

BC NDP Socialist Caucus Candidate Program

A. Healthcare

Key demand: Fully finance public Medicare including new hospitals, decent wages and working conditions for health care staff, and cut wait times across the board.

- Implement full nationalization of provincially run healthcare, away from the doctors-as-proprietor model, with the government providing administration and infrastructure. Healthcare workers will be unionized provincial, public-sector employees, with higher wages the ability to manage own premises. Clinics, hospitals, labs, and other healthcare offices will become government buildings.
- Keep the system largely intact, but robustly resourced. The funding model is direct-from-government in all aspects of healthcare. Management and planning involve worker-government collaboration through boards and councils, reducing administrative overhead and providing more effective service.
- Crack down on private clinics and illegal fees for service via fines and expropriation.
- Province-wide, build more hospitals, nurse practitioner led-clinics, diagnostic centers, and increased wages for staff.
- Provide free education and debt forgiveness for recent and studying doctors, nurses, healthcare support. (See: Education - Public University below)
- Expedite applications of foreign workers to healthcare positions, encouraging and supporting their immigration wherever possible.
- Provide public coverage of mental, dental, vision, and hearing health measures.
- Expand pandemic protections access with free N95 equivalent respirators (masks), boosters available upon request, increased and free testing, and continued data tracking of covid, monkeypox, polio, and so on.
- Provide rebates in workplace and other public spaces for pandemic and climate related ventilation renovations for MERV-13 or better level filtration, including rebates for HEPA filters and Corsi-Rosenthal boxes in the interim.
- Extend coverage for accessing healthcare (including abortions and free contraception/condoms) if not able to build infrastructure in rural/isolated communities (for example, pay for travel and meals).
- Increase investment in local healthcare manufacturing: pharmaceuticals, equipment (including PPE materials).

B. Social Infrastructure

- Nationalize all provincially funded long-term care and supported living facilities, increasing their funding, resourcing and staffing.
- End the BC PWD spousal cap
- Increase disability payments to \$2500/month (\$800 per additional dependent).

- Increase income assistance payments to \$2500/month (\$800 per additional dependent).
- Provide a BC pension supplement of \$800/month.
- Provide a BC caregiver supplement of \$800/month.
- Provide more funding for community groups addressing anti-poverty/social service initiatives.

C. Housing

Key demand: Build massive high quality, earth friendly public housing available on a geared to income basis.

- Invest in public housing across province to ensure adequate access to low-cost housing tied to income (no more than 30%), priority on areas with lowest vacancy rates. (See: Infrastructure-Public Works Program)
- Expropriate rental units owned by corporations and the wealthy for speculation only, adding them to the supply of public housing.
- Reform the Residential Tenancy Act to include tighter rental increase caps and closure of loopholes for rent increases between leases, vacancy control measures, and stronger tenant union and advocacy supports. The government will solicit public feedback.
- Implement a higher speculation tax, progressive land tax, and more equitable distribution of property taxes. (See: Tax Code)
- Implement the NDP promise of a renter's rebate to be introduced and doubled immediately (\$800/year).
- Focus on community urban planning for mixed-use, walkable, cyclable/rollable, and transit-accessible housing.
- Provide construction planning programs geared towards climate resiliency, including ventilation, heating, energy consumption, flood and fire resistance, white roads and roofing and so on.
- Fund incentives for green building and materials manufacturing

D. Childcare

- Expand childcare spaces, setting a ratio per population.
- Provide relocation supports for ECEs.
- Support higher wages for daycare providers (\$30/hr).
- Provide free education for Early Childhood Educators.
- Provide subsidies so that daycare costs no more than \$10/day upfront.
- Increase after-school care access and availability.

