

Your Family. Your Future. Your Canada.



Libéral

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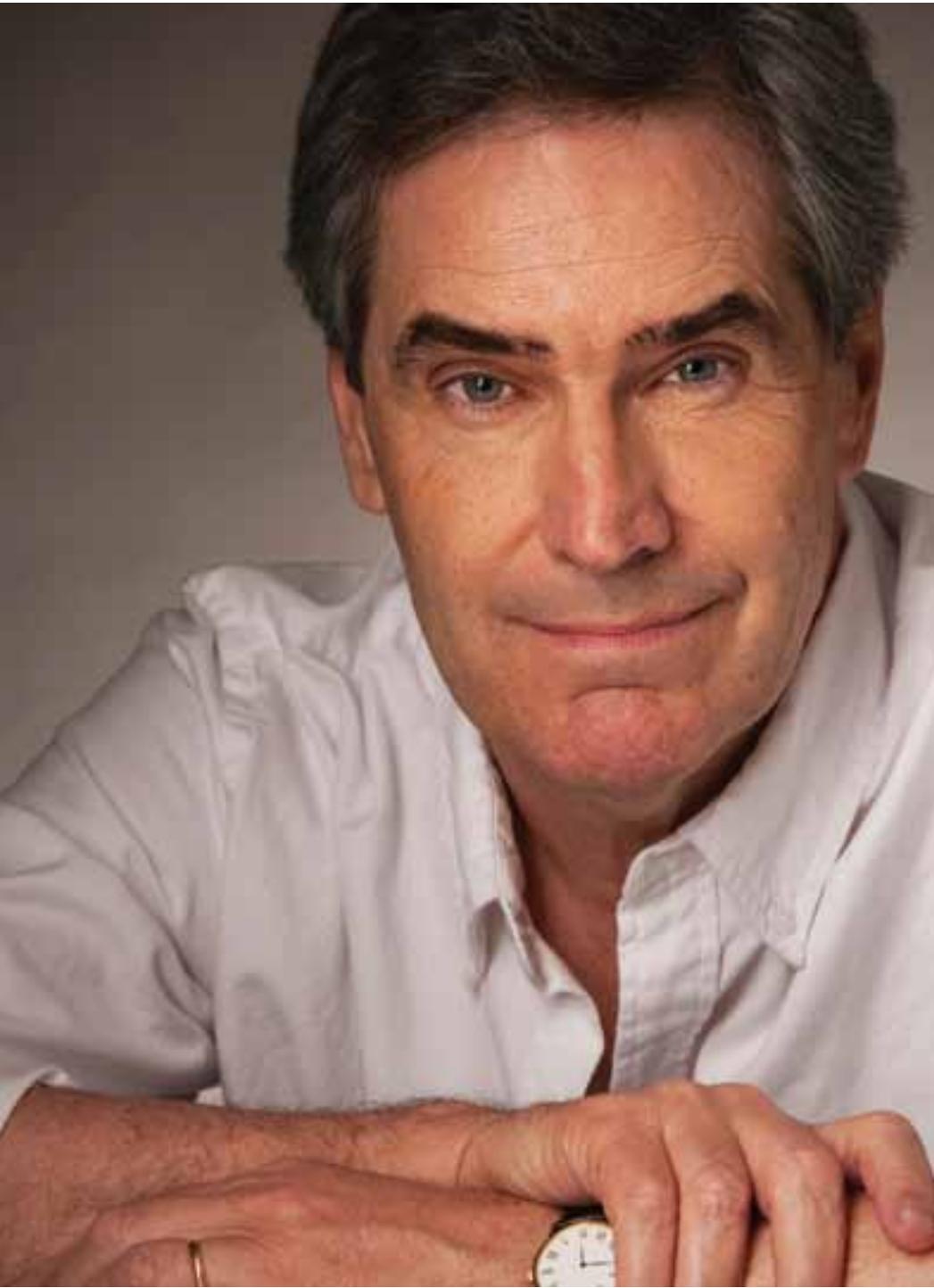


Photo: Philippe Landreville

When each of us gets
a chance to succeed,
we all succeed together.

Jim Jarmusch

March, 2011

Message from Michael Ignatieff

It's time to put equal opportunity back at the centre of our idea of Canada.

Our country has so much going for it: great people, free institutions, amazing natural resources. But what has really made Canada successful has been equal opportunity. We believe every family ought to be able to prosper; every child should get a good start in life; every new immigrant deserves a fair chance to get ahead.

Equal opportunity is what makes Canada great.

Liberal governments have built up the foundations of equality – establishing universal medicare, a good public pension system and a Charter of Rights and Freedoms guaranteeing equality of rights and responsibilities for all Canadians. Now, we're looking to the future.

Our platform in this election has one overriding objective: to make equal opportunity a reality for every Canadian, whether you live in a big city, a small town, a remote community, a farm or a fishing village.

We will invest in quality, affordable child care for every young family that needs it. We will help every family with the costs of college or university, so your kids can be ready for the jobs of tomorrow. We will help families take time off from work to look after sick loved ones at home. We'll strengthen universally accessible health care for all, and build on the Canada Pension Plan so everyone can retire in security

and dignity. We'll also have a new tax credit to help with the up-front costs of renovations to make your home more energy-efficient.

Finally, since opportunities for Canadians are now global, we will promote Canadian success overseas and stand up for the proud ideal that a citizen of Canada is truly a citizen of the world.

We can afford to do this while reducing the Conservative deficit responsibly, without raising your taxes, by making better choices. We will cancel unnecessary and unaffordable tax cuts for the largest corporations, reverse wasteful spending habits and focus on what really matters – giving every Canadian the tools to succeed in the years ahead.

Advancing equal opportunity is the work of a healthy democracy. But in the last five years, our democratic institutions have been weakened by an autocratic and secretive regime that evades the rules and shuts down debate. We will begin the hard work of restoring the credibility of Parliament and reconnecting government to the people it serves.

That's our election pledge to you: a government that respects our democracy and strengthens equal opportunity for every man, woman and child in this incredible country. When each of us gets a chance to succeed, we all succeed together.

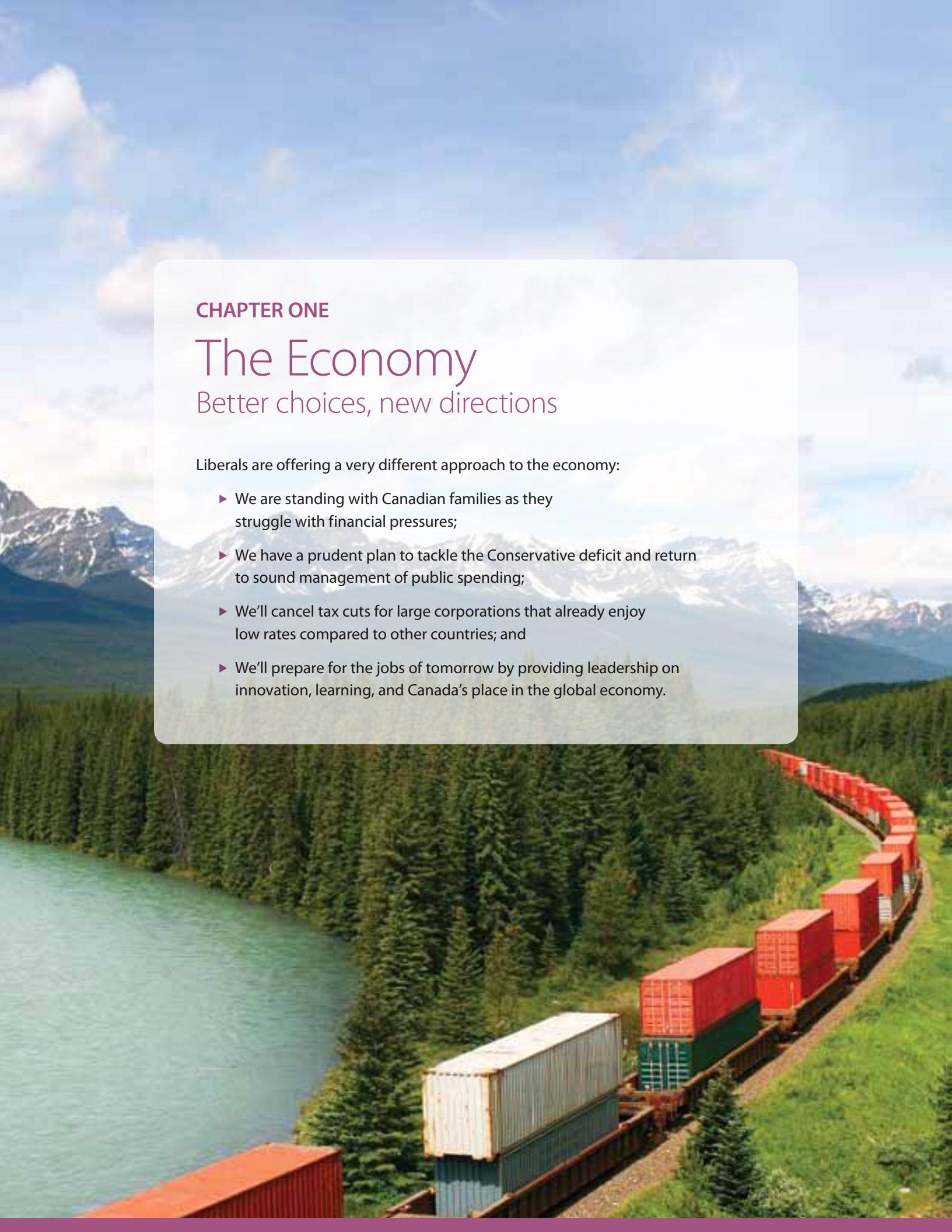
CHAPTER ONE

The Economy

Better choices, new directions

Liberals are offering a very different approach to the economy:

- ▶ We are standing with Canadian families as they struggle with financial pressures;
- ▶ We have a prudent plan to tackle the Conservative deficit and return to sound management of public spending;
- ▶ We'll cancel tax cuts for large corporations that already enjoy low rates compared to other countries; and
- ▶ We'll prepare for the jobs of tomorrow by providing leadership on innovation, learning, and Canada's place in the global economy.



Your Money, Your Choices

Liberal Priorities

Family Care: support for those caring for sick loved ones at home: \$1 billion

Learning Passport: direct financial support to families for higher education: \$1 billion

Secure Retirement Option, to help Canadians save

Green Renovation Tax Credit: \$400 million

Conservative Priorities

Tax cuts for the largest corporations: \$5-6 billion per year

Stealth fighter jets: \$30 billion

U.S.-style mega-prisons: \$10-13 billion

Wasteful G8/G20 summit: \$1 billion

Liberals believe Canada's middle-class families
are the bedrock of our economy.
Their concerns must drive economic policy.

Where We Are Today

Under the last Liberal government, Canada had a healthy budget surplus. We were paying down debt and reducing taxes.

Liberals also made major investments in research and development, and committed to long-term federal funding for health care – all of which helped make Canada competitive.

Thanks to a prudent business culture, a tough regulatory system, and good policy decisions made in the 1990s, including a refusal to permit bank mega-mergers, the Canadian financial sector has remained solid while other countries have been spending billions on bank bailouts.

Those balanced policies, and the hard work of millions of Canadians, gave our economy the resiliency to cope with the global downturn.

So where do we stand today? Consider where the present course is taking us:

- ▶ In 2006, when the Harper government took office, unemployment was 6.4 percent. In 2011, it's hovering between 7.5 and 8 percent.
- ▶ In the past five years, the personal debt Canadian families carry relative to their disposable income has risen 20 percent, and is now the highest among the 20 most developed countries.
- ▶ In 2005-06, the federal budget *surplus* was \$13.2 billion. In 2009-10, the *deficit* was \$56 billion, the largest in Canada's history.

Jobs



2006 – 6.4%

2011 – 7.8%
Unemployment

Personal Debt



2006 – 123.5% of income

2010 – 150.2% of income

Federal Budget Balance



2005-06 – \$13.2 B surplus

2009-10 – \$56 B deficit

Federal Government Spending



2005-06 – \$175.2 B

2009-10 – \$244.8 B



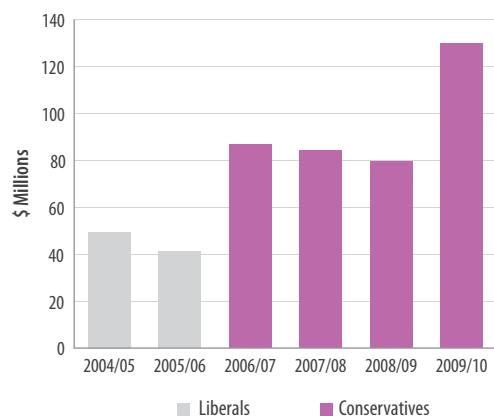
From 2006 to 2008, the Harper government increased spending at three times the rate of inflation, eliminated the contingency reserves included in previous budgets, and went from surplus to deficit before the recession hit. What are the Conservatives' big spending priorities?

- ▶ \$30 billion for stealth fighter planes;
- ▶ \$1 billion for a 72-hour, wasteful photo-op at the G8 and G20 summits;
- ▶ \$10 to \$13 billion Canada-wide for US-style mega-prisons;
- ▶ \$5 to 6 billion per year for tax breaks for the largest corporations, which already enjoy rates 25 percent *lower* than in the United States; and
- ▶ More than \$1 billion annually for consultants and advertising, much of which is costly self-promotion at taxpayers' expense.

These are bad choices. While most other countries used their stimulus spending to make their economies stronger and more competitive, the Harper stimulus spending was notable mostly for its partisan slant toward Conservative-held ridings, lavish spending on advertising, and obsession with promotional signs on every street corner. They missed a crucial opportunity to invest in the future.

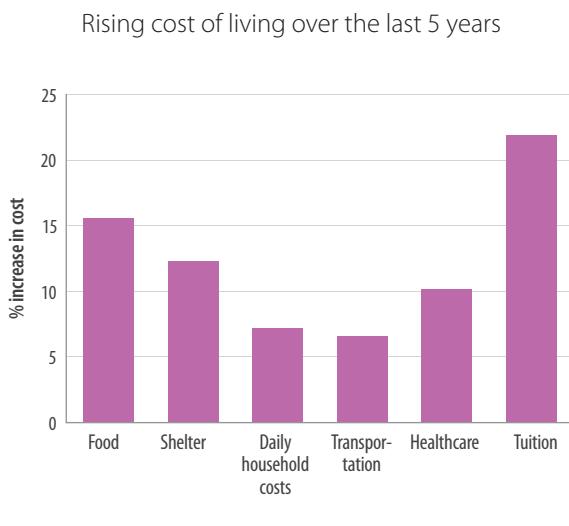
Liberals believe middle-class families are the bedrock of our economy. Coming out of the recession, Canadian families carry more debt than most others in the Western world, including the United States. Every dollar of disposable income in the average household is offset by nearly \$1.50 in debt. Against that troubling backdrop families are struggling to meet the increasing costs of putting children through college and university. Many parents must choose to stay in the workforce while raising kids, but can't find high quality, affordable child care and early learning. Many of the same families must also care for aging parents or other loved ones in need. Saving enough for a comfortable retirement is impossible for too many of us. On top of that, families are less certain than ever that the health care system will be there for them when they need it.

Federal government spending on advertising has tripled



Sandwiched by all these financial and emotional strains, Canadian families feel they're falling further behind, even though they're working harder than ever. But at the top end of the income scale, the richest are getting still richer, and the gap between them and the average family is getting wider.

Liberals believe that a more fair and equal Canada, with a thriving middle class, will be a more competitive and productive Canada.



Families are beginning to feel the impact of Canada's aging population. As baby boomers retire, we'll have an ever smaller proportion of the population in the workforce. As a result, experts predict that in the next thirty years, our standard of living will grow at only half the rate of the last four decades.

Are we willing to accept the current direction when it means our children will be poorer than we are today?

Today, 14 percent of the population is 65 or older; by 2040 the figure will be roughly 25 percent. That means fewer working age Canadians to support the elderly, at the same time as costly demands on social services, especially health care, continue to increase.

That's why it's more important than ever that our economy becomes more productive more quickly. Unfortunately, Canada's productivity growth lags well behind the United States, and most of our competitors.

The jobs of tomorrow will require more skills and knowledge. So investing more in learning is one of the most important things governments, businesses and individuals can do. We also know that productivity and our standard of living are driven by innovation. Businesses and entrepreneurs have the responsibility here, but governments can shape incentives.

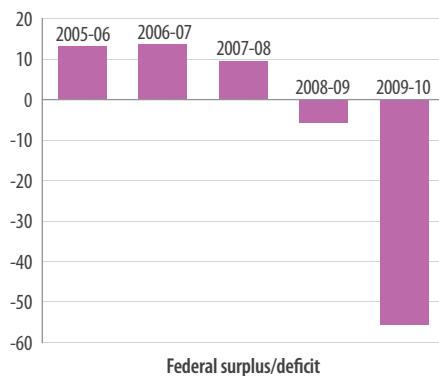


Further, as the global economy becomes ever more competitive, and new economic powers like China and India influence how wealth is created and where jobs are located, it's crucial that the federal government works effectively with partners in other governments, the private sector and civil society to strengthen Canada's presence in the world.

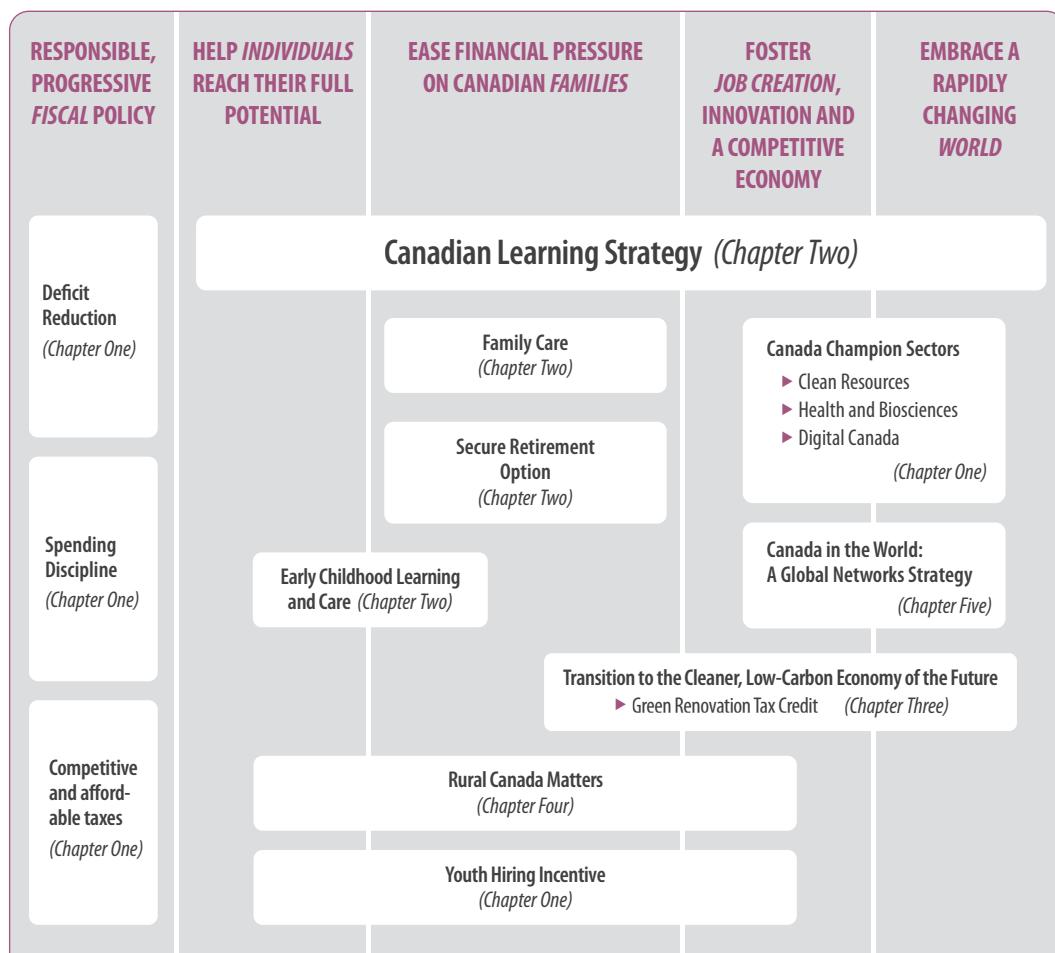
We need a different kind of federal leadership – responsible, balanced and progressive. The Liberal plan proposes significant investments in learning, caring for children and loved ones who are sick at home, and jobs. These are the priorities of middle-class families, and the essentials for a strong economy.

If we avoid these challenges, they don't disappear – they only get worse, and they get dumped on our children and grandchildren to solve. This country is better than that. We have the resources, the ability and the ambition to confront our challenges together and win. All we've been lacking is the leadership.

