

Chamber of Commerce Questionnaire
October 2019

1. Economic Development

- a. Canada has not had comprehensive tax reform since the 1960s and the businesscommunity has been calling for such a review through a Royal Commission. Do you agree with this position? Do you agree that taxation decisions should be made through an economic development/ overall burden to business lens?
 - i. Yes, given that the last comprehensive tax reform occurred in the 1960s, the Green party platform is calling for *an arm's length Federal Tax Commission to analyze the tax system for fairness and accessibility, based on the principle of progressive taxation*. I would add that the reform also must be conducted with an eye to the impacts on small businesses.
- b. What are the biggest natural resource development opportunities for New Brunswick? What role can the federal government play to facilitate development of our natural resources?
 - i. Our forests, farms, and fisheries have always been at the heart of our natural resources sector. There are many things to be done to support these sectors:
 - 1. Enhancing supports for local food producers and distributors
 - 2. Making it easier for new farmers to get their start and to utilize the 93% of unused farm land in NB
 - 3. Opening up our forests to more diverse opportunities using waste, and non-timber forest products
 - ii. We also need to start seeing the potential for exporting renewable energy. With the largest tides in the world, and some of the land with the highest number of days of sunlight, the potential is huge.
- c. At the federal level, businesses deal with over 130,000 individual regulations – what steps could be taken to reduce this burden? What interprovincial trade barriers would you most like to see lifted?
 - i. This is something I would need to work on with the advice from those on the ground, experiencing the challenges. There is a lot to be considered, especially as it impacts New Brunswick specifically. I think of the example of NBs successful craft brewery industry. Due to the protection against other provincial competition, local brewers were able to thrive. Now that we have traction it would be great to boost exports interprovincially, but the question remains on whether this would stifle other fledging product development. We certainly would commit to reevaluating and decreasing regulations to remove some of the frustrations and barriers in navigating the federal system and to opening up the discussion on interprovincial trade to consider all benefits and drawbacks.

2. Workforce

- a. What is your vision for growing our population provincially and regionally?
 - i. We need to encourage immigration and we should continue to take in a high proportion of refugees.. I would like to focus on immigration that helps to reunite families and close gaps in our workforce - including making it easier for international students to transition from their student visa to a work visa, linking labour with adequate labour market information, ensuring that there are reforms in credential recognition for immigrants arriving already trained and skilled.
 - ii. Our domestic population can also be protected by increasing access to healthcare professionals, providing mental health supports, job opportunities - specifically in retrofitting, research and development, transportation and agriculture in keeping with the transition away from fossil fuels.
- b. How can Fredericton do a better job of attracting and retaining newcomers? How can the federal government help?
 - i. Confronting racism head-on, including anti-racism curriculum components in our schools.
 - ii. Speeding up family reunification immigration to help them build community around family, the way those of us born in New Brunswick do.
- c. Our chamber is currently advocating for the following regarding international students:
 - i. Allow international students attending either a public institution, or private institution in any province or territory, that is registered on the Designated Institution list to:
 - a) qualify for the Canada Summer Jobs program
 - b) participate in voluntary co-op terms and internships without obtaining a separate work permit
 - c) count all time spent in Canada as an international student towards citizenship eligibility (i.e increase from half time to full time)

Do you support these measures?

- Absolutely, especially item (c)! We also advocate for a 15\$ minimum wage for federal employees which would include summer students

3. Finances

- a. How important is balancing the budget to your party?
 - i. Very important. Our costed platform includes the plan to balance the budget within 5 years. It is extremely important that we balance ambitious goal setting and restructuring with fiscal responsibility.
- b. How would you change the federal equalization system if given the opportunity?
 - i. We need to renegotiate the federal health transfer to include consideration of our demographic situation in NB (rural, aging population,

higher rates of depression/anxiety, etc.) Greens are also talking about setting up direct transfers to municipalities to help fund municipal services like public transportation.

- c. Université de Moncton economist Richard Saillant has been calling for demographically weighted health transfer payments to compensate for New Brunswick's aging population. Do you support such an idea? Yes (see above)

4. Governance

- a. What should Canada's top foreign policy priority be?
- b. In the case of a minority government – would you agree to work with other parties to form a coalition? Are there any parties you would not work with?
 - i. I am absolutely committed to cooperating across party lines, particularly in the face of the climate crisis. A Coalition government would be one potential model of collaboration, another would be something like the BC provincial model of a confidence and supply agreement. I am prepared to be part of a small Green caucus holding some of the balance of power responsibly in a minority government situation.
- c. What are the next steps that must be taken by the federal government regarding First Nation reconciliation? What should be done on a local level?
 - i. Firstly, we need to implement UNDRIP without qualification. Then there is much we need to do to advance the process toward truth and reconciliation, to act on the findings of the inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. We need to end the boil water advisories by addressing eco-injustice for vulnerable populations, fund clean water infrastructure and implement preventative measures to ensure water access remains overtime . We also need to empower the self-governance of local First Nations communities on the ground to advance their own priorities and concerns by bringing leadership (both traditional and official) into early planning conversations to avoid some of the pitfalls, delays, legal fees in ignoring our responsibility to consult and receive prior and informed consent.

5. Miscellaneous

- a. How urgent a problem is climate change? What actions should be taken by the federal government?
 - i. It is absolutely critical. We have 12 years to act to meet our Paris target to limit warming to 1.5 degrees C. The federal government must end subsidies to fossil fuel industries immediately and start investing in cutting carbon pollution. The opportunities of this shift are exciting in terms of economic opportunity and job creation in renewable energies, energy efficiency, clean tech, bio-sectors, and all of the business services up and downstream of this shift.

- b. Is gun control a priority for your party? Should there be different rules for urban and rural areas?
 - i. Our platform is interested in reducing the number of handguns and assault weapons in private hands. It commits to launching *a confidential buyback program for handguns and assault weapons*.
- c. Why do you think we've seen an increased negative political climate recently?
 - i. This question is quite broad. I think our politics has always been influenced by the political realities in the United States. With the up-swing in right-wing populism there, it was inevitable for some of that language to make its way into our political discourse in Canada. But I am proud of Canada and proud of the people in the greater Fredericton/Oromocto region. No candidate in this riding has gone negative, against one another or against particular populations in the province. And nationally, things like the black-face picture debacle have forced us to confront racism in our society head-on. It is these tough conversations that we need to keep having outside of an election cycle which will make us stronger as a united, inclusive nation.