who require the most healthcare and long-term care. The more our province ages, the more pronounced those issues will become. We have to get a handle on this now, and we can only do it by working together. I am committing to conduct a base staff level review of all nursing homes in the province. Your front line workers have a good idea of what this review will find. If the review recommends action, then we will take it – but we'll do it together. Your members not only have a vested interest in ensuring we do the right thing, but you also have better insights than most in what needs to be done. I am 100% serious about involving you in making things work better. I expect you to hold me to my word, especially since I am standing on a platform of honest leadership. Every one of us has loved ones who are currently receiving health care, and all of us will need care one day ourselves, if we aren't patients already. Lives depend on the choices we make. We're determined to get this right. We are not going to break the system or those who provide the care. We are going to get it right.

## 4. PRIVATIZATION

The Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public "and Private" Employees represents, not just public sector workers, but also private sector workers. In our province, people have the right to organize and elect unions like NAPE to represent them. Whenever the word "private" comes up, we need to remember that these workers also have rights. I have fought for workers in private industries. I know that NAPE does too. I respect that. My agenda is not about union breaking. It's not about undermining the protections of workers, or getting away with something less than Newfoundlanders and Labradorians deserve. I simply want to hear what people propose. If a proposal has no merit, then I am sure that NAPE and others will point that out, loudly and effectively, and bad ideas will not see the light of day. I'm not coming at the issues of service delivery with any preconceived notions.

# PC PARTY RESPONSE

I have spent my entire career standing up for the individual against the system. That's who I am, and I'm not about to turn into the bully. I just want to ensure the people of Newfoundland and Labrador are served in the best possible way. Whenever issues of service delivery come up, I want NAPE and your members to present your evidence and make your case.

I don't believe NAPE has preconceived notions, either. I truly believe that everyone is capable of thinking outside the box about making better use of innovations and trying things in different ways, as long as they make sense. This applies to every area of governance that you list. What is the best way to deliver the service? Who are the best people to do it? What are the pitfalls we need to avoid? No one understands those issues better than those who have been working on the front lines in delivering these services. You have my ear. You will always have my ear. We can't afford to make things worse by doing the wrong things. The only way to avoid costly mistakes that hurt people is to bring everyone to the table, sort out all the information and get the benefit of the insights that your members have. Let's not be afraid to innovate, if it improves lives – including workers' lives. Let's keep raising the bar so we deliver the best possible value for the public dollars we invest.

## 5. HOME CARE

With a population that is rapidly aging, we need more working young people generating the revenue that covers the costs of care for seniors, whose working years have passed but whose needs for care have grown. That revenue will finance the fair salaries that our health care providers need to be earning. Growing industry, jobs and population has to be a top priority, because it gets at the root cause of the problem you're describing.

In the meantime, we have to do a better job of caring for those already in need. That means fairly remunerating those who provide that care. We have to do this through negotiation around a table. There's no other way. I will open my door to you and your members, and keep the door open, so we can talk continually about what needs to be done and what adjustments in approach need to be made. It will be a constant dialogue between all of us as partners in the delivery of care.

Let me list some of the things I've outlined in my Blue Book on providing better access to care for seniors.

We will reverse the decision of the Liberals that restricts seniors' access to personal care homes. Currently, assessors are obligated to strictly enforce a policy that requires applicants to have a physical care need – and sometimes more than one care need – to qualify for admission to a personal care home. Mental wellness issues such as depression, loneliness, fear and anxiety do not qualify as acceptable care needs on their own. This is a very regressive and regrettable step in the provision of mental health care in this province. It is well documented that mental health affects physical health. Today, many seniors, who would have previously qualified for admission are being turned away. Personal care home beds are lying empty while needy seniors are awaiting assessments. There is much evidence to support that the intervention of personal care homes can defer or even eliminate the need for the more expensive long-term care option.

# PC PARTY RESPONSE

We will restore the dignity and independence of seniors and allow them to have a voice in choosing the best care for their needs. We will engage the Seniors' Advisory Council differently and more effectively by involving them in the "health in all policies" approach.

We will establish a provincial palliative care team to guide health care providers in making decisions about the most appropriate care options for end-of-life patients. All changes will be monitored and evaluated as they are being implemented.

We will develop a community residential hospice/end of life care model. We will learn from the experiences of other provinces that have led on end-of-life hospice care. As a start, we will work with the proponents of the Lionel Kelland Hospice in Grand Falls-Windsor in their efforts to establish a hospice, and based on learnings from this initiative, look to support others like it throughout the province.