Federal surplus has become a record deficit



Stronger Economy, Better Future: The Liberal Approach



Equal Opportunity for all Canadians

Balanced, Progressive, Responsible Fiscal Policy

The Liberal approach to **fiscal responsibility** has 3 pillars:

- ▶ Deficit Reduction
- ▶ Competitive and Affordable Tax Rates
- ▶ Spending Discipline

Deficit Reduction

Our plan begins with a commitment to a strong fiscal anchor.

A Liberal government will commit to **reducing the deficit to one percent of GDP** within two years, down from 3.6 percent in 2009-10. We will set subsequent, rolling targets to continue decreasing the deficit every year after that until the country is returned to surplus. Unless Canada is faced with an unexpected second recession, all fiscal planning will be consistent with this anchor.

We will restore a two-year budgeting framework to increase transparency and make steady, measurable progress in deficit reduction. That progress will be driven by **rolling, near-term targets** that are firm and achievable.

In addition, Liberals will restore prudent budget planning, starting with this platform. By its second year, our plan frees up \$7 billion through better choices. We will put some of that money aside in a \$3 billion **Prudence Reserve**, to manage any unforeseen events without missing our targets. If the reserve isn't needed, it will go toward the deficit.



These unshakable commitments – rolling deficit reduction targets, a realistic budgeting time-frame, and a tangible commitment to prudence – worked the last time a Liberal government had to clean up a fiscal mess left by Conservatives.

Competitive and Affordable Tax Rates

A new Liberal government will implement two measures to make our tax system fairer and preserve revenues. The funds from these measures will support a prudent plan for eliminating the deficit and several investments in the priorities of middle-class families that will also have long-term benefits for our economy.

First, we will **cancel the Harper government's corporate income tax cuts** of January 1, 2011 and January 1, 2012, restoring the 2010 level for Canada's largest firms. That will still maintain a 25 percent advantage over the United States, and one of the lowest rates in the G-7. Given that Canada's corporate tax rate is very competitive, using borrowed money to cut it further is not a prudent policy. Our action will ramp up to yield over \$5 billion by the second year of our plan, rising to nearly \$6 billion within four years.

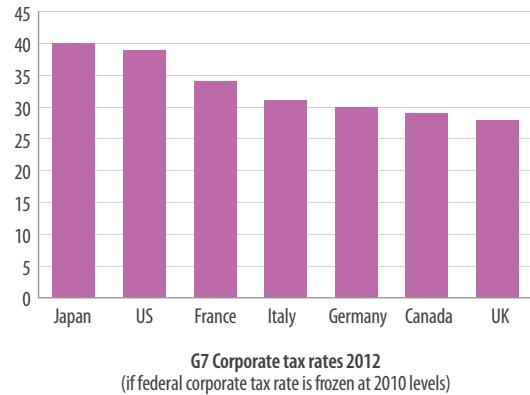
Second, we will **limit the lucrative tax break on stock options**. In some companies, employees are offered the option of acquiring stocks at a set price, below market value if the stock has risen. The difference is treated as employment compensation, but the employee can claim a tax deduction for 50 percent of it. Currently, 8,000 Canadians who earn more than \$500,000 a year deduct an average of \$400,000 from their taxable income based on stock options. Many other taxpayers are claiming much more modest amounts. But those 8,000 high earners are receiving three-quarters of the total claimed under the stock option deduction.

At a time of high deficits and growing inequality between the richest Canadians and middle-class families, this is a disproportionate benefit for the very wealthy. A Liberal government will cap the amount that can be claimed through the stock option deduction at \$50,000 annually.

Stock options are a legitimate method of compensation, and particularly useful for start-up companies. Employees with up to \$100,000 in annual stock option gains will be unaffected by this change. Very wealthy taxpayers will also continue receiving the deduction, and pay the regular income tax rate above this cap. The change will achieve a fair balance, and return approximately \$600 million to the public purse over two years.

Our plan does not require an increase in the GST, personal income tax or small business tax rates.

Canada's 2010 corporate tax rate is competitive



Capping stock option deductions:

Canada's top 100 CEOs averaged \$6.6 million in pay in 2009, or 155 times more than the average worker. Nearly one-third of that was in stock option benefits.

And they're sitting on another \$1.3 billion in stock options they haven't cashed in yet.

Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Spending Discipline

The Liberal Platform will cost less overall than the course the Harper government is on. That difference will allow for an ample Prudence Reserve, as described above.

This platform identifies all the funds needed to pay for all its new initiatives, without adding to the deficit. For example, we will:

- ▶ Fund new directions laid out in the Canada in the World plan by re-allocating more than \$1 billion, after the end of the combat mission in Afghanistan in 2011.
- ▶ Spread the anticipated revenue from the upcoming wireless spectrum auction over the 10-year life of the awarded contracts to support investments in a more creative and connected Canada.
- ▶ Cancel the Harper government's Public Private Partnership Infrastructure Fund, which in its two years of operation has only delivered eight percent of the funds allocated to it. Instead, we will invest in affordable housing. A dedicated fund is not necessary for P-3s, and in fact this one accomplished virtually nothing.
- ▶ Cancel immediately the Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance for oil sands investment. We will invest the savings in measures that will help make oil sands development cleaner.
- ▶ Cancel the mismanaged, \$30 billion deal for F-35 stealth fighter jets. When it is necessary to buy new fighters, we'll spend billions less than the Harper government would have. But the higher priorities will be investments in middle-class families, and building a stronger economy for the future.



A Liberal government will **review all federal program spending**, and implement smart, sustainable savings. We will seek the best analysis and ideas from the professional public service, and provide direction based on a positive and realistic vision of modern government.

We will **cut wasteful spending** that has ballooned under the Harper government. This would include, but not be limited to taxpayer-funded promotional advertising, the over-sized Cabinet, PMO staff and skyrocketing spending on consultants.

We anticipate saving at least \$500 million by the second year of our plan, consistent with the C.D. Howe Institute's assessment of potential cost savings that should be achieved in the federal government.

Overall, these measures will define a fiscal policy that is balanced, progressive and responsible. We will restore prudence to management of the nation's finances, and make steady, measured progress toward a balanced budget while investing in the priorities of Canadian families in a manner that strengthens the economy for the long-term.

Innovation for the Jobs of Today and Tomorrow

The global economy of the 21st century is being shaped by rising economic powers such as China and India, transformative new digital and internet technologies, and whole new economic sectors.

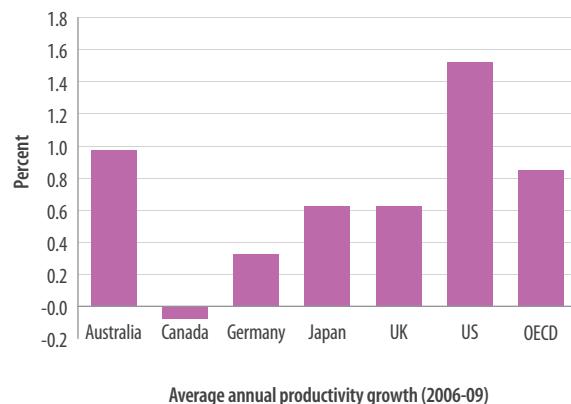
Developing countries that used to rely on low-cost labour are shifting toward more valuable knowledge-based economic activity, and becoming stronger competitors on the world stage. In this constant race for growth and jobs, no country can afford to stand still.

Unfortunately, Canadian productivity has been sluggish in recent years. According to Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of Canada, “Canada under-invests in machinery and equipment, training, and innovation – in fact, all of the underlying drivers of productivity.” We are ranked 16th in the OECD in terms of business research and development. Venture capital in Canada is at a 14-year low.

A forward-looking government must foster an innovation-friendly environment. While reigning in unnecessary regulation, the federal government can do more to target public investments, and provide the right incentives for entrepreneurs and investors to take risks on new ideas, technologies, business models and other productivity improvements. The most crucial long-term task for the federal government is to make learning through all stages of life truly a Canadian priority.

The Harper government has presided passively over a string of foreign takeovers of major Canadian companies. Conservative ministers did nothing while Nortel, an icon of Canadian innovation, was sold off in pieces to foreign investors. Similarly, Inco, Alcan, and Stelco were bought out, with headquarters and management control removed from Canadian hands. Only intense pressure from Saskatchewan and across the country prevented the same result for Potash Corporation, a dominant player in a key, global commodity.

Canada's productivity lags compared to our competitors



Foreign investment is good for Canada, and Canadians invest even more in other countries than foreigners do here. We should aim for still more success in global business. That will require the federal government to stop being a passive spectator. A Liberal government will strengthen the **Investment Canada Act** to make foreign investment reviews more transparent, clarify how “net benefit” is assessed, recognize the importance of Canadian headquarters and management control, and articulate when an asset can be considered of particular “strategic” value to Canada. Being pro-active is not the same as being protectionist. Rather, it’s part of a more effective approach to innovation and Canada’s place in the 21st century global economy.

Canadian Champion Sectors

A Liberal government will concentrate on **three key sectors expected to be sources of growth** in the global economy in the coming years, and in which Canada already has a strong foundation and real potential: clean resources, health and biosciences, and digital technology. The goal will be for Canada to become a world leader in each of these "**Canadian Champion Sectors**". These sectors will be priorities across government departments, as well as the focus of collaboration with other governments, and with business and academic leaders. And we will target new tax incentives for innovative, emerging firms, in these Canadian sectors.

Canadian Champion Sectors

- 1) Clean resources
- 2) Health and biosciences
- 3) Digital technologies



1) Clean Resources

World markets are demanding more sustainable and environmentally responsible resource products and consumption. Environmental footprints of entire supply chains matter more than ever. Canada is well positioned to benefit commercially from its exports of responsibly harvested natural resource products, and the expertise and technologies needed for cleaner extraction, management and consumption of resources abroad.

This broadly-defined clean resources sector, including energy, will be a major driver of the global economy for decades to come, and Canada can lead the world in this area. A Liberal government will offer incentives for innovation and work with industry, experts and other governments to advance Canadian commercial success and job creation.

2) Health and Biosciences

Canada has demonstrated longstanding leadership in health innovation from the invention of insulin in 1922, to the introduction of universal medicare in 1966, to today's breakthroughs in stem cell research, genomics and neuroscience. This positions us well to capitalize on the expected surge in demand for health-related products and services from aging populations throughout the world.



A Liberal government will work with provinces, territories and the research community to bolster innovation in the health and bioscience field, improve the health of Canadians, and help bring Canadian products to global markets.

3) Digital Technologies

The information and communications technology sector has always played an important role in our economy and in Canadian society. Today, it generates over \$155 billion in revenues annually, employs more than half a million Canadians and contributes almost 40 percent of total private sector research and development in Canada, a measure that must continue growing if we are to keep pace with competitors. We're already home to world-leading companies such as Research in Motion, Open Text, Ubisoft and Electronic Arts.

A Liberal government will make digital technologies one of its Canadian Champion Sectors, boosting incentives for investment in innovators seeking to conquer world markets.



Supporting Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Canadian Champion Sectors

A Liberal government will promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the Canadian Champion Sectors – clean resources, health and biosciences, and digital technology. This requires private capital. But with the modest venture capital market in Canada, new incentives are needed to generate more start-up capital for entrepreneurs. Therefore, we will implement:

- ▶ A new **Innovation and Productivity Tax Credit** (IPTC) that will grant Canadian investors a 15 percent tax credit for investments in small, early-stage start-ups that don't yet have the track record to seek financing from more traditional sources such as banks and the stock market.
- ▶ An extension of the popular "**Flow-Through Shares**" tax model to start-ups in the three Canadian Champion Sectors. This tax incentive would allow venture companies with little or no revenue to pass on tax deductions to investors, creating a significant incentive to invest in Canadian entrepreneurs from promising sectors where Canada can become a world leader.

Small Business: A Liberal Priority

Small businesses account for more than half of all jobs in Canada, and Liberal policies will help them create more.

- ▶ Youth Hiring Incentive – full EI premium holiday on all new youth hires
- ▶ Innovation and Productivity Tax Credit and extension of flow-through shares for investment in start-ups in emerging sectors
- ▶ 100 percent coverage of high-speed internet across rural Canada
- ▶ A responsible, prudent plan to reduce the deficit without increasing personal or small business taxes or the GST
- ▶ Canadian Learning Strategy, with major new investments in the knowledge-based workforce of tomorrow
- ▶ Secure Retirement Option, a voluntary, low-cost option within the CPP that small businesses can choose for affordable pensions

Small and medium businesses are the backbone of the Canadian economy. We need more of them to grow into large, innovative Canadian leaders that take on global markets. These measures to advance the Canadian Champion Sectors will target start-ups, and improve the incentives for the most innovative among them.

A New Innovation Gateway

A Liberal government will also revamp existing innovation programs to ensure that they do a better job of meeting the needs of the private sector. Currently over 100 such programs are scattered across the government, working with little strategic vision or purpose, and leaving Canadian entrepreneurs and major enterprises confused about what government support is available for innovation.

A Liberal government will launch a new **Innovation Gateway** providing a “single window” approach that consolidates government support for innovation and entrepreneurship in emerging fields as well as long-standing areas of strength like aerospace, manufacturing and natural resources. The objective will be a simpler and more efficient emphasis on entrepreneurial, innovative companies. Consolidating all existing federal resources earmarked for innovation, the Innovation Gateway will focus on:

- ▶ Helping entrepreneurs access the business and managerial training they need;
- ▶ Advancing business incubators and innovation clusters in partnership with industry and Canadian colleges, polytechnics and universities; and
- ▶ Supporting growing Canadian companies just past the venture capital stage in bridging the difficult “valley of death” step between research and commercialization.

Investing in Science, Technology and Basic Research



The federal government must continue funding basic research that the private sector – focused more on profitability and returns – will not undertake adequately. History shows that such public investment leads to tremendous economic benefits over the longer-term, as key discoveries are later adapted for commercial use. The CAN-ADARM, the Blackberry, IMAX and canola are among the many examples of innovative breakthroughs that would not have occurred without public investment in basic science, research and development.

As the country’s financial situation improves, we will increase investments in science, technology and basic research. In the near term, several commitments in this platform will advance science investment in cooperation with major national research bodies, including for brain research, oil sands environmental impacts, and the Canadian Freshwater Strategy.

Transportation and Infrastructure to Drive the Economy of the Future

Modern, efficient infrastructure is another driver of a productive economy and high quality of life. Sound investments can reduce pollution and ease congestion in our cities, while making our economy more competitive.

A Liberal government will provide leadership, working with other levels of government and the private sector to put in place a **Canadian Transportation and Infrastructure Strategy** that targets long-term economic benefits.

The last Liberal government took a strategic approach, with the Pacific Gateway Strategy, which combined international trade competitiveness with transportation infrastructure investment. However, under the Harper government, interest in sound policy gave way to partisanship. The federal role in infrastructure became little more than posing for pictures with big cheques in Conservative-held ridings.



Looking to the future, all governments will need to coordinate strategies and investments with each other and the private sector. The successful gas tax transfer to municipalities is ongoing, but other infrastructure funds that were launched before the recession expire in the next several years. A new Transportation and Infrastructure Strategy will underpin a next generation of programming. In a time of record high fiscal deficits and infrastructure deficits, realism, cooperation, clear thinking and tough choices will be necessary. A Liberal government will bring clarity and coherence to the federal role in infrastructure. It's about investing for long-term results on major Canadian objectives such as international trade competitiveness, regional development, economic growth and modernization, urban quality of life and greenhouse gas and other pollution reduction.

Liberal infrastructure priorities include:

- ▶ **Highways and major roads** that support international trade, regional commerce and economic development;
- ▶ **Local and regional transit, rapid transit and commuter rail** that helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions by providing efficient alternatives to private vehicles;
- ▶ **Municipal infrastructure**, particularly for water and sewers to meet local needs and reduce pollution, and major public multi-function spaces;
- ▶ **High-speed rail** in regions where rapid, convenient connections between major urban centres promise environmental benefits, enhanced mobility, decreased congestion and a boost to international commerce, if coordinated with investments underway in the United States.

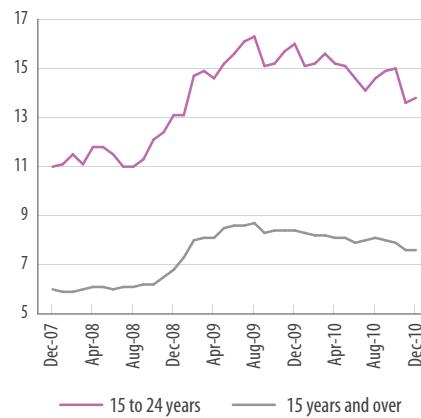
Canada's cities are drivers of good living standards and economic competitiveness in today's global economy. Still, serious infrastructure gaps are costing us jobs and productivity. The Harper government has paid little attention to cities, and advanced no vision of their role in the economy of the future. A Liberal government's Canadian Transportation and Infrastructure Strategy will address the needs and opportunities of cities, and build on their dynamism and innovation.

Acting on Youth Employment

At 14 percent, the youth unemployment rate is nearly twice the national average, and the worst in a generation.

As an immediate step, we will put in place a **Youth Hiring Incentive** for small and medium-sized businesses – a 100 percent Employment Insurance holiday for every Canadian youth age 18 to 25 that they hire. This incentive will apply to all new youth hires by small and medium enterprises for three years, and be evaluated in the third year to verify results and administrative efficiency. The Youth Hiring Incentive will be particularly valuable given that existing payroll taxes pose a significant burden for smaller firms. It is expected to benefit up to 170,000 young Canadians each year, at an annual investment of \$130 – \$160 million.

Youth unemployment is nearly double the national average



The new Youth Hiring Incentive will benefit
170,000 young Canadians annually.

The Digital Canada of Tomorrow

With continuing, rapid leaps in computing capacity, data storage and wireless innovation, digital technology and the Internet have the potential to invigorate our democracy, our economy, and our culture, putting the full power of information and action into citizens' hands.

But in the last five years, Canada has fallen behind more ambitious competitors. The United Kingdom, France, Australia and the United States, for example, have developed far-reaching plans for the digital society of the future, and are introducing comprehensive policies and programs.

A Liberal government will develop and implement **Digital Canada**, focusing on the following objectives:

Access to Broadband for All Canadians. Liberals consider access to a high-speed broadband Internet connection essential infrastructure, just as the electricity grid and the telephone network were over a century ago. A Liberal government will publicly tender contracts for private companies to install broadband capacity for the hundreds of thousands of Canadians in rural, remote or

northern areas who do not currently have access. To make those contracts economical for private investment, we will provide \$500 million in support, allowing Canada to achieve basic high-speed Internet access for all Canadian households within three years. The source of that investment will be the next spectrum auction for wireless licensing rights.

Closing the Digital Divide. Research shows that Internet skills lead to real economic benefits, including lower prices for consumers and more competitive small business. A Liberal government will work with all partners to promote digital life skills and training, in particular for older Canadians and lower income families.

Fair balance Between Creators and Consumers. Digital technology offers many new opportunities, but enjoying content without compensating its creators shouldn't be among them. At the same time, consumers should have freedom for personal use of digital content they rightfully possess. Liberals have worked to pass effective copyright legislation, including a private copying compensation fund instead of any new tax on consumers.

Flourishing Canadian Content, Culture and Identity in Digital Media. Canadians should continue to have access to ever more Canadian stories and Canadian content in the Digital Canada of the future. New media should provide vibrant and rewarding new avenues for expression by Canadian artists. The public broadcasters, Radio Canada and the CBC have crucial roles to play in achieving these objectives.

Competition in a Healthy Business Environment that Rewards Innovation. Consumers deserve choices and carriers that invest heavily in the advanced services and infrastructure of tomorrow deserve the chance to earn a fair return.



An Open Internet. The Internet is today's principal conduit for the free flow of ideas. To ensure it fosters the uninhibited exchange that innovation requires, Canada's Internet environment must remain open. Internet traffic management must remain neutral, and maintain the open sharing of legitimate technologies, ideas and applications. A fair, effective wholesale regime is also essential to allow smaller Internet service providers to lease broadband infrastructure at fair prices.

Open Government. Canada's federal government must embrace information technology and open data in order to improve services to Canadians and make government more transparent and accountable for public spending. Putting Statistics Canada and other government data online wherever possible, after meeting all privacy and other legal requirements, will strengthen Canadian democracy, help create and disseminate knowledge and spur innovation.

Protection from Digital Threats. Just as openness and transparency are the sources of boundless innovation and creativity on the Internet, these same features are too often exploited for criminal purposes causing significant personal and economic disruption, harm to children, and even threats to national security. A Liberal government will make security a priority in Digital Canada, working to advance it with the private sector and other governments at home and abroad.

CHAPTER TWO

Families, Finances and the Future

Middle-class families are the bedrock of Canada's economy and our way of life. They come in all descriptions – large and small, "nuclear", single-parent, blended, and of all cultural backgrounds.