E. UNDRIP

Key demand: Implement full UNDRIP including land back and massive restitution to Indigenous peoples

- Fund remote indigenous communities to provide adequate staffing, education, resources, housing, and so on for self-governance.
- Through nation-nation dialogue, implement an infrastructure investment plan for priorities identified by indigenous. Communities, including clean water, transportation, housing, environmental reclamation, and so on.
- Provide resources, including mediation, professionals, funding, meeting spaces, comms tech and so on, to transition from band governance to traditional, self-determined governance when requested.
- Recognize ancestral territory and title and return land including resources to indigenous management.
- Fund initiatives for historical research and traditional land use studies and maps for the data-gathering and archival work required to make “land back” a reality in an equitable and community-led fashion.

F. Natural Resource Industry

- Nationalize all resource projects and subject them to UNDRIP (Indigenous management) to achieve a just transition from environmentally harmful practices. This would include an immediate ban on old-growth logging.
- Implement heavier restrictions on forestry and logging.
- Implement fishing restrictions in line with sustainable conservation.
- Provide workers who lose income due to these policies with increased employment. insurance (equal to what they were being paid by Industry); provide free retraining programs in green/government prioritized industries, and free relocation programs. (See: Infrastructure- Public Works, Labour and Education- Public University)

G. Energy Industry

Key demand: Nationalize oil and gas and phase it out as quickly as possible

- Nationalize all large-scale energy projects and subject them to UNDRIP (Indigenous management) to achieve a just transition from environmentally harmful practices. This would include an immediate ban on fracking and an immediate end to any fossil fuel subsidies.
- Provide a massive investment in renewable resources (solar, onshore and offshore wind, geothermal, tidal).
- Find ways to lower barriers for small-scale and community-driven green energy generation and create incentives instead.
- Dismantle the Site C Dam project immediately.

- Provide workers who lose income due to these policies with increased employment insurance (equal to what they were being paid by industry); provide free retraining programs in green/government prioritized industries, and free relocation programs. (See: Infrastructure- Public Works and Education- Public University),

H. Infrastructure

- Focus on a provincial public-works program that creates climate-friendly and socially beneficial infrastructure and other government identified priorities, such as mass social housing initiatives, rural indigenous communities, climate/energy related builds and retrofits (bridges, roads, sewers, and so on), public transportation network, environmental reclamation, renewable energy/waste-management infrastructure, re-purposing of oil and gas facilities, healthcare facilities, and infrastructural requirements.

I. Transit

- Create networks of low-cost, reliable, and frequent transit service across the entire province.
- Provide an annual funding allocation for operations and maintenance of public transit systems.
- Provide more buses, light rail, and metro within cities and towns
- Provide low-cost passenger rail service between towns along existing routes (electrified where possible); an expansion of BC Bus North service to fill gaps, beginning with dangerously under-serviced remote and indigenous areas as well as high carbon-emitting congested routes.
- Do not provide subsidies or support for air carriers (with workers entitled to increased EI and retraining and so on.)

J. Tax Code

Key demand: Take away the bloated pandemic profits of the rich, the real cause of inflation.

- Overhaul the tax code to place the burden on economic elites and away from low and middle-income earners.
- Implement progressive income taxation with no financial cliff.
- Increase corporate taxation.
- Provide initiatives to investigate and close loopholes on corporate and personal tax avoidance.
- Decrease sales tax (returns) for low-income earners, and increase tax for luxury/speculative goods.
- Implement a land tax on sale of home.
- Increase speculation and capital gains taxes with tighter restrictions on declarations of income versus capital gains.
- Impose an inheritance tax.

- Provide tax incentives for government-identified priority programs, such as green energy, Indigenous capacity-building, cooperative formation, priority employment fields.

