



Sept. 18, 2023

Brianna Solberg
Director of Legislative Affairs
Canadian Federation of Independent Business
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Dear Ms Solberg,

Thank you for engaging with us in this critical election. We appreciate the advocacy from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and all that your members do to serve Manitoba families and provide good jobs.

1. Business Affordability

Small businesses drive the economy and create good jobs. That's why the Manitoba NDP was the first to eliminate the small business tax.

The Manitoba NDP will continue to work with small businesses to help them flourish and remain competitive. We know energy costs are a big concern for small businesses. That's why we committed to cut the gas tax while inflation remains high and to freeze hydro rates. We will also help small business owners stay safe and reduce costs with a \$300 rebate for security updates like alarms, doorbell cameras and motion sensor lights.

Our commitment to supporting local business will use the power of government procurement to help grow the Manitoba economy and support local entrepreneurs.

2. Provincial Taxes

We know how important it is to maintain a competitive tax environment to support good jobs at local businesses. The Manitoba NDP will not raise the PST and will not raise taxes on small businesses. We'll also keep the education property tax rebate, and will take it off your tax bills up-front.

We have also committed to eliminating the 14 cents a litre provincial gas tax while inflation remains high, which will reduce costs for many business owners.

3. Spending and Provincial Debt

The Pallister-Stefanson government made so many cuts they severely damaged our healthcare and our education system. They left families scrambling to find home care for aging parents and childcare for their children.

Former NDP Premier Gary Doer showed it is possible to invest in healthcare and education while also balancing the books. The Manitoba NDP will be fiscally responsible, balancing the budget within our first term in office.

4. Red Tape

The Manitoba NDP will regularly monitor provincial regulations to ensure important accountability requirements are met in the most efficient way possible for small businesses.

5. Energy costs

Heather Stefanson raised hydro rates and plans to implement surge pricing for hydro, charging higher rates on the coldest and warmest days of the year.

The Manitoba NDP will freeze hydro rates to help small businesses. We will stop surge pricing at hydro, and keep Manitoba Hydro public to ensure energy remains affordable.

6. Fuel costs

The Manitoba NDP will remove the provincial tax on gas while inflation remains high. This will save small businesses and Manitoba families 14 cents a litre every time they fuel up.

We will also give the Public Utilities Board the power to review and regulate gas prices.

7. Labour Shortages

We will create a Premier's Business and Jobs Council to bring together leaders from business, skilled trades, agriculture, Indigenous communities, and labour to tackle economic challenges and implement solutions together.

We will add childcare spaces and make childcare more affordable so women and parents face fewer barriers to pursue jobs and opportunities. We will also invest in training and increase the number of co-op placements and paid apprenticeships to help students pay for their schooling while learning valuable job skills. In addition, we will support immigration and help newcomers work in the careers they trained for by accelerating the recognition of international credentials.

8. Minimum Wage

The Manitoba NDP believes small businesses and workers can be supported together.

The Pallister-Stefanson government froze minimum wage for years, which left Manitoba workers behind. At the same time the province offered insufficient support programs for small business, programs that were complicated and failed to meet people's needs.

We know Manitoba's minimum wage should move towards a living wage and are committed to consulting with all Manitobans, including small business and workers, to achieve this.

9. Paid Sick Days

The Manitoba NDP will listen to the voices of workers and small businesses on this important question. We know the pandemic shined a light on this important issue. We will consult broadly with labour, small business and other groups to chart a path forward, together.

10. Statutory Holiday

The Manitoba NDP supports the introduction of Truth and Reconciliation Day as a new statutory holiday to further our province's reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

11. Public Safety

Under Heather Stefanson, crime is getting worse and youth crime is on the rise. The Manitoba NDP will develop a comprehensive public safety strategy with an emphasis on reducing youth crime to set young people on the right path and keep our communities safe.

Our plan will bring together police officers, community foot patrols, educators, and families to develop the best strategies to make communities safer. We will also help small business owners stay safe and cut down on costs with a \$300 rebate for security updates like alarms, doorbell cameras and motion sensor lights. We will also help the police do their jobs by hiring 100 more mental health workers to support their efforts.

Manitobans know that the smart way to address crime must include a focus on the root causes of crime. Together with our universal nutrition program, we will invest in education to help more kids graduate high school, find good jobs and live meaningful lives.

12. Alcohol/Cannabis Distribution

The Manitoba NDP supports the current structure for alcohol and cannabis distribution.

Thank you again for giving us the opportunity to respond. The Manitoba NDP look forward to working with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to move towards a shared vision for a thriving economy that meets the needs of families across our province.

Sincerely,

The Manitoba NDP