Today, more families than ever are struggling with financial pressures. They're often caring for their aging parents and their own children at the same time, putting older children through college or university while also struggling to save for retirement. The household debt of the average family is higher than ever before.

These pressures are compounded by worries over whether the healthcare system will be there for them when they need it.

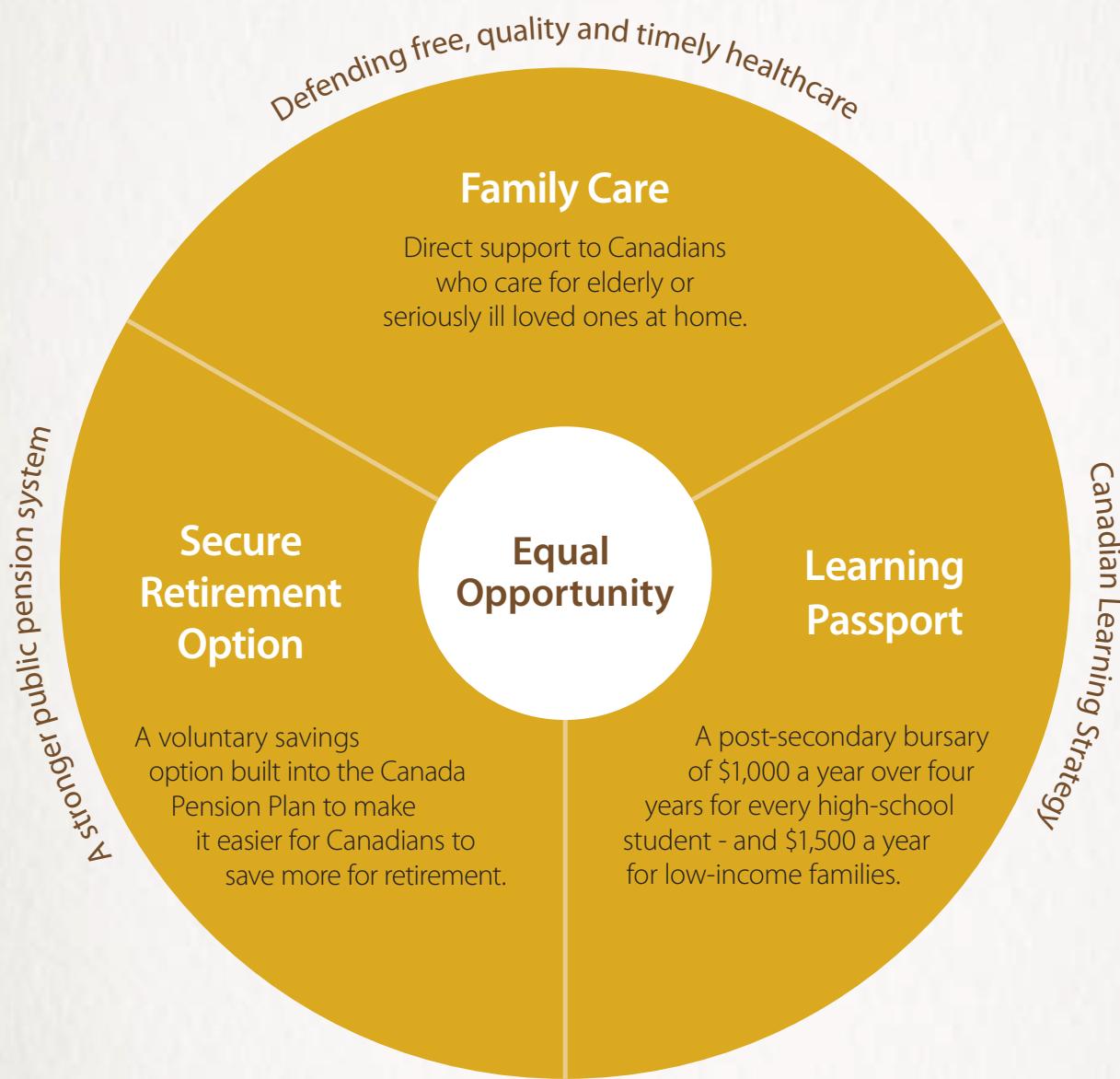
Canadians want a compassionate society and a strong economy. Since the jobs of tomorrow will require more skills and education, doesn't it make sense to help middle-class families manage the spiralling costs of university and college? When more and more families have to care for aging parents or other loved ones at home, while still making financial ends meet, doesn't it make sense to stand with them?

As our population ages, pressures on families will only increase. Families want to shoulder their responsibilities, but they shouldn't have to do it alone.

In tough economic times, standing with families is the right thing to do, and the right priority for the long-term too.



Families, Finances and the Future



Getting public finances under control goes hand in hand with smart investments in middle-class families. Both will help build a stronger economy, and put equal opportunity back at the centre of Canadian life.

The Canadian Learning Strategy

No country can escape the competitive pressures of the global economy, with its growing demand for skills, knowledge and innovation.

That's why learning must become a Canada-wide priority to maintain and enhance our standard of living and economic competitiveness in the years ahead.

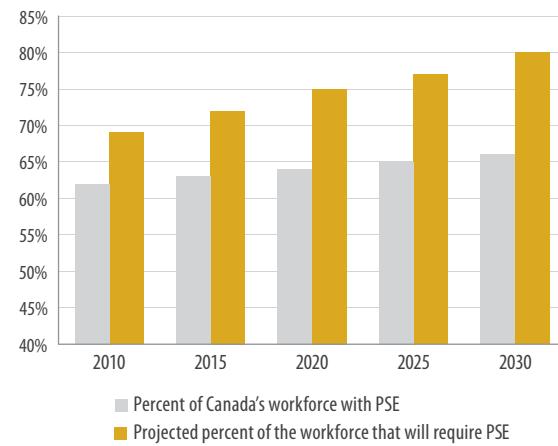
The Canadian Learning Strategy will include the following major initiatives:

- ▶ Early Childhood Learning and Care Fund
- ▶ The Learning Passport
- ▶ Aboriginal Learning
- ▶ Expanded Language Training for New Canadians
- ▶ Veterans Learning Benefit
- ▶ The International Dimension of Canadian Learning

A Liberal government will work with labour unions, employers and other governments to expand apprenticeships and other skills training opportunities for Canadian workers. In adult literacy, where provincial governments and local agencies are best placed to act, a Liberal government will offer support as part of the Canadian Learning Strategy.

Unless Canada takes action, we will increasingly become a country that has "jobs without people and people without jobs" – a significant number of workers who are un- or underemployed, alongside hundreds of thousands of jobs that can't be filled because too few Canadians have the skills and education required. Experts estimate that by 2017 we will need to increase the proportion of Canadians who have some form of post-secondary education from 60 percent to 73 percent to keep up with this demand for skilled workers. And yet, gaps and obstacles to learning persist and grow at all levels.

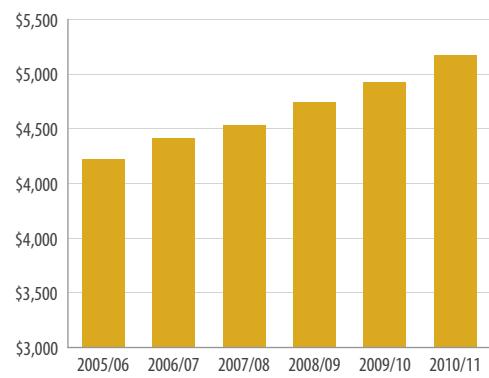
Canada's skills gap is growing



As post-secondary education becomes ever more vital for success, it's also becoming more costly. At more than \$5,000 per year on average, university tuition is now slipping out of reach for many middle-class families.

We also face an unacceptable regional and income-based education gap, with 60 percent of low-income students dropping out of school in some communities. The gap between levels of education attained by rural and urban youth is significant, and the one between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians is completely unacceptable.

University tuition has risen 20 percent over the past 5 years



Too many Canadian parents seeking child care and early learning cannot find quality and affordable spaces when and where they need them. And employers need to provide more training opportunities to support Canadian workers in upgrading their skills more frequently.

Studies show that more than 40 percent of adults lack the literacy skills they need to succeed in the modern economy. New Canadians often face the particular challenge of mastering one or both of the official languages of their new home.

The challenge of learning is one for all Canadians, and is crucial to the goal of making equal opportunity a reality for every family.

The policy initiatives anchoring the Canadian Learning Strategy entail nearly \$3 billion in new federal funds over the first two years of a Liberal government, a bold investment in Canada's future.

Early Childhood Learning and Care

Every child in Canada deserves the best possible start in life and a comprehensive approach to learning in Canada must begin with Early Childhood Learning.

We've already seen leadership from some provinces, particularly Quebec. But due to the lack of federal leadership, Canada receives failing grades from international bodies, including the OECD and UNICEF, for having no coordinated, national early childhood learning and care policy. Working parents, amid all their other pressures, often struggle with waiting lists for the limited number of existing spaces. That wait can often last years.



A Liberal government will establish a new **Early Childhood Learning and Care Fund** that will begin with \$500 million in the first year, rising to an annual commitment of \$1 billion by the fourth year.

Administered as a new social infrastructure fund, provinces and territories will be able to apply to the Fund for cost-sharing of early childhood learning and care plans that create and operate new, affordable, high-quality early

childhood learning and care spaces across Canada, with well-trained professional staff.

The long-term goal is a high-quality, affordable early childhood learning and care space for every Canadian family that wants one. But the federal government cannot do this on its own. It will require sustained collaboration among all governments. As implementation of the Fund ramps up joint investment, a Liberal government will also work with other governments on the research, policy development, and sharing of best practices for the system necessary to meet this long-term goal. This plan will support innovation and different approaches at the provincial and community level.

A Liberal government will place Canada on a path of step-by-step, year-by-year progress in improving access to inclusive early childhood learning and care. The result will be higher quality care for Canadian families, less waiting for spaces, and a country with a renewed commitment to the learning and development of our youngest citizens.

The Canadian Learning Passport

Canadian families are willing to invest in learning. However, with tuition continuing to rise – more than 20 percent over the last five years – we are at risk of higher education slipping beyond the grasp of too many middle-class Canadian families. According to a study for BMO Financial Group in 2010, nearly two-thirds of parents believe they will be unable to afford post-secondary education for their children. That's a troubling trend when more and more of the jobs of tomorrow will require college or university.



Canada's approach must be based on a simple objective:

"If you get the grades, you get to go."

A Liberal government will introduce the **Canadian Learning Passport**, a significant financial boost for higher education delivered directly to families. It will provide \$1,000 a year over four years for every high school student in Canada to use for college, university or CÉGEP. For students in low income families, the amount will be \$1,500 a year, or an extra \$6,000 in total.

All parents will have to do is open a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP). They won't have to make any contribution of their own to receive the Learning Passport.

This will be a new federal investment of \$1 billion annually.

The RESP is the right vehicle for a new, national investment in learning. It already incorporates incentives for families to save for education, putting aside what they can for the long-term. The Learning Passport will increase take-up of RESPs, especially among families least able to save. It will also provide extra incentive to stay in school, helping to reduce drop-out rates.

A Liberal government will work with financial institutions, provincial and territorial governments and other partners to assist all parents to start an RESP for their kids. Promotion and information about the Canadian Learning Passport will begin early, in order to encourage young Canadians to consider and prepare for college or university. Additional financial support will help increase post-secondary participation among those families who currently assume they can't afford it. Moreover, the Learning Passport goes where the student goes, empowering students to choose the institution that works best for them.

There will be further relief for student debt loads through a Liberal government's Canada Service Corps, which will forgive \$1500 in student loan debt for young Canadians who engage in volunteer service.



The Canadian Learning Passport

The Learning Passport will be paid out in annual installments of \$1000 or \$1500 at the start of the school year, when students need it most. A reduced amount will be paid out for part-time study. If the recipient completes studies before the Passport benefits are fully paid out (for example after a 2-year college program), the remaining value of the Passport will remain in the RESP, available to support further post-secondary learning in later years. If the beneficiary of an RESP does not attend college or university, then the Learning Passport money does not get paid out, and is returned to government coffers.

The Learning Passport will simplify the existing scheme of tax credits by ending and rolling in the modest Textbook and Education tax credits (except for graduate students). The Tuition Tax Credit will remain in place, as would the Canada Student Loans Program and the associated Canada Student Grant Program.

Aboriginal Learning

The Kelowna Accord broke new ground in building relationships among federal, provincial and Aboriginal leadership based on respect and shared commitment to fairness and results. Much has changed since 2005, but much can be gained by retaining the lessons and spirit of the Kelowna process.



Aboriginal people are taking action with hope and ambition for the future. The federal government must stand with them as partners to accelerate progress in several major areas. Education is the most fundamental, and should be the top priority. A Liberal government will commit to working with Aboriginal leaders toward the goal of ensuring Aboriginal people have the same quality of opportunities to learn as other Canadians.

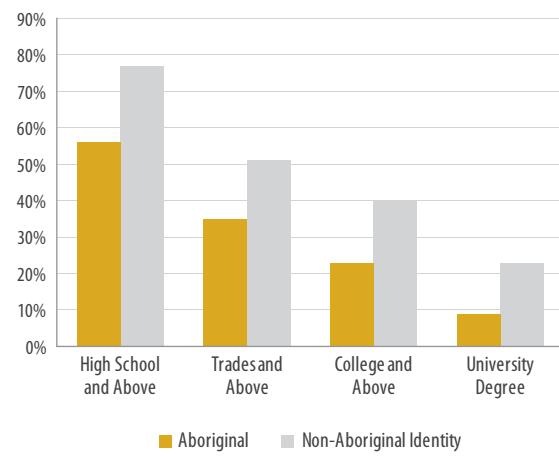
With a population that's growing at six times the national average, and a median age of only 27, the success of Canada's Aboriginal people is critical to our country's economic well being. For them, as for most Canadians, learning is the key to success.

Yet, the dropout rate among Aboriginal students is twice the national average. And those who do reach post-secondary education face long odds against finishing.

One of the drivers of these tragic statistics is the underfunding of aboriginal education in Canada. Most on-reserve schools, funded by the federal government, receive significantly less per pupil than schools in the provincial systems. And while federal funding for Aboriginal post-secondary education has been capped at 2 percent per year, tuition is rising at twice that rate.

A Liberal Government will invest an additional \$200 million in its first two years to **lift the cap on post-secondary education funding**. Consistent with the approach of the Learning Passport, we will explore with Aboriginal leaders ways to deliver resources more directly to students and their families. A key objective will be to increase the retention of Aboriginal students in Canada's post secondary institutions.

The learning gap for Aboriginal people



Addressing the challenges in K-12 education is even more fundamental. A Liberal government will work with Aboriginal leadership to **address inadequate funding over the medium term**, starting with \$300 million in new investment in its second year. We will support efforts to improve administration.

First Nations University in Saskatchewan, an important institution, will be re-financed under a Liberal government. We will create a **Canada Métis Scholarship** program, with a \$5 million annual investment in Métis students.



First Nations University of Canada

A Liberal government will also create an **Office of the First Nations Auditor General** to monitor progress, identify best practices, and ensure accountability for public funds.

Veterans Learning Benefit

A Liberal government will implement a new **Veterans' Learning Benefit** that provides full support for the costs of up to four years of college, university or technical education for Canadian Forces veterans after completion of service.

Following the Second World War, both Canada and the United States offered veterans full support for their post-secondary education. Although the GI Bill continues in the United States today, no similar program remains in Canada. It's time we did more.

In addition to honouring veterans, post-service education support would contribute to other important objectives. It would provide a significant boost for recruitment at a time when the Forces face difficulty in meeting enrollment needs in many specific occupational categories, particularly high-skill and technical areas. In addition, education support would smooth the reintegration of Canadian Forces personnel into society and the workforce. That makes sense for both the individuals involved, and the knowledge and skills-dependent Canadian economy.

Based on current projections of attrition rates and the Forces' needs, and assuming a high take-up rate, this represents an estimated investment of up to \$120 million in veterans' learning over the first two years of a Liberal government.



Expanding Language Training for New Canadians

With an aging population and a declining birth rate, Canada's reliance on immigration for labour force and population growth will continue to increase.

Unfortunately there is a large success gap between immigrants and citizens born in Canada, a gap that has grown in the last 30 years. Research has consistently shown that inability to function in either English or French is a major barrier to immigrants' success in the workplace and in the community. Language proficiency also increases earnings for the individual, and labour productivity for the economy.

Only about 25 percent of newcomers are accessing federally funded language training. And yet the Harper government has been shrinking its commitment in this crucial area, by failing to disburse identified funds, and even slashing planned spending for basic language training. The rules are another problem, as newcomers become ineligible for language training support as soon as they become Canadian citizens.

Liberals believe it's in everyone's interests that new Canadians succeed in the workforce, and can fully participate in the daily life of their communities. Under the Canadian Learning Strategy, a Liberal government will significantly increase federal investment to **improve and expand language skills training programs**, ramping up to an increase of \$100 million annually within four years.

We will expand eligibility to include foreign born Canadian citizens who need help improving their English or French, and work with partners to make language training more flexible and accessible, and better inform potential participants to increase take-up.



The International Dimension of Canadian Learning

Canada has an interest in attracting the best and brightest foreign students, especially from emerging economic powers, and in maintaining their connections to Canada after studies. Similarly, we will support opportunities for Canadian students to study and volunteer abroad.

In an increasingly interconnected world, entrepreneurship and innovation in all fields will be well-served by the flow of ideas that is enriched when we expose more Canadian students to international experience, and introduce students from other countries to the strengths of our country, our culture, economy and higher education system.

We will better leverage our reputation for openness, multiculturalism and excellence in education, by making learning a major component of a new Branding Canada initiative.

Family Care: Standing With Canadians Who Care for Loved Ones

At one point or another, almost all families will face the challenge of a loved one falling ill, whether it's an aging parent, a young child, or a spouse and partner.



Canadian families shoulder their responsibility of caring for their own, but they also deserve a government that stands with them. A Liberal government will strengthen families by helping them with the costs of caring for sick or aging loved ones.

Standing with families makes economic sense for Canada. Many family caregivers are forced to choose between working and caring for loved ones. Canada must address the impact on productivity of an aging population. Helping caregivers reconcile work and care will help. These are difficult economic times, so governments – and Canadians – must choose. We choose to help Canadian families.

Today, 2.7 million Canadians provide care for seniors. Family caregivers are responsible for 80 percent of Canada's homecare services, providing over \$9 billion in unpaid care each year.

- ▶ Over 40 percent of family caregivers use personal savings to make ends meet;
- ▶ One-quarter of family caregivers miss one or more months of work to provide care;
- ▶ 65 percent of family caregivers have household incomes under \$45,000; and
- ▶ Three-quarters of family caregivers are women, who are more likely to have lower wages, less savings and additional responsibilities for child care.

The Liberal Family Care Plan

To enhance care for our sick loved ones of any age, and to recognize the important contribution of family caregivers, a Liberal government will invest \$1 billion annually in a new **Family Care Plan**. This will help reduce the economic pressure on hundreds of thousands of struggling Canadian families.

The Liberal Family Care Plan will introduce:

- 1) A new six-month Family Care Employment Insurance Benefit so that more Canadians can take time off work to care for gravely ill family members at home without having to quit their jobs.
- 2) A new Family Care Tax Benefit, modeled on the Child Tax Benefit, to help low- and middle-income family caregivers who provide essential care to a family member at home.

New Six-Month Family Care Employment Insurance Benefit. The Employment Insurance system provides compassionate care benefits to Canadians forced to take time off work to provide care and support to a gravely ill family member. Under the current program, a family caregiver can only receive EI benefits for six weeks, and the eligibility guidelines require the caregiver to sign away hope with a doctor's confirmation that their family member is "gravely ill with a significant risk of death within 26 weeks." A Liberal government will replace the six-week compassionate care provision with a new six-month Family Care Employment Insurance Benefit.

The new program will have more humane eligibility requirements for family caregivers, changing the nature of the required doctor's certificate. We will build more flexibility into the program by allowing the six months to be claimed in smaller blocks of time over a year-long period and allowing family members to share the six months to provide care. The new Family Care EI Benefit will cost \$250 million per year and will help an estimated 30,000 family caregivers. A Liberal government will not increase EI premiums to fund this measure.

The new Family Care EI Benefit means you can take six months off work to care for a sick family member.

New Family Care Tax Benefit. Many family caregivers do not currently pay into EI and do not qualify for the existing EI compassionate care benefit. These family caregivers include some self-employed workers, retirees, or those who've had to quit their job in order to take care of an ill family

member. Canada's existing caregiver tax credit is also restricted to those caring for family in the same home and does not benefit many Canadians who do not earn sufficient income.