K. Labour

- Implement a minimum wage of \$25 per hour, with annual increases tied to inflation
- Provide high-paying provincial public works program jobs (see above: Infrastructure) wherein government is the employer, and with subcontracting subject to government-directed standard conditions (wages, benefits, union access)
- Provide robust support programs for workers exiting high-carbon/polluting industries; simultaneously addressing climate priorities, empowering worker autonomy, tackling structural unemployment, and creating resilient labour market (see: Natural Resource and Energy Industries, Education-Public University)
- Implement 10 paid sick days per year for all BC workers
- Provide further incentives and support for unionization: remove legislative barriers for unionization; remove back-to-work legislation; provide resource support for labour in collective bargaining
- Facilitate more shared decision-making with labour unions: create industry councils, and incentives for grass-roots and democratic labour organizing (e.g., worker committees, roundtables, conventions)
- Fund incentives for worker cooperative formation/transition: e.g., forgive loans for worker buy-outs
- Increase the burden on employers to provide better pensions and extended healthcare

L. Government Relations

- Demand from federal government more funding and investment for social and infrastructure projects. Use leverage wherever possible.
- Commit to nation-nation dialogue and decision making with Indigenous nations.
- Defund the police. Prohibit funding transfers to RCMP and municipal police forces, redirecting them to peer-led community support programs, social service and healthcare access, housing, and other measures that actually reduce crime.
- Set up a citizens assembly for electoral reform to create a proportional representation electoral system to implement before next provincial election

M. Ecology and Climate

Key demand: Transition fairly and justly to a green economy.

- Provide Right to Repair legislation and incentives for companies.
- Limit carbon emissions in line with climate science.
- Nationalize (provincial ownership) and speedily end the fossil fuel business. (See: Energy Industry)
- Invest and collaborate with Indigenous groups to address ecological concerns, including flooding and fire safety, land use management, as well as species conservation.
- Focus on waste reduction and efficient waste management, and emissions-reducing programs. Provide more government-run initiatives and reduce privatization in waste management. (See: Infrastructure- Public Works)

- Facilitate the greening of cities and towns through increased tree cover and natural/wild grasses and plants; reduce urban heat effects, improve air quality, reduce stormwater runoff and provide habitat for pollinators
- Provide food security incentives: repurposing of lawns for gardens, community gardens, free gardening education programs/clubs, funding for small sustainable farms and markets, pro-permaculture practices in agriculture and livestock
- Provide forestry management and re-forestation geared towards ecological health/biodiversity and fire suppression NOT forestry profits (as currently is the case)

N. Education

- Provide higher wages for school teachers, education assistants, and front-line school staff (min \$30/hr).
- Provide free education and student debt forgiveness for educators learning and working in BC.
- Open a free public university in BC. This would be a publicly funded post-secondary institution offering tuition-free education and training programs identified as social priorities such as: full-spectrum healthcare (providers, support, technical, and so on); early childhood education; pedagogical programs (elementary, secondary, ESL), environmental science and technology; social work, Indigenous studies (community-led), trades programs for a green transition, transportation, infrastructure and housing, and occupational certificates and diplomas. Note: Focus on interdisciplinary and foundational skills during the first year of 4-year degree programs.
- Implement a review and reform of BC Loans Service Provider. Guarantee public university living supports and eliminate predatory practices. (For example, lower the administration salary to total revenue ratio, lower the interest rate burden, expand repayment assistance and debt forgiveness programs.)
- Provide more funding for school boards for enrichment, wellness, life skills activities.
- Increase the focus on Indigenous nation decision-making/returning jurisdiction in education in Indigenous groups.
- Provide non-mandatory vaccination program to schools to help with uptake of vaccines.
- Provide free, on-site after-school care and activities. (See: Childcare)
- Implement recruitment drives, including incentives like basic needs and housing support for program placements.
- Continue the SOGI curriculum.

O. Technology

- Implement public ownership of internet and mobile phone networks, run as public services-offering efficient and low-cost services.
- Fund and support investments in bio-tech/healthcare, climate-resiliency tech, accessibility, closing the tech divide and improving government-run software, hardware and public platforms. These are social provisioning priorities and not consumer-driven start-ups.
- Maintain daylight savings time for the entire year.