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NSDP RESPONSE - Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)

With many Nova Scotia small- and medium-sized businesses continuing to feel the negative effects of the pandemic, will your government commit to a “Do No Harm” principle for small businesses in Nova Scotia; to not introduce new legislation, or policies that will increase employer costs?

An NDP government will create a level playing field for smaller businesses as the economy emerges from the pandemic. Most pandemic-related support from the Rankin Liberals has been for larger businesses only, or too complex and insignificant to really help the smaller businesses that provide 75% of private sector jobs in Nova Scotia.

If elected, how will your government support Nova Scotia small- and medium-sized businesses that continue to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the NDP called for support to small and medium businesses:

- *Work with federal government to force banks to waive interest on loans, lines of credit, mortgages, and credit cards held by small business*
- *Establish a small business hotline to provide information and advice to business owners*
- *Ensure the commercial eviction ban continues*

If elected, an NDP government would give immediate priority to the following:

- *Developing a system of portable benefits that could bring down the cost of benefits for small and medium businesses.*
- *Improving government procurement processes so that local companies are more likely to receive contracts.*



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- *Making sure businesses across the province have access to affordable and reliable internet service.*
- *Providing small and medium businesses with access to information and expertise by reopening rural economic development offices.*

An NDP government will also directly involve small business in the task of developing a plan for economic recovery from COVID-19 that focuses on strengthening local communities, and increasing our capacity to rely on food, energy, goods and services that are produced here at home.

If elected, how will your government address the challenges faced by businesses in finding skilled and unskilled labour?

An NDP government will develop a system of portable benefits that could well reduce the cost of employee benefits for smaller businesses, while enabling small businesses to better compete for workers. The NDP will work with the business community in developing the benefit system to maximize its value for employers and employees.

If elected, what will be your government's plan to reduce claim durations and claim costs within the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia?

An NDP government will recognize that the Workers' Compensation system is primarily the responsibility of employers and workers, acting through their representatives on the board.

An NDP government would also be proactive about enhancing occupational health and safety in workplaces across the province, for example, by including psychological safety in the Occupational Health and Safety Act. An NDP government would also pursue strong relationships with labour groups and employers who can together enhance workplace health and safety and reduce workplace injuries.

When workers have better access to mental and physical health care generally, they are less likely to be injured at work. An NDP government would recognize and work to improve the social determinants of health and improve access to mental and physical health care.



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If elected, how will your government reduce the regulatory burden on small businesses and citizens?

An NDP government will continue the work done under all three parties to eliminate unnecessary and unnecessarily burdensome regulations.

If elected, what is your government's plan to ensure Nova Scotia small- and medium-sized businesses are competitive?

An NDP government will listen to and work with the business community for their experience and advice on how to provide the best possible economic and social environment in which to run a business, including points mentioned above.

An NDP government would also work to develop targeted business supports that make sense, such as establishing tax incentives for seasonal businesses that want to try to extend their season.

If elected, will your government align minimum wage increases with the consumer price index?

An NDP government will introduce a \$15 an hour minimum wage, because working people need to be able to make ends meet and have some ability to spend in the local economy. As the vast majority of provinces bring their minimum wage closer to a living wage, Nova Scotia needs wages that are competitive for an increasingly mobile work force.

An NDP government will also increase the money being spent in local economies by reducing the costs of housing and child care.

If elected, what will be your government's policy on paid sick days?

An NDP government will introduce an annual maximum of ten paid sick days as a Labour Standards Code requirement, since the pandemic has made clear the dangers of economic pressure that forces people to go to work sick.

If elected, will your government legislate pay equity for the private sector?



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Though the NDP supports the principle of pay equity, there is no plan, intention or platform commitment for an NDP government to legislate pay equity for the private sector.

If elected, what is your government's plan to restore fiscal balance to the province?

An NDP government will not put at risk the programs and services on which Nova Scotians rely. Balancing the budget through cuts to public services only pushes extra costs down the road. The NDP will not shrink from halting unnecessary spending, like the Liberals' \$70 million tax giveaway to big business with no strings attached. An NDP government will make the investments needed to support an economic recovery that improves the lives of everyone and that establishes a sound financial foundation for the return to pre-pandemic conditions. The federal government and many provinces state that a return to fiscal balance should not be expected for at least five years, and a Nova Scotia NDP government expect to work on a similar timeline.