

Confederation of Canadian Unions
Political Party Questionnaire for 2023 Alberta Election

Greetings,

The Confederation of Canadian Unions (CCU) is the nation's largest federation of independent labour unions. Founded in 1969 on the initiative of labour organizers Kent Rowley and Madeleine Parent, the CCU is dedicated to the establishment of a democratic, independent Canadian labour movement. The CCU includes members in affiliated unions across the country in both the public and private sectors.

The CCU is establishing a political education campaign to help its membership make informed voting choices for the 2023 Alberta election. The following questions will be sent to all four major parties in the province, including the United Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party and the Alberta Party.

The answers from each party will be posted on the CCU website (www.ccu-csc.ca), and the CCU leadership will also provide a "school grade" to the parties on each of the issues below.

We would ask that you keep your answers to 350 words or less per question, and that you return the full questionnaire to Sean Cain at media@ccu-csc.ca by May 15, 2023, so that we have time to properly inform our membership before the vote on May 29.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email. And thank you for participating.

Sincerely,

Kelly Johnson
President, Confederation of Canadian Unions
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QUESTIONS

Labour

1. Statistics Canada reports unionized workers receive higher wages than non-unionized workers in the same line of work, as well as stronger pensions, safer working conditions, longer paid vacation time, better health and drug benefits, and more rights in the workplace. Does your party believe that unions play a positive role in our economy? If so, what policies will your party implement to create a climate that is easier for unions to organize?

The Alberta Party will involve all groups to ensure policies are inclusive and beneficial to Alberta's society. We believe in defending the rights of all Albertans.

2. Last year in Alberta, 161 people were killed at work through accidents, injuries and illness. What will your party do to guarantee better health and safety conditions to reduce workplace injuries and fatalities?

An Alberta Party government would establish a Wellness Foundation to promote health and prevent disease and disability using a comprehensive approach. The foundation would focus on evidenced based, primary prevention initiatives.

3. What is your party's stance on the Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act (Bill 32)? Specifically, what is your stance on the changes to picketing laws, overtime provisions, reduced holiday pay, union members opting out of "non-core" expenditures by their union, employer penalties for non-compliance, and child labour?

Although the Alberta Party has no explicit policy on Bill 32, we are committed to a future that is fair and equitable to all stakeholders.

The Economy

4. A recent poll by Abacus Data showed that 74% of Albertans are in favour of increasing taxes on wealthier Canadians and large, profitable corporations. Does your party agree with this policy to reduce income inequality and protect public services?

Yes. The Alberta Party will increase the marginal tax rate on the highest income earners. We will also not lower the corporate income tax rate.

5. Most economies throughout the western world have been on a general five-day workweek for almost a century. Yet some governments are considering legislating a four-day workweek to protect workers, create jobs and free up time for the overworked. What is your party's view of moving the economy of Alberta to a four-day workweek?

The Alberta Party has no policy on a four day work week. We are open to innovation and change for sustainable economic development.

6. Primarily due to the low unionization rate in the province, only about 25 percent of Albertans have workplace pensions. What will your party do to protect pensions in both the private and public sectors in Alberta and ensure that retirees can enjoy their golden years in dignity.

The Alberta Party will defend the rights of all citizens.

Health Care

7. Our publicly administered, universal health care system is cherished throughout Alberta. What policies will your party implement to ensure that health care in the province remains under public control and is accessible to everyone?

An Alberta Party government will improve the quality and affordability of healthcare by partnering to raise awareness of evidence based best practices. We would ensure that patients receive tests, treatments, and procedures that are necessary and add value to their care. We would establish a Wellness Foundation for Alberta to promote health and prevent disease and disability using a comprehensive approach. We would focus on evidence based primary preventative initiatives.

8. After decades of cutbacks, there are thousands of people in the province on waiting lists for surgery, home care, and finding a family doctor. What will your party do to fund more doctors, nursing positions and hospital beds throughout the province to eliminate wait times?

An Alberta Party government would expand the use of integrated primary care teams to ensure improved patient outcomes, better quality of life, longer life expectancy, improved patient experience, and lower overall cost. We would increase funding to improve the accessibility and quality of home care services. Ensure efficient use of financial resources , reducing the need for expensive acute care beds and public long term care homes. Ensure adequate supports for the informal networks of those requiring home care services.

Education

9. One of the most important policies for creating a better education system is reducing class sizes. What specific policies will your party implement to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes in primary and secondary schools in Alberta?

An Alberta Party government would provide sustainable, consistent, adequate funding for schools with annual increases proportionate to population growth plus inflation. Funding must be stable to allow for long term planning.

10. As a result of cutbacks to post-secondary education over the past three decades, average tuition fees in the province have increased radically during that time, adding to the already-record levels of student debt. What will your party do to lower tuition fees and reduce student debt in the province?

We would legislate a cap to limit tuition fee increases for both domestic and foreign students to Alberta's CPI. Advocate that the government of Canada increase the income threshold for recent graduates to begin repaying their student loans.

The Environment and Resources

11. Albertans care deeply about our environment and believe that climate change is a major issue. What will your party do to reduce our carbon footprint and help lower greenhouse gas emissions?

The Alberta Party will focus fiscal support for Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) technology that may be appropriate for Alberta and then encourage development of appropriate infrastructure to achieve conversion to SEVs by 2035. Encourage the transition to an increasingly decarbonized energy system. Employ a revenue neutral carbon levy to incentivize expansion of renewable sources.

Indigenous Peoples

12. Where does your party stand in relation to Indigenous rights? What plans do you have to ensure meaningful discussions about the integration of Indigenous peoples into the economy that flow from their traditional lands? How will your party work to end the many social injustices faced by Indigenous people from across Alberta?

Implement recommendations from the TRC that fall within provincial jurisdiction. Advocate the federal government to consider the specific and unique needs of Alberta's indigenous population. Support Municipal governments in implementing TRC Recommendations.

Our government would provide education to public servants on the history of indigenous peoples, including residential schools, UNDRIP, indigenous rights, laws, and crown relations. Seek the guidance of indigenous Albertans in educating the public service to be a pillar of reconciliation.