## 6. CORRECTIONS

I was one of the first to call for a public inquiry into the deaths of inmates at our correctional facilities. These are people in the province's care. It is not okay that people are dying while incarcerated. The families were understandably distraught, and people everywhere were troubled that this had happened – and not just once or twice, but over and over. Obviously, there was a systemic issue at play, and getting to the bottom of the problem was imperative and urgent. Marlene Jesso did an excellent job of reviewing the circumstances, within the constraints imposed on her. She concluded by pointing to other investigative work that is needed to follow up on her own investigation. Much of what she found has been redacted. I fully understand the need to respect the privacy of individuals, but let's remember that the Cameron inquiry into breast cancer testing errors brought the personal details of patients into the public domain so the systemic shortcomings could be exposed and the right changes made. It is not about assigning blame. It's about changing the system. The Jesso report is just the latest to examine problems with our correctional system, mental health care and addictions treatment. Some of the fundamental issues remain uncorrected, even after all these years. HMP needs to be replaced, but that is only one element of a major overhaul of the system that gets all the pieces right. As Premier, I would listen to front line workers, correctional officers, caregivers, inmates and others about what needs to be done to produce a better system. The groundswell of public support for replacing both the HMP and the Waterford Hospital provides all of us with the perfect opportunity to seize the moment and take a comprehensive approach to not just corrections reform but also mental health and addictions care reform, because the two are so closely connected.

Here's what I stated in our Blue Book: We will establish a much-needed new correctional facility in the appropriate location. We will review the recent deaths of inmates at correctional facilities in greater depth, and take measures to ensure the operations at our current and replacement facilities accord with our mental health and addictions strategies and the findings of reports on our corrections and justice systems.



# PC PARTY RESPONSE

And related to this: We will bring forward a renewed Violence Prevention Strategy to build on the advances of the most recent Violence Prevention Strategy. Initiatives will relate to child protection, victim safety, shelters and support networks, transition houses, cyber-violence, workplace harassment, gang violence, human trafficking, protective police presence, restorative justice, victim impact, legal aid and support, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, elder abuse, persons with disabilities, racism and hate crime, gender-based violence, bullying, safe and caring schools, violence in care facilities, and other matters.

## 7. HIGHWAY SNOW-CLEARING

Over and over during the past year in the House of Assembly, our Caucus Members have raised issues of snow clearing, particularly as ambulances have been stranded for lack of snow clearing. We need to deal with this collaboratively, with snow clearing workers giving us the information we need to make sensible choices to keep our highways safe for traveling. I do want to see 24-hour snow clearing reintroduced so roads are passable during the evening hours if emergency vehicles, truckers and travelers need to use them. I want to sit around a table with officials and front line workers to determine what the challenges are and how we can fix them. Whatever the approach, it has to be an improvement on the status quo.

## 8. LABOUR LAWS

From what I have heard and seen, it does not appear that the government has been effective in applying the legislative and other instruments already in place to avoid protracted labour disputes. It took a long, long time for the dispute at Gander to come to a resolution. The government eventually stepped in, but not before great damage was done. Protracted disputes like this do nothing but harm the province's reputation as a place to do business, so even from an employer's perspective, it is imperative that we bring a better approach to labour relations in our province. I think we need to get back to talking about partnerships that involve all the parties keeping an open dialogue going from the start. When problems arise, there is then a familiar forum for dealing with them. The parties will already have working relationships and a history of dialogue. Waiting until things boil over is not good for any working environment. This is a lesson we learned recently when workplace harassment incidents boiled over and dominated public discourse. The better solution is a proactive approach, so issues are dealt with early on to minimize conflict and avoid serious clashes. It should never have to come to replacement workers crossing picket lines. We have to focus our attention on preventing disputes from ever reaching that point. NAPE has a vested interest in cultivating a healthy labour relations climate in this province – and you have decades of expertise to draw on. We need to set the example in the public sector by opening up the dialogue and showing how to nurture a healthier labour relations climate. Let's start from day one to make this a priority. Let's commit to keep the conversation going. I'm open to being informed by you about the things that you understand your perspective and advice on how best to nurture a healthier labour relations environment and what to avoid. I will also bring to the table my perspective as a lifelong advocate for the underdog. Let's work together, not as adversaries, but as partners, and make the public service a more collaborative and progressive working environment while at the same time advancing labour relations laws and policies that put Newfoundland and Labrador at the front of the pack from a labour relations perspective.