A Liberal government will introduce a new Family Care Tax Benefit to help lower and middle-income family caregivers, regardless of employment circumstances. To help Canadians defray the cost of providing care to family members in their homes, the new benefit will provide individuals with a tax-free monthly payment worth up to \$1,350 per year.

This new benefit will work just like the Canada Child Tax Benefit, and will be available to all family caregivers with family incomes under \$106,000 who produce a medical certificate affirming that their ill family member requires a significant amount of personal care and assistance with daily tasks. Families with sick children who meet the criteria will also qualify.

The new Family Care Tax Benefit will help an estimated 600,000 family caregivers each year at an annual cost of \$750 million.

A Stronger Public Pension System for Working Canadians

Canadians who work their whole lives to provide for their families deserve a secure and comfortable retirement.

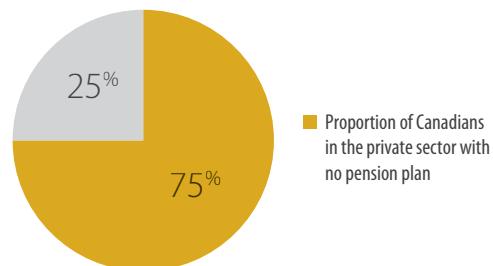
Unfortunately, fewer and fewer Canadians have access to a high quality, employer-sponsored pension plan. In fact, in 2008 75 percent of all private sector employees did not have a registered pension plan. Meanwhile, contribution levels to Registered Retirement Savings Plans have not grown over the last decade, with only 1 in 4 taxpayers actually making RRSP contributions. Many RRSPs have annual charges of 2 percent or more on assets. The costs, risk and complexity of RRSPs deter many Canadians from using them to provide for their retirement security.

Thanks to the work of the Liberal government in the 1990s, the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) are on sound financial footing. But for many seniors, these pillars of our retirement system are their only source of income.

Unfortunately, the Harper government backed away from strengthening the CPP, after spending months talking about it. Instead, they have advanced only a private sector option that will do little more than RRSPs already offer. The financial services industry has an important role to play for investors who can afford the fees and tolerate the risk, but a private option on its own is inadequate. The Harper approach is welcome on Bay Street, but fails to meet the needs of Canadian families.

A solid pension plan should be available to all, not just a luxury for a fortunate few. The most reliable and affordable way to achieve that is by enhancing the trusted and cost-efficient CPP that has served Canadians so well. The CPP provides enormous advantages to both employers and employees as it avoids the risk, complexity and hidden management fees that too often drain retirement savings from plans that are administered by the private financial sector.

Most private sector workers have no pension plan



A Liberal government will work with the provinces and territories to enhance the Canada Pension Plan in two complementary ways. We will support a **gradual increase of the defined benefits under the core CPP** to enhance the retirement security of all Canadians. In addition, a Liberal government will propose a new, voluntary supplement to the CPP called the **Secure Retirement Option (SRO)**.

The SRO would be available to any Canadian worker who wants it, with maximum flexibility built in. Entirely voluntary, Canadians could, for example, opt to save an additional 5-10 percent of their pay in a secure retirement fund backed by the CPP. Millions of Canadians can't afford the risk or cost of the stock market or RRSPs. This is an option for them.

Contributions to an SRO would fall within the same limits that apply to RRSP contributions, to prevent upper income earners from accessing an unfair amount of tax sheltering.

Employers would have the option to also contribute to their employees' SRO accounts, providing a low-cost pension plan for companies, particularly small and medium sized businesses for whom the expense of creating a pension plan would otherwise be prohibitive. By leveraging the CPP, employers of all sizes would have access to a large, risk-pooled fund with very low administrative fees.

The SRO would also be fully portable, allowing workers to continue making contributions as they move from employer to employer.

A Liberal government will pursue this innovative approach to retirement security collaboratively with provincial and territorial governments. Their agreement will be required to make the necessary changes to the Canada Pension Plan and the Quebec Pension Plan.

A Liberal government will take additional steps to ensure that Canada's pension regime protects society's most vulnerable. We will ensure that those collecting **long-term disability benefits** are given greater protection in the event that the company providing the benefit goes bankrupt. We will also create a **stranded pension agency**. In the event that an employer goes bankrupt, this agency will give Canadian workers a chance to transfer their pensions into the Canada Pension Plan so that their assets can continue to grow through a secure investment vehicle, rather than having their pension simply placed in a low-return annuity.

Supporting Low-Income Seniors

Together, the Old Age Security pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) provide low-income seniors with a fully indexed benefit that ensures a basic level of income throughout their retirement years. Still, an increasing number are struggling in poverty. A Liberal government, and indeed most Canadians, cannot accept this without taking serious action.

In its failed election Budget, the Harper Conservatives took a disappointingly small step, but a Liberal government will go much further. We will boost the GIS benefit for low-income seniors by \$700 million per year, strengthening an important tool in the effort to eliminate poverty among seniors, especially older women and seniors with disabilities.

Liberal Commitments on Pensions

- ✓ Gradual increase in the CPP
- ✓ Secure Retirement Option, a voluntary supplement to CPP
- ✓ Enhance the GIS
- ✓ Protect disability benefits in bankruptcy
- ✓ Stranded Pension Agency

The Secure Retirement Option

The Secure Retirement Option is a new public option, within the CPP, that would change the outlook for those Canadians who currently do not have a pension plan. It would allow them to avoid the risk, complexity and hidden management fees of RRSPs. A two-person household, with earnings that start at \$35,000 per year, and rise to \$65,000 per year over time would need to have annual pension of \$14,000 on top of the existing Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security to secure a pension worth 60 percent of their household income at retirement. A voluntary six percent contribution rate from gross pay over the working years to an SRO account would put the household on track to achieve that goal. Participating workers who contribute more, or those whose employers provide additional contributions, would receive an even more generous pension.

Health and Health Care: At the Table For Canada

This election presents voters with a simple question:
Who do you trust to speak for Canada as crucial decisions
are made about the future of our healthcare system?

Liberal governments brought in universal medicare and passed the Canada Health Act. A new Liberal government will bring a robust, renewed commitment. For Liberals, as for most Canadians, universal access to quality, timely care regardless of your ability to pay, and regardless of which province you live in, is part of what defines Canada. It is embedded in Canadian values, and in the Liberal record. Under Liberal leadership, the federal government will return to its long-established role as a strong partner in health and healthcare.



Canadians are becoming more concerned about the sustainability of the system and the quality of services we are getting for taxpayers' dollars. The crunch is leading some to offer false solutions. User fees, for example, could actually make healthcare more expensive for everyone. Sick people deterred from seeking treatment when they need it can become more sick and require even more costly interventions later.

The federal government is a major healthcare funder, a supporter of health research and information, a major player in public health and health promotion, a regulator of prescription drugs, the defender of pan-Canadian objectives and principles, and a service-provider for Aboriginal people and veterans. It is also very well placed to work with the provinces to spread knowledge and lessons learned from innovations tried in particular jurisdictions in Canada and elsewhere.

What will matter most is how a Liberal government builds for the future on our previous record of achievement. We will be speaking for Canada with four objectives:

- 1) **Easing the pressures on Canadian families**, especially those caring for loved ones at home;
- 2) Achieving measurable, long-term improvements in **health outcomes**;
- 3) **Improving quality** in the healthcare system;
- 4) **Containing costs** over the long-term.

Speaking for Canada is crucial because no level of government acting alone will be as effective as they will be in a real collaboration with each other and with stakeholders. We will support these objectives with the following new initiatives:

- The Liberal plan for **Family Care** – supporting Canadians who care for loved ones at homes;
- Investing in **health promotion, sport and a National Food Policy**;
- Introducing a **Canadian Brain Health Strategy**;
- Collaborating with provinces and health professionals on **quality and innovation**;
- Implementing new measures to improve **rural healthcare**;
- Addressing the gaps in **coverage of prescription drugs**, and the high costs of drugs in general.

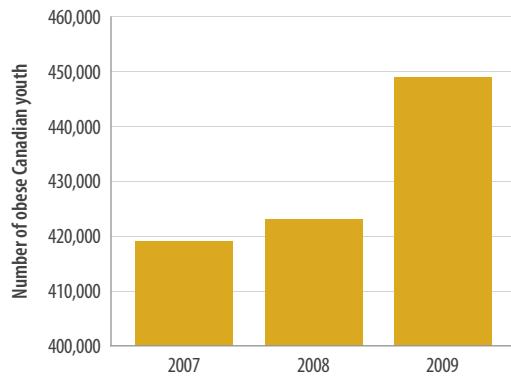
Health Promotion, Sport and a National Food Policy

Some of the most effective steps to improve the health of Canadians will take place far away from any hospital or doctor's office. And the results could save billions in healthcare costs.

Since 1979, obesity rates have tripled in Canada among children and youth, with obese children and adolescents increasingly becoming obese adults. The estimated direct and indirect cost of treating obesity is \$4.3 billion annually. It is just one problem that can be dramatically reduced through healthier eating and exercise.

That's why a Liberal government will implement a new **Canadian Health Promotion Strategy**. We will support sport and active living and improve education and promotion of healthy foods. We will work with the Council of Ministers for Education in Canada towards setting national targets for physical activity in primary and secondary schools.

Obesity increasing among Canadian youth



A Liberal government will call on Canada's elite athletes to serve as models for young Canadians. And to ensure that the next generation of Olympians is there to inspire youth across Canada, a Liberal government would commit to stable and sustained funding for Own the Podium and Sport Canada. Our athletes inspired the entire country at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, and a Liberal government will support them in future international sporting events.

At the heart of this commitment to a safer, healthier country is Canada's first **National Food Policy**, a comprehensive set of measures designed to fulfill the simple, yet powerful goal of putting more healthy Canadian food on Canadian plates. Measures include:

- ▶ A new **Healthy Choices** program to educate Canadians on healthy eating, how the food system works, and how to minimize threats to food safety;
- ▶ New, **progressive labeling regulations** that give clear and simple information to Canadians on the nutritional value of the foods they purchase, improve the regulatory process for new health claims, and clarify Product of Canada labeling;
- ▶ Strong new regulatory **standards on trans fats and salt**;
- ▶ \$40 million over four years to implement a new **Healthy Start** program to help 250,000 children from low-income families access healthy, home-grown foods, in partnership with the provinces, territories and non-governmental organizations. A Liberal government will also commit to ongoing support for the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) and Aboriginal Head Start Program (AHSP)
- ▶ \$80 million over four years to create a **Buy Local Fund**. The Fund will promote high-quality, homegrown foods produced by local farmers and support a **Farmers' Markets Development Program** to market and grow Canada's farmers' markets, in cooperation with the provinces and territories
- ▶ A comprehensive **review of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency** (CFIA), Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), to ensure Canada's food safety system is effectively coordinated to minimize risks and assure Canadians that the food on their dinner tables is safe, and
- ▶ An additional \$50 million over four years to improve **food inspection** by the CFIA and to ensure the same food safety standards set for Canadian producers are applied to foods imported into Canada.



A Canadian Brain Health Strategy

In 2008, a new dementia case was diagnosed every 5 minutes in Canada. In 2039, this will occur every 2 minutes. Alzheimer's disease alone affects 500,000 Canadians and costs us \$15 billion per year, in addition to incalculable emotional strain on caregivers and loved ones.

This "rising tide" is impacting Canadian families of every walk of life and the trend will continue to grow. The toll is already considerable, both on families and on the Canadian economy, in terms of lost productivity.



A Liberal government will consult with provinces, stakeholders and experts, and put in place a **Canadian Brain Health Strategy** in its first year in office. Its main objective will be helping Canadian families cope and it will encompass such diseases as Alzheimer's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Parkinson's Disease. The Strategy will include the following elements:

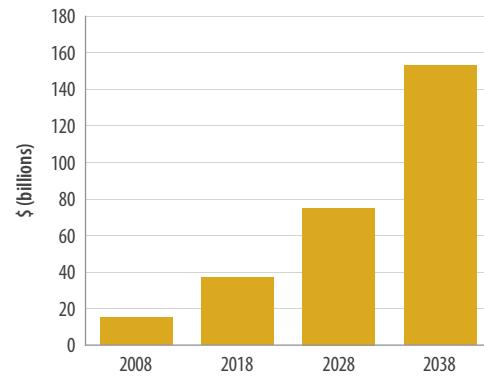
Awareness, Education and Prevention. We will develop a public education campaign to encourage good brain health throughout life, including better understanding of how proper diet, physical and mental exercise slow down the decline of brain health. Public education efforts will also combat the social stigma attached to brain disease, and mental health problems.

Research. \$100 million over the first two years of a Liberal government will be invested in the Canadian Brain Health Strategy, targeting research into new treatments and therapies for neurological disorders, and accelerating progress in understanding, treating and preventing brain diseases. This investment of new federal funds will be channelled through leading national research bodies.

Income security. We will conduct a review to identify potential measures needed to prevent brain disorders from forcing families and individuals into poverty. The Liberal plan for Family Care will make a significant difference, but more may be needed in the longer term to help the growing numbers of affected Canadian families cope.

Integrated Treatment and Support. We will disseminate knowledge and best practices to foster improvements in the quality of treatment and support for patients and families coping with brain disorders.

Costs of Alzheimer's and dementia skyrocketing



Preventing Genetic Discrimination. Today, even people without symptoms can be denied life, mortgage and disability insurance and even rejected for employment based on genetic testing that shows risk of future illness. A Liberal government will introduce measures, including possible legislative change, to prevent this discrimination.

Pan-Canadian Collaboration on Quality Improvement, Innovation and Best Practices

Provinces are working individually to address concerns about service quality and safety in health-care delivery. But successful innovations in management and service delivery are too often confined to one location. The work of bodies set up at the national and provincial levels to foster quality improvement in a wide range of specific services has not been fully exploited nationally.

Identifying and adopting the most effective and efficient delivery methods from other jurisdictions – when undertaken broadly and systematically – can reduce costs while improving the quality of care.

The federal government is well placed to energize a Canadian effort to put quality improvement, best practices and innovation at the forefront. This has to be a national effort, and a Liberal government will make it a priority again. The federal government has established valuable instruments, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Information, the Canadian Patient Safety Institute, the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation and Canada Health Infoway serving all jurisdictions. These bodies are key to progress. Particularly with respect to health outcomes for Aboriginal people, Ottawa must make quality improvement a top priority.

Rural Health Care

Rural Canadians have long struggled with a level of health care service that is not on par with urban centres. This inequity will not be erased overnight, but a Liberal government will work with provinces, territories and health professionals to pursue solutions. One step will be a new incentive for doctors, nurses, and nurse practitioners to practice in underserved communities.

Better Coverage of Prescription Drugs Across Canada

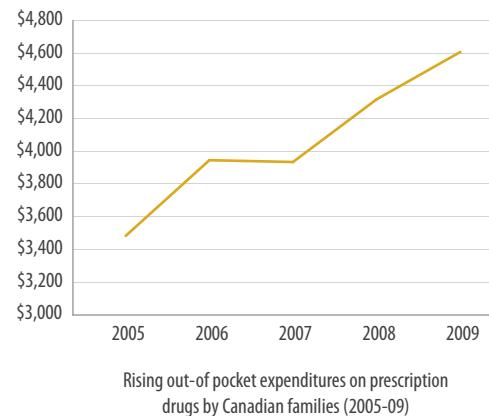
The care that patients receive in hospitals is only one fraction of the treatment prescribed. Pharmaceutical drugs are becoming a greater and greater part of patient care. Drugs delivered in a hospital are covered by our healthcare system but those prescribed outside of the hospital are a different story.

Every province and territory has a different approach to dealing with the rising costs of pharmaceuticals. This makes the quality of care dependent upon your postal code. More than 3.5 million Canadians have inadequate drug coverage, or no coverage at all.

A Liberal government, at the table for Canada, will work with the provinces and territories to ensure that all Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast have a drug plan that covers the cost of prescription drugs for illnesses such as cancer, diabetes or arthritis that can be financially catastrophic to families.

A Liberal government will also explore ways to lower the cost of prescription drugs for the healthcare system, including supporting provinces and territories to expand bulk purchasing.

Canadians are spending more on prescription drugs



The Decisions Ahead

With the federal-provincial-territorial Health Accord expiring in 2014, a new funding arrangement must be a central priority for the next federal government. At this pivotal moment, a great deal is at stake for Canadians, but the Harper government has demonstrated little interest.

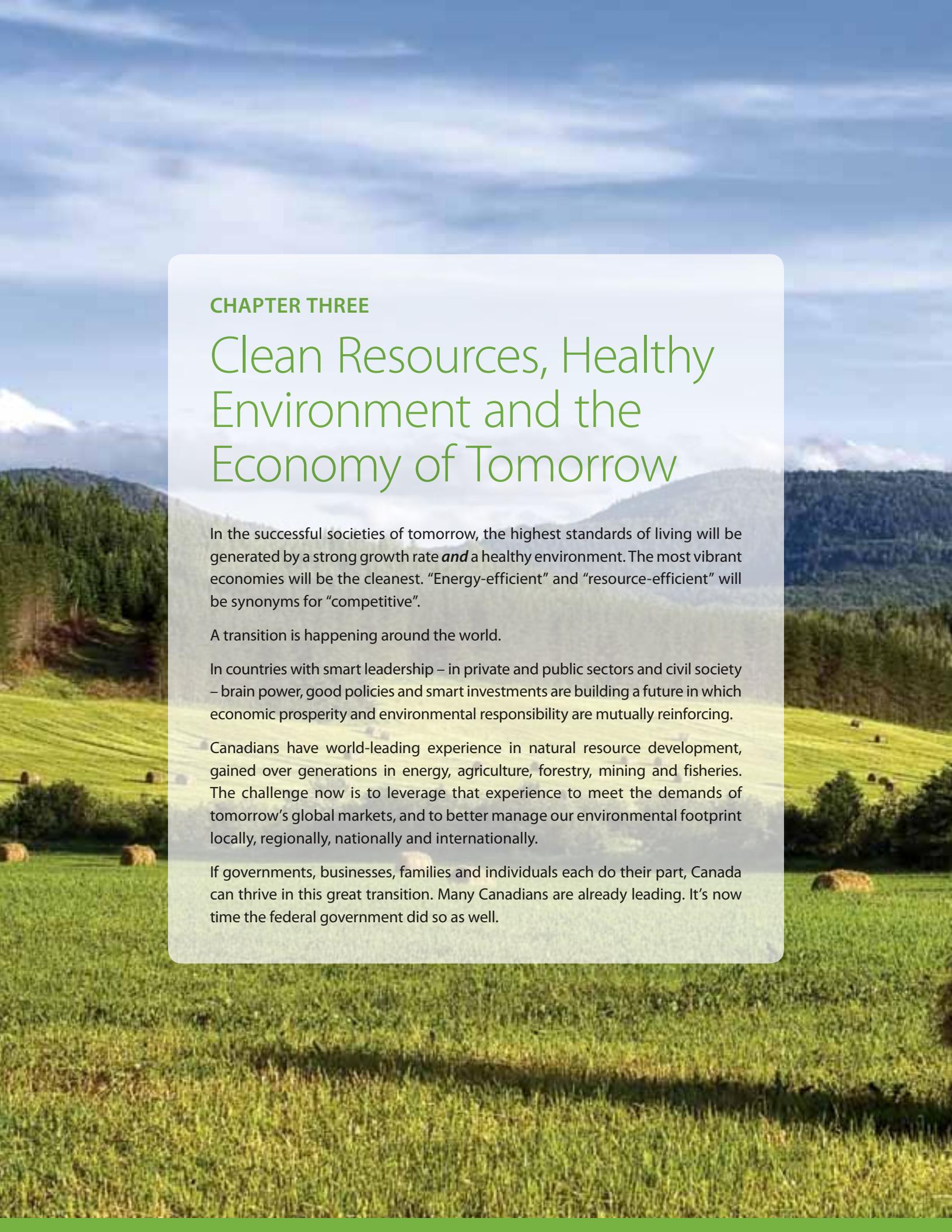
In contrast, a Liberal government will be at the table for Canadians. We will come equipped with a collaborative approach and the objectives that drive this health and healthcare platform: relieving pressures on today's Canadian families, improving health outcomes, improving quality in the healthcare system, and containing long term costs.

Two specific areas will also be priorities for a Liberal government: home care services and drug coverage. With more and more patient care taking place at home rather than in the hospital, we'll work with provinces and territories to ensure that Canadians in different parts of the country don't face significant variations in drug coverage, and home care services, including priority areas like mental health and palliative care.

The Government of Canada is a major funder of healthcare through transferred tax points and cash transfers to provinces and territories. All governments must do a better job of being accountable to Canadians for results, value for money and the quality of healthcare service across the country. While provinces and territories are struggling with escalating costs, it's far from clear that more money is the only solution. Governments must ensure we're getting full value for the money already in the system. Management improvement and innovation, advanced through much more effective dissemination of best practices nationally and internationally, promise to contain costs and improve service to Canadians at the same time.