# PC PARTY RESPONSE

## 9. DEBT / DEFICIT

You will not see drastic austerity from me. That is not who I am or how I operate. I'm here to make our province stronger, not to decimate it. Simply put, you cannot cure the disease by killing the patient. We do have a debt problem, and it is serious; but we can manage it effectively if we set responsible targets and agree on the importance of meeting them. The problem with debt is the cost of servicing it. A good analogy is family debt. When the amount owing is so high that families are living cheque to cheque just to try to make the minimum payments to keep things from falling apart, the best advice is to get the debt burden down. There are plenty of strong opinions about the best approach to take when a province's burden of debt is high.

The Ball government in 2016 took one of those approaches, but it did not work. The fundamentals were wrong. Deep cuts, high taxes, inattention to growth and the failure to seek our fair share in Confederation all contributed to a worsening economy. Today, we have fewer jobs and people than when the Liberals started. Our economy is underperforming while our neighbours are enjoying a boom. Reckless austerity did not work. That's why my Blue Book is different from the Liberals' approach.

My approach includes two significant tax cuts. Why cut taxes if we have a debt problem? Because consumers need money in their pockets to spend in the local economy to drive small business growth and all the benefits that flow from this. This distinguishes my thinking from the Liberal approach. When the Liberals raised more than 300 taxes and fees, they overtapped the economy, draining the money that had been in circulation. When they laid off public service workers, they knew that these layoffs, coupled with the tax hikes, would hurt our economy. They stated it right there in their 2016 Budget speech: "Provincial deficit reduction measures are estimated to account for 40 to 50 per cent of predicted declines in these broad measures of economic activity." One of their taxes was the levy. Four years later, their own independent tax review stated this about the levy: "the [levy] was poor tax policy... It is regressive and closer to a head tax than a progressive income tax.... government should consider ending the [levy] before the end of 2019." It was the wrong approach, and that is why I am prepared to invest money to end it immediately, just as I will wipe out the insurance tax immediately. Let's stop driving policies we know to be poor and regressive. Let's get the money back into your pockets and circulating locally. To use an analogy, if you have a sick patient with a high temperature, you first need to bring down the fever. Reducing taxes brings down the fever.

The Liberals also ignored the economic growth part of the equation. After three years, they called in an external consultant, McKinsey, to provide the answers they did not have. McKinsey's report was an indictment of the things the Liberals failed to focus on during their term: ocean technology, the fisheries, air access and more.

But perhaps the most shocking thing about the past four years is the way the Liberals have refused to stand up for our fair share in Confederation at our time of greatest need. They said our crisis was unprecedented, but time and again, they let Ottawa off the hook for money we should be receiving. The Atlantic Accord? They undermined it. An Accord offset like Danny Williams delivered? They failed to deliver it.



# PC PARTY RESPONSE

An economist has estimated we could be receiving more than \$300 million a year just from that. Equalization reform? The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimated we could be getting more than \$500 million a year under a reformed formula, but the Ball Liberals failed to fight and let the Trudeau Liberals lock us into zero for another five years. The \$400 million fisheries fund? Dead because the Liberals reneged on their promise. Health and social transfer reform to reflect need rather than population? Zero progress. Billions of dollars that we should have been fighting to get were instead left on the table while our own people have been forced to pick up the slack through tax hikes, borrowing and public sector layoffs. Meanwhile, Quebec – which always fights and always delivers – is getting \$13 billion this year to help pay for tax cuts, service improvements and another surplus.

Standing up for our province matters, because it avoid the very things you're asking about – the very consequences the Liberals have saddled us with. We are a tiny province, and we have to punch above our weight or we're going to be ignored. Ottawa is taking advantage of provincial weakness to ride roughshod over our Atlantic Accord, clawing back power and using it to throw a monkey wrench into developments that could be driving massive growth here – growth in jobs, revenues, population and demands for public services. That is why so much of our Blue Book emphasizes on standing up for our province.

I invite the members and leaders of NAPE to work with us. Let's wage these fights together and repeat the successes we achieved in 1985 and 2005 with the Atlantic Accord. Because that's one of the most important things we can do to achieve debt reduction and growth. It will secure your future and our province's future.