Canada was once thought to have one of the best health care systems in the world. Renewed commitment at the federal level, and effective partnership with provincial and territorial governments and other health sector leaders can make that true once more.





CHAPTER THREE

Clean Resources, Healthy Environment and the Economy of Tomorrow

In the successful societies of tomorrow, the highest standards of living will be generated by a strong growth rate *and* a healthy environment. The most vibrant economies will be the cleanest. “Energy-efficient” and “resource-efficient” will be synonyms for “competitive”.

A transition is happening around the world.

In countries with smart leadership – in private and public sectors and civil society – brain power, good policies and smart investments are building a future in which economic prosperity and environmental responsibility are mutually reinforcing.

Canadians have world-leading experience in natural resource development, gained over generations in energy, agriculture, forestry, mining and fisheries. The challenge now is to leverage that experience to meet the demands of tomorrow’s global markets, and to better manage our environmental footprint locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

If governments, businesses, families and individuals each do their part, Canada can thrive in this great transition. Many Canadians are already leading. It’s now time the federal government did so as well.

Green Renovation Tax Credit



A new Liberal government will implement a Green Renovation Tax Credit with a goal of retrofitting over 1 million homes by 2017.

CHAPTER THREE

Clean Resources, Healthy Environment and the Economy of Tomorrow

Clean Resources, Healthy Environment and the Economy of Tomorrow

Our world is in the midst of a great transition – to the low-carbon, high efficiency economy of tomorrow. To remain competitive and keep high-paying jobs in Canada, we need to get the transition right.

Countries that are acting now on clean technologies and greater environmental responsibility are getting ahead to secure the jobs of tomorrow. Across the board, clean resources and stewardship of nature will drive and define prosperity in the successful societies of the future.

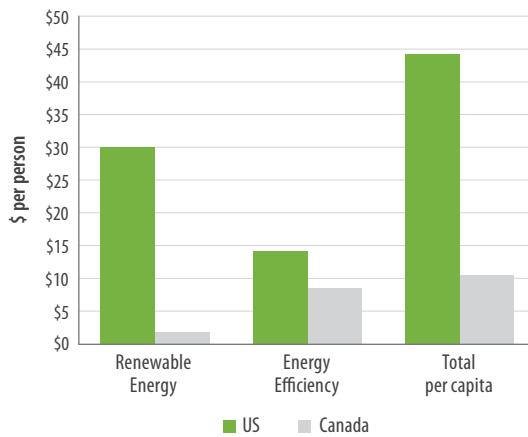
Many in our private sector, civil society and provincial and municipal governments are leading the way already.

Canadian families also want to do their part for a healthy environment and a prosperous way of life.

What's missing is leadership from the top.

The Harper government has embarrassed Canada on the international stage by obstructing progress on climate change. In fact, Stephen Harper was openly sceptical of the science behind climate change until recently, calling it "a socialist scheme". Meanwhile, emissions in Canada are increasing, there is still no plan in place, and Canada's international reputation is in tatters.

Clean energy investments lag far behind U.S.



On energy policy in particular, the Harper government has been absent, even as entrepreneurs, Canadian provinces, the United States and many other countries make aggressive strides to develop renewable energy and build the low-carbon economy of the future.

A Liberal government will provide the leadership required for a successful transition to the prosperous, cleaner economy of tomorrow, through action in four major areas: becoming a world leader in **clean resources**, a new **Canadian Clean Energy Partnership**, action on **climate change**, and stewardship of our **natural environment**.

A World Leader in Clean Resources

Canada is home to abundant natural resources demanded by global markets: oil and natural gas reserves, potash, iron, nickel, zinc, copper, gold, lead and uranium. We are one of the world's top five exporters of food, and have significant fisheries, and forestry resources, which have been the backbone of the Canadian economy for many decades. As the custodians of one of the world's largest supplies of freshwater, we should be well placed to continue developing and exporting the next generations of technologies and expertise for the efficient use and conservation of water. Decades of experience and investment in hydro-electricity add considerably to the Canadian knowledge base and future opportunities.



As global markets demand ever higher standards of environmental stewardship, energy efficiency and corporate social responsibility, Canada can lead the world. Under a Liberal government we will – by earning a reputation as a **global leader in clean resources**. That means both exporting resource-based products produced with the lowest possible impact, and supplying knowledge, technology and expertise to other markets for responsible management, development and consumption of natural resources.

That's why clean resources are one of three "Canadian Champion Sectors" at the heart of a Liberal government's approach to innovation, including new tax incentives for innovative start-ups. Clean resources can be an engine of innovation and entrepreneurialism, driving Canadian success in global commerce while also advancing the transition to the low carbon, high efficiency economy of tomorrow.

Canadian Clean Energy Partnership

Energy is the point of convergence of some of the biggest challenges shaping Canada's future: economic competitiveness, environmental responsibility, the fight against climate change, the cost of living for consumers at home, and our contribution on the international stage.

Different provinces have different energy mixes, and both exports and imports of various energy products play major roles in provincial economies. At the same time, there are also common issues, shared challenges, and tremendous opportunities. A pan-Canadian process for collaboration on those shared challenges is essential for the long-term transition to the clean, energy-efficient economy of the future.



A Liberal government will launch the **Canadian Clean Energy Partnership**, inviting provincial and territorial governments, the private sector and stakeholders to work together on five Canada-wide objectives:

- ▶ Managing a long-term transition to the low-carbon economy of the future;
- ▶ Helping families advance energy efficiency and conservation;
- ▶ Encouraging Canadian businesses to become more competitive through energy efficiency;
- ▶ Securing clean technology jobs in Canada;
- ▶ Doing our part in the global fight against climate change.

Energy Conservation: The Green Renovation Tax Credit

A large part of Canada's clean energy solution will come from practical energy conservation measures that will save families money.

In the United States, the Obama Administration is spending twice as much as Canada per capita on energy efficiency measures, and 18 times more per capita on clean technology. The Harper government has allowed billions in clean energy programming to expire. In its failed election budget, the Harper government temporarily extended the ecoEnergy Retrofit Program for just one year.

A Liberal government will implement a new \$400 million **Green Renovation Tax Credit** targeting home renovations that save families money and bring environmental benefits. Canadians who make energy efficient changes to their homes (such as installing new windows, doors and roofing) will be able to claim a tax credit of up to \$13,500. A Liberal government will also cover 50 percent of the cost of the home energy audit required in advance of the renovation. This permanent, refundable tax credit will be simpler and less costly to administer than the temporary grant program, more generous for many types of projects, and will foster the growth of energy efficiency small businesses.



The new Green Renovation Tax Credit means that you can qualify for a tax credit of up to \$13,500 for renovations to green your home.

Canadian families want to contribute to a healthy environment and the fight against climate change. They deserve a government that will help them act on good ideas.

Homeowners who have performed energy efficiency retrofits save an average of \$500 on their annual energy costs. That's an ongoing boost every year for both family finances and the environment through energy efficiency. We'll stand with Canadian families and help with the up-front investment for green renovations on more than 1 million homes by 2017.

Measures like the Green Renovation Tax Credit
will help families pursue a high standard of living while
reducing their impact on the environment.



Renewable Energy

Liberals are committed to quadruple Canada's low-impact renewable energy production from 2009 levels by 2017, to significantly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and create clean energy jobs.

To help meet this goal, we will bring back the Renewable Power Production Incentive (RPPI), a highly successful program cancelled by the Harper Conservatives. It will provide an incentive to renewable power entrepreneurs to accelerate the development of near market-ready renewable energy technologies such as solar, wind, tidal and biomass. In combination with existing provincial initiatives, and a Canadian plan to tackle climate change, outlined later in this chapter, an investment of \$1 billion in RPPI over the coming years will increase Canada's renewable energy mix to 10 percent of our total electricity output by 2017.

Renewable energy should have a growing position in Canada's energy mix, and a Liberal government will help achieve it. Canada must move forward on all fronts – advancing renewables, while also lowering the carbon and environmental footprints of continued fossil fuel development and consumption.

Cleaner Oil Sands Development

Oil sands development must become more sustainable as this major resource continues to contribute to Canada's prosperity.

As part of the Canadian Clean Energy Partnership, a Liberal government will work to:

- ▶ Accelerate development and **deployment of technologies** that will reduce all environmental impacts, including the carbon footprint, of oil sands development, with a goal of eliminating the 15 percent differential compared to conventional oil;
- ▶ Increase the rigour with which the federal government exercises its **regulatory responsibilities** relevant to oil sands development; and
- ▶ Improve the **knowledge base** necessary for responsible regulation by increasing investment in science and monitoring relevant to oil sands development.

The basic objective of these measures, of course, is cleaner oil sands development, and “more orderly development”, as former Alberta Premier, Peter Lougheed has advocated. The industry is addressing the problem of how it is perceived in the United States and overseas. This problem is also Canada’s. Accelerating improvement in the industry’s environmental performance is the best strategy for improving its image. That progress will also contribute to Canada’s efforts to combat climate change, and effective stewardship of our water, land and wildlife.

In support of cleaner oil sands development, a Liberal government will **immediately end a generous tax break for the industry**. The Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance for oil sands investments is being phased out slowly by the Harper government, by 2015. Acting more decisively will yield nearly \$500 million in government revenue over the next two years. We will earmark these funds for two purposes: new or improved incentives for industry investments in emerging technologies that will decrease greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts of oil sands development; and we’ll invest in monitoring and scientific research on environmental impacts of oil sands development, in pursuit of knowledge that will inform the exercise of federal regulatory responsibilities.

The Harper government made a commitment to “phase out and rationalize” fossil fuel subsidies, along with the other members of the G20, at its Leaders’ Summit in Pittsburgh in 2009. However no action has been taken in Canada, and the initiative was not even mentioned in the final communiqué of the subsequent G20 summit, chaired by Stephen Harper in June 2010. A Liberal government will take this international obligation seriously in its balanced approach to clean energy.

Climate Change Action at Home and Abroad

The Harper Conservatives campaigned on setting a carbon price in the last federal election, but didn’t keep the promise. After five years and four environment ministers, they have failed to tackle Canada’s greenhouse gas emissions and build the cleaner energy economy of tomorrow. Canadian industry is looking for clarity, and generally supports a market-based approach to reducing emissions.

A Liberal government will establish a cap-and-trade system – a mechanism that sets a ceiling on the total amount of permissible greenhouse gas emissions by large industrial facilities, and then auctions off emission permits to companies who can trade them amongst themselves to remain compliant under the law.

A cap-and-trade system already operates in Europe. Here in Canada, leading provinces including British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec – frustrated with the inaction of the Harper government – are working with American states to implement a North American cap-and-trade system by 2015 under the framework of the Western Climate Initiative (WCI).

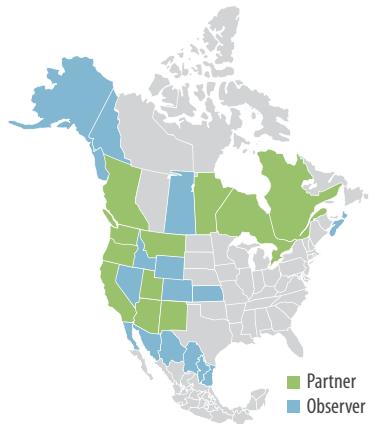
Working with the provinces, a Liberal government will develop a system that applies to all sectors of the economy with no exceptions, and which will be equitable across all regions of the country.

A Liberal government will also work responsibly with other countries and multilateral bodies to secure a strong global climate change agreement based on science.

Liberals have committed to a long-term greenhouse gas reduction target of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. We also urged the Harper government to work for an ambitious global agreement on climate change that would keep the global rise in temperatures below 2°C. Their embarrassing obstruction at the Copenhagen conference, and invisibility a year later in Cancun made it clear they have no intention to help reach a new global agreement.

We will continue to advance our long-term emission reduction target, and ask the independent advisory body, the National Round Table on Environment and Economy, to recommend a series of science-based, achievable mid-term targets.

Rather than waiting for the U.S. Congress to act, as the Harper government has done, a Liberal government will engage American counterparts in the Administration and Congress proactively on key issues including: carbon pricing, research and development for standards and regulation, clean energy technologies, cooperation on electricity transmission grid development, and transportation. While the Harper government has outsourced Canadian policy to American legislators, a Liberal government will act in the Canadian interest.



Western Climate Initiative

Stewardship of our Natural Environment



Parks and Protected Spaces

Despite our deep connection with nature, Canada is actually a global laggard when it comes to ecological protection. We rank 16th among OECD countries in the amount of land set aside for conservation purposes. In fact, less than 10 percent of our land base and well under one percent of our ocean territory are protected.

Canada is not doing enough to protect biodiversity, and ensure fragile ecosystems can be cherished for generations to come.

A Liberal government will work with the provinces, territories, First Nations and conservation groups to protect more of Canada's intact wilderness areas. This effort will emphasize an ecosystem-wide approach to conservation, whereby national and provincial parks and other conservation areas, including parts of our boreal forest, are connected through protected "eco-corridors" that allow species to move from one protected area to another.

A Canadian Freshwater Strategy

Canada is home to six of the world's 10 largest freshwater bodies, and seven percent of the world's renewable freshwater, a national treasure that we need to conserve. We cannot take our water resources for granted, particularly as pollution, overuse, climate change and increasing populations in some regions are putting water quality and availability at potential risk.



A Liberal government will work with the provinces, municipalities and stakeholders to develop a new **Canadian Freshwater Strategy**, the first comprehensive federal water policy in over 20 years. It will address growing challenges such as ground water contamination, new measures needed to combat drought and flooding, as well as better water consumption efficiency. The objective of the Strategy will be to preserve Canada's freshwater heritage for the generations to come. That will include protecting our water resources from being subject to bulk exports.

A Liberal government's focus on freshwater will also bolster efforts to clean up key water basins by investing \$100 million, rising to \$125 million annually, to:

- ▶ Restore degraded and threatened areas across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence regions;
- ▶ Support efforts to clean up Lake Winnipeg, which suffers from excess levels of phosphorus and nitrogen;
- ▶ Advance research and improve efforts to protect freshwater ecosystems from invasive species such as the Zebra Mussel.

Stewardship of Canada's Oceans

Canada has the longest coastline of any country in the world. Our waters in the Arctic, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans are home to some of the planet's richest marine ecosystems.



Fisheries will continue to be an anchor of Canada's resources sector. Yet, the combined challenges of incomplete stock recoveries and volatile markets have worsened the financial strain in coastal communities. The industry remains strongly committed to responsible, sustainable fisheries, and it will have a partner in a Liberal government. We will work with the industry on a range of measures including fleet rationalization and licence retirement programs for **fisheries in crisis**, along with older worker retirement and retraining programs. Harvesting capacity must be better aligned with the resource and some workers

need more effective assistance to transition to new opportunities. A Liberal government will also recognize the fundamental importance of **Pacific salmon** for the economy, cultures and way of life on Canada's west coast, and will ensure its conservation is the first priority in fishery issues there.

Less than 1 percent of Canada's oceans are protected, while Australia and the U.S. have federally designated marine protected areas that are 32 and 16 times larger, respectively. Canada has committed under the Convention on Biological Diversity to establishing a marine protected area network of 10 percent of its ocean area by 2012. Unfortunately, we are a very long way from meeting that commitment.



A Liberal government will **expand Canada's marine protected areas** network and ensure that this network is accompanied by a more effective approach to ocean management. We will engage with coastal communities, First Nations, provincial governments, tourism operators, ocean industries and other ocean users in decisions about how to reduce risks to oceans health. We will also advance integrated oceans management and ocean zoning, with the same rigour as land-use planning is conducted on Canadian landscapes, to support conservation and our ocean economy.

Designating appropriate areas for various uses reduces the potential for conflict among users, allows us to address the cumulative impacts of human activities, and provides industry with greater certainty regarding the regulatory environment. Advancing an integrated approach to oceans zoning will be a critical building block for sustainable oceans management, and will ultimately support greater access for Canadian fisheries to the growing market for eco-certified seafood.

A World-Leading Oil Spill Contingency Plan

The Harper government has been unable to assure Canadians that federal response capabilities would be sufficient to cope if a disaster similar to the recent Gulf of Mexico oil rig explosion and spill were to happen in Canadian waters.

A Liberal government will work together with provincial and territorial counterparts to conduct an **independent review of Canada's offshore oil spill prevention and response capability**, including the legislative and regulatory regimes, and capacities and practices in place across the country for prevention and remediation of oil spills. Drawing on this review, a Liberal government will create a world-leading **oil spill contingency plan** for Canada to ensure the very best emergency and safety measures are part of the cost of doing business.



In the event of an oil spill, absolute liability limits on companies are currently a maximum of \$30 million or \$40 million, depending on the regulatory body they fall under. They would be required to pay more only if found negligent in court. Given that billions of dollars will be spent on clean up in Gulf of Mexico, a Liberal government will put in place **new liability limits** to ensure taxpayers are not left to pay for the clean-up of a major spill.

Fishermen, tourist operators, coastal communities and others must have access to compensation in the event of a major oil spill, without having to spend years in court fighting for it. New liability limits will address compensation for loss of income and the cost of clean-up activities, without being so prohibitive that oil and gas companies won't be able to operate.

Halting New Leasing and Oil Exploration in Arctic waters

There is no technology in place to clean up an oil spill under Arctic ice. Two years ago, the Harper government accelerated the approval of leases for exploration by BP and Imperial Oil in the Beaufort Sea, despite the fact that it would be impossible to protect this fragile ecological zone if there was ever a major spill.



Given the uncertainty surrounding the technology, a Liberal government will **halt all new leasing and oil exploration activities in Canada's Arctic waters** pending an independent examination of the risks.

More effective cooperation amongst a network of governments and indigenous people is key to the Liberal approach to the Arctic, and to Liberal foreign

policy. A Liberal government will lead international cooperation on Arctic issues including climate change, environmental stewardship, responsible resource development, and future shipping through the Northwest Passage. We will build and strengthen multilateral institutions in order to advance cooperation on environmental stewardship, economic and social development, transportation, search and rescue, and security. The priorities would include a joint mapping exercise of Arctic lands and waters to help establish international protected lands, oceans, fisheries and wildlife, and sacred indigenous sites.

Formalizing the Existing British Columbia Crude Oil Tanker Moratorium

In 1972, the Liberal government put in place a moratorium prohibiting crude oil tanker transit through B.C.'s northern coastal waters.

Fully opening B.C.'s coast to crude oil tankers now would heighten the risk of a major spill, endangering wildlife and the livelihoods of dozens of communities that live in and around the coastline. To prevent an oil spill from occurring in the coastal waters of the ecologically sensitive Pacific North Coast, a Liberal government will **formalize the moratorium** on crude oil tanker traffic in these waters, including the Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait, and Queen Charlotte Sound, through regulation, legislation or both.





CHAPTER FOUR

Bringing Canadians Together

Today governments do many things, but Liberals believe the job of the Prime Minister really comes down to one thing – bringing Canadians together.

Liberal governments always focus on what Canadians have in common, and what we can accomplish as one country.

That kind of leadership is needed again. More than ever, we need to bridge the gaps that divide us, and welcome all contributions to the ongoing work of building stronger communities and a better country.

Canada is not a small or selfish country. It's a bilingual country, with a multicultural and creative people, proud of their heritage, their communities, provinces, cities, and cultures. We draw strength from our diversity. We expect our leaders to reflect the best in us, and to build on it.

Canadians cherish equality – equality of individuals, of women and men, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, of North and South, rural and urban, and people with disabilities and their fellow citizens. Equality is the foundation of our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Where we find gaps between the ideal and practical reality, we work together to narrow them. We're all in it together.

Our democratic institutions have served us well, and we expect our representatives to respect them. Canadian federalism has evolved with changing realities, and helped us reconcile valued identities with common purposes. While preserving what's best in our institutions, we have to be open to change, so they continue to serve us well in a rapidly changing world.



Bringing Canadians Together



Divisive politics have made our country smaller.
It's time for all of us to build bridges, renew our
democracy and strengthen our communities.

Stronger, Safer Communities

Canadians take pride in their communities, whether they live in our largest cities, the growing suburbs, small towns, or rural areas.

Still, we face real challenges. Although crime rates are declining nationally, some families don't always feel safe in their own neighbourhoods. Many of our fellow citizens live in poverty, are homeless, suffer from mental illness that is not adequately treated, or struggle to pay the rent, even for sub-standard housing that contributes to poor health and hopelessness among children. Too many Canadians with disabilities don't enjoy the same standard of living as others.

These challenges matter to all of us, even if we're fortunate enough to avoid them in our own families. They matter to our communities.

There are many strengths to build on. Dedicated community servants – police, firefighters and other emergency personnel – work hard to maintain our safety. We need to ensure they have the tools they need to do their jobs. Community groups and governments at provincial, territorial and local levels are advancing strategies to fight poverty, and tackle specific problems like the lack of affordable housing. They need a stronger partner in the federal government. Canadians are generous volunteers, and there is great potential for volunteerism to do even more in the future to make our communities stronger.

The Harper government's narrow preoccupation concerning our communities has been punishing crime, and exploiting fear. The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates that just one of their piecemeal sentencing Bills will cost federal and provincial governments \$10 to 13 billion over five years, for building US-style mega-prisons. No one disagrees that criminals must be punished. But more prisons alone will not make our communities safer and stronger. That approach has failed in the U.S. Evidence and experience suggest it will take much more than prisons.

Affordable Housing

According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), one-quarter of households face affordability problems, meaning that more than 30 percent of their income is spent on housing. Thirteen percent of homes are in need of major repairs, or are unsuitable for the number of people living in them. The figures are even worse for seniors and new Canadians and, of course, they don't even address the homeless. At the same time, the shortage of affordable housing in large cities presents a growing barrier to young families of modest incomes looking for their first home.

While modest public investments are resulting in new affordable housing coming on the market, other affordable units have been disappearing at double the rate, due to gentrification, low interest rates and growing demand. The federal government has been an

unreliable presence in affordable housing in recent years. A long-term commitment to partnership with other levels of government is needed.

A Liberal government will work with provincial, territorial and municipal partners to put in place a renewed **Affordable Housing Framework** (AHF). The previous Framework was established a decade ago, and several programs are temporarily extended, but under review by the Harper government. The main objectives of the new Framework will be to:

- ▶ Reduce homelessness;
- ▶ Maintain and renew existing affordable housing stock; and
- ▶ Stimulate new construction of affordable housing.



The new Framework will feature a long-term commitment by the federal government, replacing the collection of temporary programs that currently exist. The magnitude of that long-term commitment will necessarily depend on consultations with municipalities and the government's overall financial situation in the coming years. However, in its first two years, a Liberal government will increase federal investment in affordable housing by \$550 million.

Housing challenges and opportunities vary from one region to another. Therefore, the new Affordable Housing Framework will emphasize flexibility and openness to innovative approaches such as tax incentives and loan guarantees. It will offer a platform for more effective collaboration among all levels of government, the private and non-profit sectors. The new Framework will promote progress on the particular needs of people with disabilities, as well as Northern and Aboriginal communities. It will also recognize that affordable housing is one major piece of the larger puzzle for reducing poverty.

Fighting Poverty

More than 3.5 million Canadians live in poverty, including more than one in ten children. Canada ranks near the bottom of the list of major developed countries for poverty rates.

Leaders at all levels must come to grips with rising inequality. The persistence of poverty across the country remains an unmet challenge, robbing individuals of fair and equal opportunity, sapping productivity from the economy, and even undermining confidence in our democracy. Canada cannot afford *not* to fight poverty. It will require the engagement of all Canadians, including businesses, individuals, experts and civil society.





Most provincial governments have demonstrated leadership by launching poverty reduction strategies. Building on those efforts, a Liberal government will work with partners at all levels to develop a **Poverty Reduction Plan for Canada**. It will set goals, indentify practical measures for achieving them and set out who can do what among all the partners. The outlook will be long-term.

Several major commitments of this platform will be the foundation of a Poverty Reduction Plan for Canada: the Canadian Learning Strategy, particularly Early Childhood Learning and Care, the Learning Passport for post-secondary education access, and Aboriginal learning; Family Care; a renewed focus on volunteerism through the Canada Service Corps; the National Food Policy's nutrition measures; and a new Affordable Housing Framework. These practical measures to support Canadian families, worth more than \$5 billion over two years, will help reduce poverty and inequality, especially as part of a whole-of-Canada effort to strengthen our communities. They will also contribute to a stronger economy over the long-term.

Supporting Police, Firefighters and other First Responders

Our communities owe a great deal to police, firefighters and other emergency personnel, whose public service puts their own lives at risk. Governments must give them the tools they need to do their jobs.

Improving the Long Gun Registry. A Liberal government will improve the long gun registry so that it better serves police, Canadian long-gun owners and rural Canadians.

Police officers consult the long-gun registry an average of 11,000 times each day. So it's no wonder that the Canadian Police Association, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Canadian Association of Police Boards support it, as do countless organizations that represent women's health and safety.

Since the creation of the long-gun registry, over 90 percent of Canadian gun owners have registered their firearms. Rural Canadians and Canadian long-gun owners, however, have expressed legitimate frustration and criticism of the fees, paperwork and threat of criminal charges related to the registry.

A Liberal government will maintain the integrity of the gun registry in order to protect public safety, while addressing the legitimate concerns of Canadian long-gun owners. We will improve the long-gun registry with the following actions:

- 1) **Decriminalize.** First-time infractions for failing to register firearms should not be a criminal offence, and should be subject to a ticket instead, in the absence of aggravating factors. Working with the provinces and territories to make this change would give front line officers the legal tools to differentiate between an honest mistake and a threat to public safety.

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- 2) **Eliminate fees.** A Liberal government will permanently eliminate fees for new licenses, renewals and upgrades.
 - 3) **Simplify.** Although forms are available on-line, many in rural and northern areas continue to find the system inaccessible. A Liberal government will simplify forms, make registration as simple as possible and improve community access to registration services through Service Canada locations across the country.

The Harper government disregarded the views of law enforcement professionals across the country, and carried on a prolonged campaign against the long gun registry. The only real result was political division, which the Conservative Party exploited aggressively for partisan advantage. Liberals have stood firm and united with Canada's police forces. At the same time, we have responded to legitimate concerns about the registry, and we will improve it. This approach will give police the tools they need to protect the public, while bridging differences between rural and urban Canada.



Managing the RCMP. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have a unique place in Canada's history, and play a crucial role in serving and protecting communities across the country. Sadly, in recent years, the RCMP have been plagued by frequent setbacks that have shaken public trust. The Harper government has failed to take effective action to resolve management problems. Furthermore, on one of the key policy issues – the lack of civilian oversight – the Harper government displayed its intolerance of objective and informed criticism, failing to reappoint the outspoken RCMP Public Complaints Commissioner, who criticized the government's lack of progress on reforms.

A Liberal government will move decisively to **establish a civilian oversight board**, restore transparency, and address management and leadership issues in the RCMP. Past, present and future Mounties deserve no less from their government, as they work hard to protect our communities every day.

Community Heroes Fund. Representatives of police and firefighters have long called for a national fund to recognize the service and sacrifice of officers killed in the line of duty. A Liberal government will establish a Community Heroes Fund that will pay a benefit of \$300,000 to the families of fallen officers, not only helping to secure their financial future, but also demonstrating the respect and gratitude of their communities and their country.

Volunteer Firefighters Tax Credit. Communities across Canada rely on volunteer firefighters, and their service will be recognized under a Liberal government with a refundable tax credit.



Dealing with Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women



Violence against women persists in all Canadian communities. Aboriginal women are particularly affected. The Native Women's Association of Canada estimates the number of missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada is more than 580. These cases amount to nearly ten per cent of female homicides in Canada, even though only three per cent of the female population is Aboriginal. There has been little action from the federal government to address this tragedy.

A Liberal government will mandate a national task force to examine the systemic causes of this problem, with an emphasis on preventing its continuation in the future. It will build on the work of provinces and Aboriginal women, and report to the Minister of Justice with an analysis and recommendations.

Valuing Volunteerism

Volunteerism – giving one's time and labour to help others – is vital to a healthy society and vibrant democracy. It strengthens Canadian communities and benefits both the volunteer and the organization.

A Liberal government will make a "call to service" to all Canadians, to inspire even greater contribution to our communities. This will be underpinned by a national goal for increasing the rate of volunteering in Canada, set in consultation with voluntary sector leaders.

To help achieve this goal a Liberal government will create a new **Canada Service Corps**. This will replace the Canadian Volunteer Initiative that was cancelled by the Harper government. The Corps' mandate will be to:

- ▶ Increase Canadians' awareness of the value and rewards of volunteerism and civic engagement;
- ▶ Increase capacity, knowledge-sharing and training of Canada's volunteer organizations; and
- ▶ Create additional opportunities for Canadians to volunteer in a meaningful way.

We will invest an initial \$180 million over four years in the new Canada Service Corps. From these funds, \$20 million will be dedicated to capacity-building and promotion in the voluntary sector. Specifically, the Canada Service Corps will work to develop networks of voluntary non-profit organizations and fund training and capacity building programs to encourage, sustain and support volunteerism. The Corps will also support volunteer non-profit organizations in marketing themselves to attract volunteers.

The remaining \$160 million over four years will be invested to encourage volunteerism in young Canadians. The Canada Service Corps will **forgive \$1500 in student loan debt for young Canadians** who donate at least 150 hours of service in a year, in a Canada Service Corps volunteer position after graduating from post-secondary education. The volunteer service can also take place in a gap year or during studies, but the debt relief will be contingent on completing studies. This initiative will create up to 26,000 volunteer postings annually. The Canada Service Corps will work with voluntary and non-profit sectors to create domestic and international volunteer positions.

It's time to return to a respectful and constructive relationship between the federal government and civil society.

The Harper government has been actively hostile to volunteer, non-governmental and community activist groups, particularly those who disagree with its right-wing ideology. However a healthy democracy requires a diversity of voices. The government does not have to agree with them, but should respect the role they play. Rather than attempt to control public debate, and shut down dissent, a Liberal government will engage constructively with civil society groups, and respect their right to advocate and criticize the government.



Daily Bread Food Bank, Toronto

A Creative, Bilingual, Diverse, and More Equal Canada

Promoting Arts and Culture and Home-grown Content in a Digital Canada

The cultural sector is a major part of the Canadian economy.

According to a Conference Board study, culture generates more than \$80 billion in direct and indirect economic benefits every year, and creates 1.1 million jobs.

Liberals have always understood that artists are hard working citizens, committed to the value of cultural expression. A Liberal government will stand with them as they navigate both the opportunities and challenges of the new digital society.

As news and entertainment choices proliferate, accelerated by new digital technologies, concerns have grown about the future of Canadian content in our major media and local news and programming. In this fragmented media environment, public broadcasting is an essential promoter and defender of Canadian culture, in both French and English. On the radio, on television, and through the Internet, the mandate of the CBC and Radio-Canada remains to inform, enlighten and entertain with programming that is distinctively Canadian, reflecting the country and its regions to national and local audiences.

The role of the public broadcaster is especially significant for Radio-Canada, which remains uniquely the defender on the airwaves of the French language from coast to coast to coast. A Liberal government will provide the CBC and Radio-Canada with stable and predictable funding in support of their unique and crucial roles.



More support for Canada's artists

The Canada Council for the Arts is a major force in supporting working artists. A Liberal government will significantly increase support for Canadian artists and creators by **doubling the annual budget of the Canada Council for the Arts**, from \$180 million to \$360 million over the next four years.

A Liberal government will also **restore the Promart and Trade Routes** cultural promotion programs, increasing their funding to \$25 million. These programs play an important role in bringing Canadian culture to the world and increasing our exports. The new annual funding will help to create a domestic tours program as well.

Supporting Official Languages

Canada's two Official Languages help to define who we are. It was a Liberal government that made official bilingualism a reality over 40 years ago. Working with minority Official Language communities across the country, Liberals put in place an effective program to support and promote French and English throughout Canada. Its success has helped bring and keep Canadians together.



When the Official Languages Plan came to an end in 2008, the Harper government hastily put together a replacement but failed to consult the linguistic minority communities that the program is supposed to serve. Two years later, some elements of the program have still not been implemented, causing significant concern and disruption to those communities. Official languages governance within the federal government has atrophied under the Harper government, and this slide must be reversed.

A Liberal government will immediately begin consultations for a **next generation Official Languages Plan** so that it can be as inclusive and comprehensive as possible. These consultations will seek public views on how Official Languages policy should deal with digital technologies, among other issues. Another important issue will be how to encourage development of more bilingual programs in post-secondary institutions.

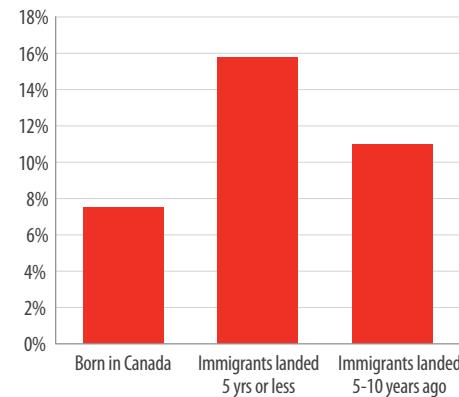
Canada is always evolving and always growing. Bilingualism is one of the dimensions of that growth. For example, today no one can envisage a prime minister who is not able to communicate well in both English and French, but that was not always the case. Bilingualism is well-established in today's federal public service. A Liberal government will work to continue that progress, in order to strengthen the ties that bring Canadians together.

The Success of New Canadians

Immigration has been central to the Canadian experience throughout our history. Immigrant stories are Canadian stories, woven into the fabric of our identity.

Liberals understand that our immigration and refugee system often fails to meet expectations for efficiency and fairness. That is why a new Liberal government will make **fixing the immigration and refugee determination processes** a top priority. Waiting times are too often unacceptably long, information and communication inadequate, and procedures confusing and inefficient. These services are too important to leave them in disrepair. We will consult with new Canadians, immigration stakeholders and experts to develop solutions.

Higher unemployment for new Canadians



Family reunification must remain a crucial part of Canada's immigration policy. After five years of reductions in family class immigration under the Harper government, Liberals will restore balance by increasing family class visas.



A Liberal government will expand **language training** for new Canadians, since language skills are often a major barrier to their success. The other barriers to new Canadians in the workforce are a lack of Canadian job experience and unrecognized credentials earned abroad. It's estimated that faulty foreign credential recognition in Canada is costing our economy more than \$2.6 billion a year. The federal government must do a better job

screening and advising prospective immigrants on **credential recognition** before they leave their countries of origin. Improving credential recognition and more quickly integrating new Canadians into the workforce requires a renewed level of concerted attention and more effective cooperation among the federal government, provinces, territories, professional groups, educational institutions, sector councils and unions. A Liberal government will make this a priority.

Court Challenges

Canadians take pride in their Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and see it as both an expression of our values, and a tool for building a more equal society. Access to justice is essential for a meaningful commitment to equality in our democracy, but the high costs of litigation can sometimes silence those whose rights are already most vulnerable. The Court Challenges Program provided financial assistance for pursuing language and equality rights under Canada's Constitution, but the Harper government cancelled the program. A Liberal government will **reinstate the Court Challenges Program** in order to maintain effective access to justice, and to prevent financial barriers from blocking the pursuit of equality for all Canadians.



Equality of Opportunity for Canadians with Disabilities

Too many Canadians with disabilities live in poverty, are unemployed or lack access to goods and services. More must be done to remove the barriers between them and equality of opportunity.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides a framework for addressing the barriers. Canada has signed and ratified the Convention, and yet little has been done to implement it.

A Liberal government will work with the provinces, territories, disabled Canadians and their organizations to develop an action plan for implementing the Convention, monitoring and reporting to the public on progress.

Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value

Pay equity, or equal pay for work of equal value, is a fundamental right that ensures economic fairness in our workforce. Despite progress over many years, the income gap between women and men in Canada persists. For example, women aged 50 to 54 earn just 72 cents for every dollar their male counterparts earn. Statistics Canada data suggest the progress of younger women in narrowing the gap has stalled in recent years. Pay equity also remains an issue for people with disabilities, and visible minorities.

As the country's largest employer, the federal government has a duty to lead by example on equal compensation. That is why a Liberal government will **reverse the Harper government's decision to reduce pay equity to an ordinary labour relations and collective bargaining issue** in federally regulated industries. We would instead create an effective, proactive system for implementing and monitoring pay equity at the federal level in which equality is again recognized as a human right.



Rural Canada Matters

Rural Canada puts food on tables and drives the resource wealth of our country.

But too many Canadians are leaving rural communities because they can't find jobs or access essential services like healthcare, internet, or education.

A Liberal government will commit to narrowing the gap between rural and urban Canada starting with new measures in five major areas.



Rural Broadband

Canada's economy is increasingly knit together through the internet. As jobs, education, and communication become more dependent on the internet, Canadians without access or relevant skills will be left behind.

In 2006, Canada's Telecommunications Review Panel recommended the federal government achieve 100 percent high-speed internet connectivity by 2010. This goal was not achieved under the Conservative government. According to the CRTC, in 2009 close to 800,000 Canadian households (20 percent of all rural Canadians) still could not access high-speed internet. Although Canada ranked second in the world in internet connectivity in 2000, we've now fallen to tenth place. This threatens our economic competitiveness and quality of life.

Using proceeds from the upcoming spectrum auction slated for 2012, a Liberal government will set a goal of **100 percent high-speed internet connectivity** of at least 1.5 MB/sec for all Canadian communities within three years of being elected. This commitment will increase the availability of affordable line and wireless connectivity, and improve mobile phone coverage in rural areas.

Rural Health Care

For many years, Canadians living in small towns and rural communities have expressed deep concern about the availability of Health Care services in their community. While some 20 percent of Canadians live in rural areas, only 10 percent of doctors practice there. Many rural families have to travel hours to get a family doctor for their children, find mental health services, or put elderly parents in care facilities.

In cooperation with provinces and territories, a Liberal government will introduce a new incentive by forgiving a portion of Canada Student Loans for doctors, nurses and nurse practitioners choosing to practice in a designated underserved small-town or rural community. Family doctors will be eligible for student loan forgiveness up to \$8,000 per year to a maximum of \$40,000. Nurses and nurse practitioners will be eligible for student loan forgiveness up to \$4,000 per year to a maximum of \$20,000. Quebec does not participate in the Canada Student Loans Program, therefore a Liberal government will work with the government of Quebec to determine the best ways to meet the objectives.

A Liberal government will invest an additional \$40 million over two years to improve rural health services in cooperation with provinces, territories, municipalities and medical professionals.



Volunteer Firefighters

Over 90 percent of fire departments depend on Canada's 84,000 volunteer firefighters. They perform a crucial service to their communities, particularly in smaller centres.

A Liberal government will introduce a **\$3,000 refundable tax credit** in recognition of the costs Canada's volunteer firefighters incur for their emergency public service. All

volunteer firefighters with a minimum of 200 hours of volunteer service during the tax year will be eligible. This annual volunteer service would include time devoted to achieving and maintaining firefighter training in accordance with recognized standards. The tax credit would be made available to everyone who qualifies, regardless of income.

Mail Service

No matter where Canadians live, they should expect high-quality, reliable mail service within their communities. Many see their post offices as community hubs, but since 2006 the Harper government has overseen closure of 42 rural post offices, and cancellation of 55,000 rural roadside mailboxes from service.



Still more closures are likely unless a commitment is made to **protect rural postal services**. Therefore, a Liberal government will:

- 1) **Protect Universal Service.** Canada Post will maintain a postal system for collection, transmission and delivery of letters, parcels and publications anywhere in Canada, and ensure that rural regions remain an integral part of its universal service.
- 2) **Restore and Maintain Rural Mail Service.** A moratorium will be placed on the closure of rural post offices, and priority placed on re-establishing discontinued box-to-box, rural and roadside mail services.
- 3) **Improve Community Consultation.** Six months before any changes in service or delivery methods affecting rural post offices or roadside mail boxes can be implemented, Canada Post will communicate with all affected customers and communities, and consult with local residents to explore options to address their concerns.

Canada's First National Food Policy

Safe Food: Strengthening inspection and enforcement

Canadians expect all foods within Canada to meet the same quality, safety and environmental sustainability standards, regardless of whether that food is produced at home or abroad.

A Liberal government will:

- ▶ Conduct a comprehensive review of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), to ensure effective coordination of Canada's **food safety system** to minimize risks and assure Canadians that the food on their tables is safe.
- ▶ Invest an additional \$50 million over four years to improve **food inspection** by the CFIA and to ensure the same food safety standards set for Canadian producers are applied to foods imported into Canada.

Sustainable Farm Incomes: Supporting innovation and protecting against risk

Sustainable farm incomes, rural infrastructure and research and innovation are keys to ensuring Canada maintains a strong and vibrant food production system. Unfortunately, Canada's farmers face a maze of confusing and unpredictable programs. A Liberal government will work in partnership with Canadian farmers to build farm programs from the farm up, not Ottawa down, including:

- ▶ A "Clean Slate Commitment", for a complete review of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada programming in partnership with farmers within the first year of a Liberal government, including business risk management programs, agricultural research, innovation and environmental programs.
- ▶ Restoring AgriFlex to its original mission of offering regionally **flexible programs** including practical, bankable business risk management to help farmers meet their costs of production. This could include programs such as the Risk Management Program in Ontario, Assurance stabilization des revenus agricoles in Quebec, market price insurance and improved crop insurance in the West, or a Buy Atlantic program in the Atlantic provinces.

Environmental Farmland Stewardship

Canadians know that our farms and our food are tied to our natural environment, and that a clean environment for the future means investing in clean energy and farmland stewardship. As part of our Clean Slate Commitment, a Liberal government will:

- ▶ Work with Canada's farmers to strengthen Canada's **Environmental Farm Plans**, support improved fertilizer and pesticide management, and introduce new environmental goods and services programs that reward farmers for environmentally-sustainable initiatives such as setting aside land for wildlife habitats or carbon sequestration.

-
- ▶ Invest in the development of clean energy from Canadian farms – biomass, wind, solar and geothermal energy – as part of the Liberal commitment to quadruple Canada's clean energy production.

International Leadership: Opening new markets and building capacity.

Steady growth in fair, rules-based **trade in agri-food** will continue to be of vital interest to Canada. Our future competitiveness and opportunities for export growth rest on expanding our share of high-value markets where our reputation for quality puts us ahead. We also have a role to play in ensuring that some of the world's poorest nations – particularly in Africa – have access to safe, healthy food, and can participate in international trade in agri-food. Therefore, a Liberal government will:

- ▶ Expand export opportunities by building Canada's international brand as a producer of the highest-quality foods and beverages in the world.
- ▶ Support capacity-building in local food production and food security among world's most vulnerable nations, particularly in Africa, by reassessing the Canadian International Development Agency's priority nations list, and focusing on initiatives such as micro-lending, research, trade-related capacity building, and enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability.



Federalism in a Networked Era and Public Service Excellence

Leadership for the Era of the Network

A Liberal government will be unafraid to engage with all those who can contribute to solving a complex problem. Perhaps the most underutilized power of the Prime Minister in the Harper years has been the power to convene. In today's networked world, effective leaders articulate the shared mission, bring together the key players, foster agreement on responsibilities, and hold themselves and others accountable for results.

This style of leadership requires leaders to work with many others, including people with whom they may disagree.

Of course, some tough decisions ultimately require a strong Prime Minister to stand alone. But playing only to hard core supporters doesn't serve the country as a whole. Instead, a Liberal government will draw on the strengths of a wider circle. Widely shared victories are the most important outcomes, not crushed opponents.

Modern Federalism

The major issues confronting Canada for the coming years cut across jurisdictions more than ever before: economic uncertainty; ever-increasing demand for knowledge and innovation to maintain good jobs at home; the range of financial pressures squeezing middle-class families; rising inequality; the aging population, and its implications for health care and other social services; the productivity of our workforce; climate change and stewardship of our water, land and air; and managing the transition to the clean technology economy of the future. Important powers of both federal and provincial governments are at play in all these issues, and none of them can be addressed seriously by just one jurisdiction.

A Liberal federal government will work with other governments to address 21st century challenges that do not confine themselves neatly to jurisdictional divisions. But our approach will be based on a rigorous respect for the jurisdiction, roles and responsibilities of provinces and territories.

Experts and stakeholders often call for a "national strategy" on a serious issue. While priorities must be chosen carefully, a Liberal government will not shy away from such challenges, as this platform demonstrates. However, no one should confuse the courage to face national challenges with a desire to create intrusive new federal programs.

Canadian federalism is not a security fence, to keep hostile camps apart. To remain vibrant, it must be a framework for partnership in a new century, not an excuse for isolation, nor a rationale for stunted ambition.

It's a framework that respects diversity, reconciles identity with common purpose and enables innovation. In this federation, we face common challenges – together.

Public Service Excellence

Canada's public service is a cornerstone of our democracy and good government. For decades, dedicated and public-spirited women and men have served governments of different partisan stripes with professionalism, integrity and competence.

However, in recent years the public service has been widely regarded as in decline. This is most visible at the front lines, where services are delivered to the public. Too many have suffered from confusing information, waited endlessly in line, or bounced from one place to another while seeking service from the federal government. Front-line employees work hard, but the machine often sputters.

Liberals believe government can be, and must be,
a positive force in the lives of citizens.

Working with the public service, its members, their unions and management, a Liberal government will develop and implement concrete service standards, so Canadians will know specifically what they can expect when they come to their government, and be confident their expectations will be met. Achieving excellence is a goal public servants share. Service standards will help spread best practices, supporting front-line employees in their efforts to provide the highest quality service possible.

The federal public service is in need of renewal across its full range of functions, not just in front-line delivery. But its challenges have been greatly aggravated in recent years by the Harper government's distrust of professional public servants. Conservatives have publicly attacked, fired or forced into resignation officials who acted responsibly, or offered expert advice, well-informed opinion and sound technical analysis they found inconvenient.

The poisoned relationship between public servants and their political leadership must be repaired as a first step toward broad-based renewal. With good will and determination, Canada's public service can again become the foundation of good government, and a magnet for recruiting the best and brightest young Canadians eager to help make their country the best it can be.

Canadians Make the Rules: Respecting and Renewing our Democracy

Canadian democracy is in poor health – not terminal, but declining. Voter turnout is at an all time low, especially among the youngest voters.

Canadians still want to be proud of our democratic institutions, but find them often paralyzed in acrimony, personal attacks and partisan gamesmanship. They lament that our national political debate is rarely a serious contest of ideas, and see the federal government as a closed, unresponsive machine irrelevant to their own lives. For too many Canadians, voting is not the exercise of power it should be. As a result, people are disengaged from their own democracy.

The decline of Canada's democracy did not start with the election of the Harper government. All parties share responsibility for the broad trends of recent decades. However, since 2006 the decline has accelerated.

Mr. Harper shut down Parliament twice in a year to avoid accountability. His government fired, forced out or harassed the heads of arms-length government agencies. And senior Conservatives have issued warnings to non-governmental organizations not to diverge from the government's ideological agenda. They ended the mandatory long-form census, ignoring the unified opposition of an unprecedented array of volunteer, faith-based, business, academic and official language representatives. The government's systemic delays have undermined both the spirit and letter of the Access to Information law. Conservative ministers have ignored the will of Parliament repeatedly, misled it and withheld vital information from it and from the public. Conservatives also actively sabotaged the proceedings of Parliamentary committees on numerous occasions. Four members of Stephen Harper's inner circle are facing jail time if convicted of charges for electoral fraud to get around spending limits. His former Chief of Staff, who previously served time in prison, is under investigation for influence peddling. And the Harper government – the first in Canadian history – has been found in contempt of Parliament for withholding basic financial information about its spending priorities: stealth fighter jets, US-style mega-prisons and corporate tax cuts. Harper Conservatives think they're above the rules of our democracy.

Making Public Policy in Public

The Liberal Platform is the result of many months spent listening to thousands of Canadians in communities across all ten provinces and three territories.

We have talked about our country in coffee shops, backyards, church basements, union halls, and legion halls. When Stephen Harper shut down Parliament, Liberals held two dozen public roundtables on Parliament Hill to air views on important policy issues.

At the "Canada at 150" conference in Montreal, we used internet technology to connect more than 30,000 participants and 72 satellite meetings across the country in a three-day discussion about

Canada's future. Liberal Party members held workshops in every region. We spent the summer of 2010 travelling on the Liberal Express bus, meeting with Canadians in 112 communities. We followed that up taking questions from all comers at "Open mike" townhalls throughout the fall and winter.

We believe this has been the broadest and most open exercise ever undertaken by a Canadian political party – doing public policy in public.



Liberals propose to engage all parties in Parliament and the Canadian people in a sustained effort to rebuild trust, respect and a meaningful connection between our democratic institutions and the people they serve.

A Liberal government will lead a democratic renewal with a wide-ranging, three-part plan designed to:

- ▶ Create an “Open Government”;
- ▶ Work with all parties to fix our hyper-partisan Parliament; and,
- ▶ Develop an internet voting option to modernize elections.

Open Government

A key element of the Liberal plan for democratic renewal is Open Government. Liberals will adopt a new approach to information, issuing government-wide direction that the default position for all departments and agencies will be to **release information to the public, both proactively and responsively**, after privacy and other legal requirements are met. This initiative will see as many government datasets as possible available to the public online, free of charge in an open and searchable format.

Furthermore, all *Access to Information* requests and responses will be **posted online**.

This new presumption of openness will also drive a new level of accountability for public finances. We will establish a searchable, **online database for grants, contributions and contracts**.

All levels of government, civil society, researchers, business and the public must have access to independent and reliable statistics and demographic information to make informed decisions and develop sound public policy to benefit all Canadians. Therefore, a Liberal government will **restore the mandatory long form census**.



Talking to Etobicoke-Lakeshore residents from Montreal at the Canada at 150 conference.

The Parliament Canadians Deserve

Liberals will advance reforms to improve the hyper-partisan atmosphere in Parliament. Canadians want to see parties compete by attacking issues, not just each other. Returning substance and civility to Parliament will require the collaboration of all parties, but leadership counts.



Under a Liberal government, new restrictions will be placed on Prime Ministerial power, particularly by placing procedural **limitations on the prime minister's power to prorogue**.



Liberals believe that all parties must act to increase the civility and substance of **Question Period**. Many observers believe a model closer to that of the British Parliament would be better, with more time for both questions and answers, scheduled themes and rosters of required ministers, and a weekly Prime Minister's question period (though the Prime Minister should still be expected to attend all days possible). A Liberal government will advance such reform in Parliament.

Even further innovation is possible, deploying internet technology to involve Canadians directly. Under a Liberal government, all Canadians will be able to participate in **People's Question Period**, where the Prime Minister and Ministers will respond directly to unscripted, user-generated questions online. Ministers' participation in the weekly online question and answer session will be rotated and as Prime Minister, Michael Ignatieff would participate at least monthly in the online People's Question Period to answer citizens' questions unfiltered by political parties or the media.

Standing Committees have suffered from excessive partisanship and manipulation. Liberals propose that standing committees be tasked more widely to dig deeply into major issues before policy decisions are taken or legislation is introduced. In addition, "Committee of the Whole" should be used more frequently to subject Ministers individually to wide-ranging questioning for an extended period in the House of Commons. Furthermore, recent events have demonstrated the need yet again for a new Standing Committee on National Security. Our major NATO allies have had such committees in place for decades and its existence would have prevented the controversy over Afghan detainee documents from reaching a time-consuming deadlock.

In addition to these specific changes, restoring civility and substance to Parliament will require leadership. Under a Liberal government, the Prime Minister will convene **regular face-to-face meetings of all party leaders** to take stock of the tone of Parliamentary debate, productivity in the conduct of the people's business, and the mandates for in-depth work by standing committees.

Modernizing the Voting System

In the 2008 federal election, voter turnout in Canada dipped to an all-time low of less than 59 percent. Most discouragingly, in recent years Canada's youngest voters have consistently had the lowest turn-out and studies tell us we can no longer count on non-voters becoming voters as they grow older.

The internet is revolutionizing many facets of life for most Canadians. It is time to harness its power to bring electoral participation closer to citizens. A Liberal government will direct Elections Canada to develop an **online voting option**, starting with a pilot project for individuals serving overseas in the Canadian Armed Forces and the federal public service, and post-secondary students living outside their home ridings. The pilot will support a broader discussion with Canadians about an online voting option for every voter.



CHAPTER FIVE

Canada in the World: a Global Networks Strategy

For generations Canadians have taken pride in our role in the world, and our reputation for balance, tolerance, and ability to work with others to solve problems. But that reputation has suffered badly.

It is now essential that we reapply those qualities on a new and rapidly changing global landscape. Few countries are as well-equipped as Canada to thrive in today's networked world. We should approach it with ambition, not suspicion.

Our skilled diplomats, and battle-hardened armed forces matter enormously, as do Canadian business people, diaspora communities, artists and entertainers, scientists and academics, and non-governmental organizations. They all reflect Canadian ambition around the globe.

That presence in the world directly impacts job creation and our standard of living at home. Today, the economy, climate, and security are more global than ever before. The world matters to Canada. Canada should, once again, matter to the world.

That means we must return to constructive multilateralism in the United Nations and other bodies. It means we should be innovative in deepening people-to-people relationships at all levels with major emerging powers like China and India. We should be leaders in the Arctic, and partners in Africa.

Canada should use all its human connections to manage relations with the United States, our most important partner, and seize new opportunities with Mexico and others in Latin America.

This "whole of Canada" approach to the world will require a confident and collaborative new brand of leadership from Canada's federal government.

Embracing a Changing World



Global leadership today means much more than stage-managed summity. It demands a deep understanding of the world, and a willingness to share the spotlight with all those who succeed every day in connecting Canada.

Canada in the World: a Global Networks Strategy

Canada has always had a strong presence in the world.

We have made a difference for the benefit of others and ourselves: the invention of peacekeeping, the early opening to China, a strong contributor to development assistance and trade relations, the founding of the G-20, and major contributions to many multilateral institutions.

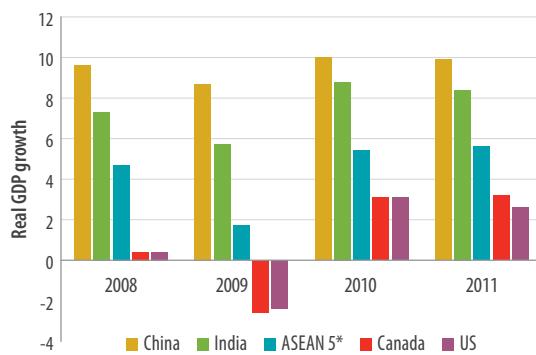
Unfortunately, the Harper government has lost ground on the world stage. This has led to a long and growing list of embarrassments and missed opportunities, including:

- ▶ Failing to win a seat on the **UN Security Council** for the first time ever, an unprecedented rebuke by the international community of the Harper government's conduct, and arguably the greatest foreign policy fiasco in our history.
- ▶ Obstructing progress at **climate change summits** in Copenhagen in 2009 and Cancun in 2010, earning condemnation from around the world.
- ▶ Wasting years of goodwill with the emerging economic giants, as Stephen Harper took nearly four years as prime minister to go to **India and China** – astonishing in an era when world leaders are working every day to develop deeper relations with these countries

This parochial approach is in sharp contrast with the modern reality of Canada. We are among the most trade-reliant nations on the planet. Canadians are people of the world: by 2020, one-quarter of our population will have been born in another country. Our cities are brimming with talented and hard working immigrants from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

Canadians are also spread widely across the globe, with nearly three million living, working and traveling abroad, more than half a million of these in Asia. Nearly four million Canadians are of Asian descent. More than one million Canadians live in the United States. Our artists and scientists compete successfully and collaborate confidently with their peers among the world's best.

Asian economies leading in growth



* ASEAN 5: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam

Today, influence is concentrated at the centres of globe-spanning networks, much more than at the top of old hierarchies. In the networked world, the best connected are the most successful. Those able to work across borders, within global partnerships, connecting between governments, business, and civil society, bridging cultures, speaking languages, embracing diversity and mediating difference – those people will excel in this century. And those people are Canadians.

Embracing a Changing World

A new Liberal government will implement Canada's first Global Networks Strategy, cutting across what previous governments have treated as the separate silos of diplomacy, trade, defence and overseas development.

The Global Networks Strategy will require a new kind of leadership from the federal government both at home and abroad. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade no longer has a monopoly on Canada's interests abroad, or on international economic relations. Today, many actors contribute to Canada's presence in the world, from transportation executives selling mass transit rolling stock to China, to Waterloo software engineers conquering foreign markets; from the Canadian doctor who headed Médecins Sans Frontières to the global artistic genius of Cirque du Soleil. All reflect Canadian interests and values. They all succeed by understanding the needs and desires of people in other lands, and mastering global networks of human relationships to get things done.

Yet none of these private sector, civil society or cultural leaders has the legitimacy to lead and articulate the country's overall priorities and objectives in the world. That's what a Liberal government will do through the Global Networks Strategy.

Global Network Agreements with China and India

Canada is an Asia-Pacific nation, and yet we are the only member of NAFTA without a trade agreement with an Asian country. We have to take action to deepen relationships with the major emerging economies that are shaping the future. A Liberal government will pursue new bilateral agreements with China, India, and other emerging powers. A new model is needed to reflect how the world works today. Boosting trade will be a major part of new "**Global Network Agreements**", but they will go far beyond exports and imports.

The new agreements would mandate greatly enhanced people-to-people cooperation, exchanges, and collaborative projects in key sectors such as higher education, clean technologies, culture, tourism, financial services, public health, food safety and security, transportation, trade logistics and governance. Instead of an ad hoc and piecemeal approach, we would set coherent objectives across the whole relationship, and establish specific mandates from the highest levels for action. Success will mean going well beyond government-to-government contacts and leveraging relationships at all levels, including in the private sector, academia, arts and culture and civil society.

At home, Global Network Agreements will embody a Liberal government's strong commitment to national leadership and partnership, encouraging collaboration between all levels of government, the private sector, academia and civil society. In particular, we will engage diaspora communities in Canada, as well as Canadians living abroad, as key partners in promoting the human networks that generate economic opportunities.

Renewed Team Canada missions will also be part of the Global Network Agreements. We will modernize the previous, successful model, focusing each mission on one or more key sectors, like those highlighted above. Missions will be part of a program of sustained interaction, rather than one-off events, and will promote reciprocal visits by a similar range of leaders from the partner country to Canada.

Global Network Agreements will advance human rights by deepening and broadening human interactions and building more mature relationships in which dialogue and problem-solving flourish over time.

Renewing Partnerships in North America

Canada's geographic, economic and cultural advantages in a North American market of nearly 500 million people will remain among our major strategic assets in a rapidly changing world. Over \$1.5 billion worth of goods and services cross the Canada-US border every day as part of the largest commercial relationship between any two countries in the world. There are 200 million border crossings between our two countries each year. And Canadians and Americans are increasingly making things together and selling them to the world.



Regrettably, as a result of numerous security-related measures in the US in the wake of September 11, 2001, the "thickening" Canada-US border is impeding cross-border trade flows and undermining the vitality of our economic relationship.

As part of the Global Networks Strategy, a Liberal government will lead and collaborate with partners at home, as well as the more than one million Canadians who live and work in the United States, to raise the profile of the vast and rich Canada-US relationship in America.

We will explore the possibility of new, smarter administrative arrangements for managing our shared border, in order to contain and reverse its recent "thickening", while maintaining effective security. Transparency and informed dialogue with the Canadian public will be essential, in contrast with the Harper government's secretive dealings on "perimeter security".

We will work collaboratively with the United States, and other likeminded nations, in multilateral settings to advance progress on major international issues.

Rather than wait for the US Congress to decide Canadian policy as the Harper government is doing, a Liberal government will engage the Obama Administration proactively on clean energy issues including renewable energy, clean technologies, and energy efficiency.

Building Canada's relationships with Mexico is also vital. A neighbour and partner in North America, Mexico's further success matters to Canada. We share a range of interests and opportunities including fighting protectionism, collaborating on climate change and supporting Mexico's progress on domestic security. A Liberal government will also work with Mexico towards phasing out the visa requirement for Mexican citizens visiting Canada, while addressing Canada's concerns regarding refugee claims.

Canada's North and the International Arctic Region

The Liberal approach to Canada's North and the international Arctic region will move beyond military photo-ops and grandstanding. A Liberal government will **focus on the peoples of Canada's north**, as well as their knowledge, ideas, and energy. The best path to strengthening Arctic sovereignty involves partnering with those Canadians who know the region best, and are the most able to shape its future.

The Canadian government must **strengthen relations with other Arctic Nations**, fostering shared interests, building and strengthening multilateral institutions. The Arctic is an excellent example of the Canadian interest being most effectively pursued from the centre of a network, rather than through an attempt to dictate terms from the top of an old-fashioned hierarchy.

A Liberal Government will reverse the mistakes of the Harper Conservatives, by appointing a new **Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs**, and energizing Canada's participation in the Arctic Council. We will work to bring together all members of the Arctic Council, including indigenous leadership, to formalize cooperation on environmental stewardship, economic and social development, transportation, search and rescue, and security. We will also pursue a joint Arctic mapping exercise to help establish international protected lands, oceans, fisheries and wildlife, sacred indigenous sites, and further cooperation on security. A Liberal government will also act to establish a **permanent secretariat for the Arctic Council** in Canada to support negotiations, and build capacity for full participation.

The Liberal approach on Canada's North will be about action on Northern issues like education, jobs, natural resource development, healthcare, infrastructure, environment and climate change, and preserving traditional ways of life in a turbulent modern world. These are the challenges and opportunities that will measure Canada's success in **making Arctic sovereignty serve Arctic people**. A strong Canadian military must play an important role in the North, but as one element of a broader approach to leadership and partnership with Northerners, and our northern neighbours.



Michael Ignatieff and Liberal candidate Joe Handley, former Premier of the Northwest Territories

Strong Ties with Europe

Canada's ties to Europe are deeply rooted in our past, and important for our future. Our \$50 billion in exports to the European Union underline the economic significance of our trans-Atlantic connections, and our two Official Languages are a testament to shared history and cultural affinities. Healthy relations with Europeans in NATO and a range of multilateral bodies are key to Canada's interests and will continue to be essential to Canada's prosperity at home and our presence in the world.

Marshalling Canada's Strengths in Human Development

The Global Networks Strategy will also take a highly integrated approach to human development, not only spanning the traditional silos of defence, diplomacy and development within government, but also leveraging the strengths of Canadians at home and abroad.

Peace, Order and Good Government

In emerging democracies and fragile states, the most profound need is often stable and transparent governance, based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. We know from experience that vast quantities of foreign aid achieve little lasting change for people suffering corrupt, unstable or oppressive governance. Aid funds are not enough. Unstable countries need help with running elections, policing, financial administration, justice and healthcare systems. Canada has a strong track record and expertise in a wide range of civilian and public administration fields that are essential for building stable democracies.

A Liberal government will use "Peace Order and Good Government," the highly practical doctrine that underpins Canada's own Constitution, as a frame of reference for not just a "whole-of-government" program, but a "whole-of-Canada" effort to marshal our governance expertise. We will establish a **Canada Democracy Agency**, with capacity to broker, coordinate and support deployments of Canadian governance expertise, from both within federal agencies, and beyond – including other governments, retired professionals, the private sector and NGOs. This will include fostering innovation, providing training, harvesting lessons learned and sharing best practices from deployments. These efforts will channel Canadian good will and expertise more effectively, and contribute substantively to preventing and resolving conflict, developing leadership, building democratic institutions, and spreading respect for human rights and economic stability in post-conflict states, and emerging democracies.

Overseas Development Assistance

Under the Global Networks Strategy, a Liberal government will renew partnerships with the many Canadian organizations actively working to improve the lives of those most in need. There is no justification for imposing a chill on democratic dialogue about international policy through intimidation, threats and politically motivated withdrawal of funding as the Harper government has done.

In the 2010 Budget, the Harper government froze Canada's development assistance, removing billions from planned investments. This brought Canada's steady improvements in support levels

to a standstill and has jeopardized long-term program achievement. To restore some of the ground that has been lost under the Conservatives, Liberals will re-invest in development assistance, as we **re-balance the spending in our international priorities**.

Still, we must move beyond stale debates about the desired amount of foreign aid. Although more money for the poorest countries can help, experts are increasingly looking at new ideas and alternative methods of supporting growth in the developing world. The key is not how much more money to spend, but how to empower people.

Canadian aid will be guided by an **overarching emphasis on the massive untapped potential of women in the developing world**. Empowering women is often the key factor in small-holder farming, health initiatives and education that leads to economic development. Vast human potential in many developing countries can be unlocked by focusing on the role of women. This will be central to a Liberal government's approach to development assistance.

A Return to Africa

It is time to reverse Canada's slide away from Africa. The Global Networks Strategy will extend the hand of partnership to those most in need. That means focusing first where extreme poverty – not short-term commercial opportunity – exists. It also means encouraging private investment and building the capacity of African states to serve their own people.



In 2009 the Harper government changed Canada's international aid targets dramatically, with virtually no consultation. The government shifted aid away from sub-Saharan Africa, removing eight African countries from the list of priority aid recipients.

A Liberal government will **return Africa to the top of our aid priorities**, matching Canadian resources, capacities, and economic interests with the greatest needs. The continent is the location of a disproportionate number of the world's poor, the world's conflicts, and crushing diseases like HIV-AIDS and malaria. Africa will also bear the brunt of climate change.

Canada must lead in advancing innovative new ways of assisting African states to confront these challenges, while helping to develop their economies, attract private investment, and deliver services to their citizens. The real issues in Africa are about opportunity, not charity, and a Liberal government will build partnerships with that fundamental fact in mind.

Middle East Peace



Before 2006 Canada was known as a voice of reason in the Middle East, respected by both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict. That matters because the objective of serious diplomacy is to advance Canada's interests and those of our allies. But the Harper government has squandered Canada's influence in the region, and polarized debate in Canada for partisan reasons, diminishing our ability to contribute to progress.

Canada's ultimate objective must be peace in the region. In the short-term, we should aim for a reduction in hostilities, economic growth for the most vulnerable, and a de-escalation of inflammatory rhetoric.

Liberals believe in a two-state solution and that true regional stability can only happen when a safe, secure and democratic Israel exists in peace beside a viable, secure and democratic Palestinian state.

On the ground, Canada has played a constructive role assisting Palestinian authorities with governance and policing capacity, and must continue doing so. We should facilitate dialogue between Israel, the Arab world and Palestinian leadership.

Iran is the major threat to peace in the region, and Canada should be forthright in condemning its menacing rhetoric, and should support international efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

On these fundamental questions, our political leaders must say the same thing whether they are in a mosque in Calgary or a synagogue in Montreal. Politicians also have a duty to discourage communities from importing tensions and hostility into Canada. Instead, we should bring the Canadian values of tolerance, diversity and principled compromise to the search for solutions overseas.

The Modern Canadian Military

The Canadian Forces do extraordinary work around the world, as well as defending our security and sovereignty at home, undertaking search and rescue operations, and responding to civilian emergencies. The Forces ably serve Canada in our major alliances, NATO and NORAD, safeguarding peace and security and fighting terrorism. After years serving bravely and effectively in Afghanistan, Canada's military is an experienced, battle-hardened force, respected internationally. That force will be indispensable to a renewed concept of Canada's role in the world.

A Return to Peace Operations

In 2009, the United Nations deployed more peacekeepers than ever before – five times the number of ten years ago – with almost 100,000 military and police personnel in 15 UN missions around the globe. Yet, while the number and the need for UN peacekeepers has never been greater, Canada's contribution has never been smaller. While we were once the world's single greatest contributor of UN peacekeepers, in 2009 we were 56th.

Traditional peacekeeping has changed significantly since Canada vacated the field. Increasingly, deployments are undertaken to more complex and often dangerous situations, better described as peace-making missions. These increasingly involve combat. Based on the hard-earned experience in Afghanistan, a Liberal government will develop a **new leadership role for Canada in today's peace operations**. It will include training, commanding and deploying personnel where it's clear that a mission is consistent with Canada's interests, values and capabilities. And while at present only

a small fraction of Canada's defence budget is dedicated to the incremental cost of United Nations operations, Liberals will ensure that the Canadian Forces have the resources they need to engage in additional Peace Operations.

Responsibility to Protect

Under the umbrella of Peace, Order and Good Government, the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) will provide a rigorous framework for renewed Canadian leadership in preventing and addressing conflict and mass-scale human rights abuse. Michael Ignatieff played a key role in developing R2P, as part of the Canadian-initiated, and UN-endorsed, International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty.



The doctrine emphasizes that sovereign states have an obligation to protect their citizens from harm, and when they do not, the international community must make every possible diplomatic effort to persuade them to do so. When a sovereign state will not or cannot protect its people, R2P requires intervention of the international community, including military intervention as a last resort, in UN-mandated operations to stop large-scale loss of innocent lives, such as in genocide or ethnic cleansing.

R2P was formally adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, with strong Canadian leadership. Since then, the Harper government has hardly mentioned it. Canada could have advocated R2P – from a seat on the UN Security Council – to help advance a coherent international response to the violence in Libya, for example. A Liberal government will work with the international community to solidify the doctrine's acceptance and implementation. This does not mean Canada will be obliged to intervene in conflicts wherever they occur. It means that **Canada will renew its leadership in conflict prevention**, and that when the world must act to stop large-scale slaughter of innocent people, Canada will be able to contribute with military capacity experienced in the complexities of modern conflict.

The Future of Our Engagement in Afghanistan

Canada's role with NATO in Afghanistan supports security and development in a troubled land previously governed by a repressive Taliban regime, which provided safe haven to Al-Qaeda to plot the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. More than 150 Canadian men and women have lost their lives, and many more face disabilities. The mission has been an honourable one in our national interest. Afghanistan must not revert to being a safe haven for terrorists.

The combat mission is ending in 2011. However, the basic objective will not be completed. The Afghan people will still not be fully able to govern themselves and maintain their own security.

That is why the Liberal Party supports the 2011-2014 training mission, and continued development work. The purpose is to help the Afghan people build a better future for themselves.

The post-combat presence for Canada must also include a substantive role in the diplomatic process and any political talks on Afghanistan's future. A Liberal government will appoint a Special Envoy to the peace process for the region.

Respect for Canada's Veterans

Canadian veterans deserve the best possible care and support, and an administrative structure mandated and organized to meet their needs in accordance with the lifelong social contract between the veteran and the nation. The New Veterans Charter has provided our veterans with many valuable tools to reintegrate into civilian life, but it's not perfect. Veterans groups, advisory groups, Senate and House committees and individual injured veterans and their families, from the regulars and the reserves, have identified ways to make the Charter more fair, responsive, family-focused, and veteran-friendly. A Liberal government will work with these groups to implement significant improvements, including re-visiting whether the disability award should continue to be a lump-sum payment.



A Liberal government will also implement a new Veterans' Learning Benefit, supporting the costs of higher education after completion of service.

Strengthening Bilingual Learning in the Canadian Forces

Bilingualism is among the many attributes that enable the Canadian Forces to both serve and reflect our country with pride and professionalism. The same is true of their emphasis on knowledge and learning. A renewed commitment to bilingual learning is now required. **College Militaire Royal de St-Jean** (CMRSJ) has played an important role through various phases of its history. A Liberal government will invest in CMRSJ to restore it to full university status.

This will add needed capacity for educating the next generation of officers within the military system, complementing RMC Kingston, which is operating at full capacity. CMRSJ will build on its traditional strength in the liberal arts, which become more important in military education as modern conflict grows more complex, and more entangled with socio-political dynamics playing out beneath the level of traditional state-to-state clashes. Most importantly, the francophone milieu of CMRSJ will help attract motivated young francophones to the Canadian Forces, and offer Anglophone officer-students enhanced opportunities to master their second official language while advancing their studies in the RMC system.

Military Procurement

A Liberal government will have a very different vision of Canada's role in the world. Naturally, the entire procurement programme in the Department of National Defence will have to be reviewed in the context of that changing role. A well-resourced military will be essential under a Liberal government. Procurement decisions will flow from mission needs in a straightforward and transparent manner. They also need to secure the best value for money and industrial benefits.

A Liberal government will **immediately cancel the mismanaged \$30 billion sole-source deal for F-35 stealth fighter jets**, and save billions of dollars. In the largest procurement in Canadian history, the Harper government never explained why that plane is essential at this time. It still cannot say what the actual price will be, and secured no guarantee for industrial benefits. Other countries, including the United States, are scaling back orders for an aircraft still under development, but the Conservatives charged ahead, despite the facts. There is a more responsible way to proceed.

After cancelling the Harper deal, a Liberal government will put further steps on hold during a review of all military procurement in light of the new international policy described in this Global Networks Strategy. This review will include Canada's search and rescue requirements as well as the needs of our air, naval and land forces. When Canada purchases new fighter planes, we will have a transparent, competitive process to procure equipment that best meets our needs, achieves best value for money, secures maximum industrial benefits, and fits a realistic budget.

A New Approach in a Networked World

Renewing Canadian Multilateralism

Canada is a founding member of the United Nations and NATO, a leader in la Francophonie, the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States, NAFTA and APEC, and a founder of the G20. Multilateralism has been fundamental to the pursuit of Canadian interests and our contribution in the past. In new ways, it must also be key to our future. That means dedicating sufficient resources to Canadian engagement in these institutions, as well as many specialized, multilateral agencies dealing with a range of issues where Canada has both an interest and an opportunity. Canadian leadership can make a difference in multilateral efforts on issues like child soldiers, nuclear proliferation, and banning cluster munitions.

Renewed multilateralism will require realistic and determined leadership in the reform of established institutions, especially the United Nations. Liberals are realistic about the limitations of global bodies like the UN and will pursue new platforms and partnerships alongside the old ones. Multilateral deliberation will remain indispensable in world affairs.

The G20 in a Changing World

A Liberal government will be active in further solidifying the G20. It is replacing the G8 as the world's pre-eminent body for global cooperation. The members of the G20 represent 90 percent of the world's gross national product. No leader serious about the future can believe anymore that global challenges ranging from economic stability to climate change, food insecurity to poverty can be adequately addressed without countries like Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Indonesia, South Korea, China and India at the table.

The Harper government missed a unique opportunity in 2010 with its incompetent organization of the G20 and G8 summits. Instead of careful planning, consultation and statesmanship, their approach was driven by partisan calculation and self-promotion. The unfortunate result for taxpayers was embarrassment and an astronomical cost – roughly \$1 billion, an expense unheard of at previous – and subsequent – summits around the world. It was dubbed by *The Economist*, Canada's "loonie boondoggle."



Stephen Harper's G20 "Fake Lake"

Collaboration Within Canada

The Prime Minister of Canada must lead by supporting the efforts of fellow leaders, and many other players in the private sector and civil society, to advance Canada's interests in the world. A Liberal government will recognize the interests and expertise of provinces in many subjects of multilateral discussion, and put in place the structures and processes necessary to engage them in preparing for relevant multilateral events. We will also ensure personnel are in place in key posts abroad, mandated to liaise with provinces on issues of substantive interest to them. None of this will compromise the responsibility of the federal government to speak for Canada internationally. On the contrary, it will allow Canada to speak more effectively to the world, with the coherence of an effectively-led team.

Branding Canada for Success in a Networked World

A Liberal government will launch a new **Branding Canada initiative** in key markets around the world, working in collaboration with the private sector, leading artists and academia. By making Canadian strengths more widely understood abroad, we will bolster the Global Networks Strategy, and all efforts to advance Canadian interests and values. This will help boost trade, investment and other strategic sectors highlighted under new Global Network Agreements. Canada's embassies and consulates will play a leading role in Branding Canada and reaching broad audiences overseas.

Knowledge fuels global networks, and learning and higher education are becoming increasingly international endeavours as a result. We have some of the best universities in the world, but in recent years Canada has fallen behind other nations, such as Australia and the United Kingdom, that are expanding their presence in international education significantly.

A Liberal government will work with provinces, post-secondary institutions and associations, and the private sector to support efforts by major Canadian institutions to establish presence in major emerging markets, and student exchanges that provide Canadians greater access to opportunities for foreign study.

Canadian culture will also be a major focus of the new Branding Canada initiative. Canadian creators working in French, English and other languages, contribute to Canadian prosperity and identity, while deepening our connections in a networked world.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Canadian businesses are active players in the global economy. They invest everywhere in the world, across the full range of economic activity. Canada is home, for example, to 75 percent of the world's exploration and mining companies. The vast majority of these companies enjoy strong reputations and operate responsibly in the developing world. But periodically a small number are accused of human rights and environmental abuses. A Liberal government will take steps to support Canadian international investment by promoting the highest standards of Canadian Corporate Social Responsibility ("CSR").

In 2007, a CSR Advisory Group representing the mining industry, labour, civil society and academics reached a consensus. Unfortunately, the Harper government has done nothing on these recommendations.

A Liberal government will act on the Advisory Group's recommendations, including adopting Canadian CSR standards, and setting up an independent ombudsman office to advise Canadian companies, consider complaints made against them, and investigate those complaints where it is deemed warranted.

Youth Service Abroad

Canadian youth are a potent force in shaping Canada's presence in the world. Many are passionate about making a difference, ambitious about what can be achieved abroad, and curious about other cultures and places. They've grown up with the pervasive power of the Internet and know how to use it to bridge distance. Experience in the world benefits young Canadians by broadening their horizons. Their humanitarian efforts benefit people in less fortunate countries, and benefit Canada when they return home enriched with ideas, inspiration and practical experience with the world's diversity and its challenges.

That's why a Liberal government will implement a **Canada Service Corps**. It will leverage the energy and engagement of Canadian youth by financially supporting their volunteer service abroad, bringing international experience within reach for greater numbers of young Canadians.

Renewing Federal Government Capacity

Carrying out the federal government's work under the Global Networks Strategy will require revitalized public service capacity. Five years of neglect and mismanagement of Canada's diplomatic corps, Trade Commissioner Service, embassies and international capacity across the government must be corrected.

For the Department of National Defence, the story has been somewhat different. Since 2005-06, as a result of both Liberal and Conservative budget decisions, Canada's defence spending has risen nearly 50 percent and is set to continue growing even after the combat mission in Afghanistan has concluded. Liberals support the recent investments in the Canadian Forces, but the trajectory for future years must be re-evaluated. A properly-resourced military is essential to our sovereignty and our constructive role in the world, but is not sufficient on its own.

The government reports that the annual incremental cost of the combat mission in Afghanistan is nearly \$1.7 billion. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has reported that the incremental costs are even higher than what's been disclosed. The incremental cost of the 2011-2014 training mission will reportedly be \$500 million annually. That leaves more than \$1 billion to be reallocated by a Liberal government in a balanced manner across the full spectrum of defence, development and diplomacy.

This change will free up resources to reinvigorate other international capacities across the federal system, better reflecting the full range of integrated functions and forward-looking engagement that define this Global Networks Strategy.

Conclusion: Canada at 150

What sort of country
do we want to be
when we turn 150?
It's up to Canadian
voters to decide.





In 2017, Canadians will mark
the 150th birthday of our country.

One hundred and fifty years is a significant milestone in the story of Canada. It's an opportunity to come together to celebrate our history and prepare for our future.

The lead-up to Canada at 150 must belong to people, not governments. The conversation should come alive, through networks connecting as many Canadians as possible to each other, to our country's history and to our shared future.

A Liberal government will establish a special Canada at 150 panel, with broad representation heavily emphasizing young leaders. The Prime Minister will task it to work with young Canadians, community organizations, schools, the private sector and other governments to raise awareness and identify the best ideas to commemorate our county's 150th birthday.

The countdown to 2017 should inspire us. It's time for a more ambitious Canada. We've proven we can compete and win in international sports and global commerce. We excel in science, arts, culture and entertainment. We have built a compassionate society that welcomes the world, and offers everyone an equal opportunity to prosper. But if we don't keep moving forward, we risk falling behind in an era of rapid change. This is a great country that must seize its future.

What sort of country do we want to be when we turn 150? With the right leadership, Canada can be the best-educated, most environmentally savvy, most open and international country on earth. This platform identifies some major steps that can help us get there. Now it's up to Canadian voters to decide.

APPENDIX ONE: The Platform Balance Sheet

Sources of Funds (\$millions)	Page #	Year 1	Year 2
Return corporate tax rate to 18%	11	3087	5237
Wireless Spectrum Auction revenue	12	0	500
Cap on stock option deductions	11	300	315
Cancel PPP fund	12	288	263
Immediately end oil sands tax break	46	265	225
Spending review and reallocation	12	250	500
Total funds available		4190	7040
Uses of Funds (\$millions)	Page #	Year 1	Year 2
Affordable Housing Framework	54	275	275
Canada Council for the Arts	60	45	90
Canadian Learning Strategy			
Aboriginal and Métis Post Secondary Education	26	115	115
Early Childhood Learning and Care Fund	23	500	700
K-12 Aboriginal Education	27	0	300
Language Training for New Canadians	27	25	50
Learning Passport	24	0	980
Veterans Learning Benefit	27	40	80
Canada Service Corps	58	45	45
Canadian Brain Health Strategy	36	15	65
Canadian Champion Sectors: Innovation & Productivity Tax Credit / Flowthrough Shares	14	0	175
Canadian Freshwater Strategy	16	100	125
Canadian International Arts Funding	60	25	25
Cleaner Oil Sands Development	46	265	225
Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean	84	25	15
Community Heroes Fund	57	10	10
Court Challenges Program	62	5	5
Eliminate firearms registration fees	56	0	20
Family Care EI Benefit	30	190	250
Family Care Tax Benefit	30	545	610
Green Renovation Tax Credit	44	0	400
Guaranteed Income Supplement	32	0	400
High-speed internet, 100% coverage	64	100	200
National Food Policy	35/66-67	45	45
Open Government (forgone StatsCan revenue)	71	25	10
Renewable Power Production Incentive	45	140	140
Rural doctors and nurses	64	20	20
Volunteer Firefighters Tax Credit	65	5	5
Youth Hiring Incentive	18	130	160
Total new investment		2690	5540
Prudence Reserve (increase to 3 billion)		1500	1500
Balance		0	0

Note: all figures are incremental to the Government of Canada's fiscal framework

APPENDIX TWO: Source Documents

- **Canada at 150: Summary Report (May, 2010)**
www.can150.ca
- **Rural Canada Matters (April, 2010)**
www.liberal.ca/issues/ruralcanada
- **Canada in the World: A Global Networks Strategy (June 2010)**
www.liberal.ca/issues/global-leadership/
- **The Liberal Family Care Plan (October, 2010)**
www.liberal.ca/files/2010/10/lpc-family-care-en.pdf
- **Opening Government to Canadians (October 2010)**
www.liberal.ca/open

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