



POLICY PLATFORM

Our Vision For Alberta

Alberta is blessed with innumerable resources the greatest of which is its people. The Wildrose Alliance endeavours to provide the opportunity, support, and incentive for Albertans to thrive and succeed.

The Wildrose Alliance Party focuses on 7 key areas: economic, health, educational, justice, social, environmental and democratic reform policies.

“The Wildrose Alliance believes Alberta will” precedes each of the following:

Economic Opportunity and Incentives

- have the lowest Provincial personal and corporate tax rates to encourage investment and growth
- allow income splitting for those caring for dependents
- know the prosperity of Alberta is dependant upon the natural resource and energy industries. A stable, price sensitive, and internationally competitive royalty and tax framework must be in place to attract investment.
- provide stable and predictable municipal funding and allow responsive delivery of public services at the local and community level wherever possible.
- create an Alberta Pension Plan that will offer at minimum the same benefits while giving Albertans control over the investment fund.

Innovation and Delivery of Health Care

- have timely and affordable access to healthcare.
- implement innovative new ideas that deliver health care more efficiently such as funding following the patient and the expansion of home care.
- give hospitals more control over where money is spent, increase accessibility and reduce wait times.
- provide significant debt relief to those medical professionals who train in Alberta and commit to practicing for a period of at least five years.

Enhanced Education

- allow innovation and implementation of new ideas which are key to educational excellence. Implementing “School Choice” legislation is such an example.
- introduce standardized annual testing of students, teacher quality, and monitor graduation rates.

Increasing Public Safety and Justice

- expand the role of Sherriffs to handle Provincial justice issues.
- support Truth in Sentencing provisions for incarcerating of criminals.

Care and Support Throughout Society

- recognize that all Albertans have equal rights, privileges and responsibilities.
- recognize that families are a cornerstone of society and must be maintained.
- provide support and care to those unable to help themselves.
- as a society, take responsibility for each other and the government will support initiatives that follow this approach.

Incentives for and Enforcement of Environmental Management

- conserve Alberta’s environment and monitor impacts with enforcement provisions
- invest in research for environmentally friendly energy production
- provide tax incentives to industries and individuals to invest in environmentally friendly endeavours.
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Democratic Reform and Accountability

- constantly work to reduce waste, duplication, and red tape.
- put the power back in the hands of Albertans through meaningful electoral reform including MLA recall, fixed election dates and citizen initiated referenda.
- limit the size of Cabinet to 16 members
- eliminate pork-barrel politics through stable, predictable and non-partisan municipal funding.

All Policies are preceded by: "A Wildrose Government will...."

Democratic Reform

Federalism

- defend Alberta against intrusions by the federal government by protecting the property, legal, constitutional and democratic rights of Albertans.
- work to remove inter-provincial trade and professional certification barriers by the expansion of the Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement to other Provinces.

Electoral Reform

- institute fixed election dates for Provincial Election every 4 years. The Legislative Assembly will be able to call a vote of non-confidence at any time.
- be accountable to the people of Alberta by having free votes with the exception of the budget and votes of non-confidence.
- institute the right of recall of elected officials if 20% of the electorate sign a petition calling for such an action and 25% if the electorate is less than 1000.
- hold elections for Alberta Senators at the same time as Provincial Elections.

Government Reform

- establish an independent agency to determine the compensation, pension, and severance packages of elected governmental officials.
- limit the Provincial Cabinet to 16 members.
- institute strict conflict of interest guidelines facilitated through the Provincial Ethics Commissioner's office.
- establish set dates for Throne Speeches, Budget Announcements, and Legislative Sessions.
- institute an open and comprehensive Freedom of Information Act.

Municipal Government

- follow any downloading of services from the province to municipalities with the appropriate amount of funding.
- extend greater autonomy and better planning tools to local governments to reduce pressure on property taxes.
- ensure that crown corporations are subject to local zoning and land-use by-laws.

Property Rights

- entrench individual property rights within an Alberta Bill of Rights.

Human Rights

- Will strike section 3 of the human rights and multiculturalism act

Referenda

- institute legislation allowing the citizens of Alberta to call for a binding referendum on a matter of significant public concern upon the presentation of a petition signed by at least 10% of the total voters of the last Provincial election in Alberta.
- only use Section 33 (the Notwithstanding Clause) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with the consent of the Alberta people in a referendum.

Economy

Agriculture

- support the elimination of all indirect taxes and tariffs on farm inputs and the reduction of provincially controlled input costs.
- support marketing programs for Alberta agricultural products, nationally and internationally.
- support research and education into enhancing agricultural productivity and value added production for agriculture.
- oppose international agriculture subsidies.
- develop an effective and financially viable long-term agriculture safety-net program.
- encourage private sector value added opportunities for Alberta's agriculture sector.
- support Alberta producer market choice to sell grain independent of the Canadian Wheat Board or to sell through the Canadian Wheat Board voluntarily.
- take on the responsibility to negotiate commercially competitive access to international markets with respect to beef marketing.
- base government regulations of the beef industry on appropriate management of real risks and an accurate analysis of the costs and benefits of these regulations
- leave investment in business and the development of beef marketing as the responsibility of the industry, not government and must be based on market signals rather than government programs
- will allow government support for the beef industry to come from national programs that minimize the risk of adverse impacts on international and interprovincial trade, and do not distort free market behavior

Budget

- institute a zero based budgeting program in all government departments. The program will require justification of all new funds spent each year.
- pass legislation that ensures all provincial finances are fully, accurately and honestly reported under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

- support the Auditor General's Office to help identify and prevent wasteful spending in order to ensure value for money. use budget surpluses to pay debts owed by the Alberta Government first and secondarily deposits to the Heritage Fund.
- limit growth in program spending to the rate of inflation and population growth of Alberta.

Energy

- support a stable and price sensitive approach to energy production.
- ensure an internationally competitive fiscal regime that attracts investment capital and makes reinvestment attractive.
- support education and research into energy-efficient homes, businesses and government offices.
- require building and land use-planning codes to have high-energy conservation standards.
- recognize the importance of the energy sector to the province and strive to reduce the cost of doing business.
- support the diversification of Alberta's energy supply.
- support the development of value added facilities through tax incentives.

Financial Responsibility

- cut red tape and the regulatory burden by 1/3 from 2009 levels.
- work to eliminate the duplication of government authorities and services.
- institute complete financial disclosure of all provincial finances including the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Crown corporations and government investments. The disclosures will be made in the Legislature with a complete accounting available to Alberta citizens.
- establish a "Waste Buster" website to help report and stamp out government waste.
- grant the Provincial Auditor full access to all Government funded companies, Crown corporations and subsidiaries of Crown corporations.
- have open tendering on government contracts that allow fair competition for businesses and to provide better value to taxpayers.
- make sure the role of government is not to own and operate businesses when a competitive business market exists.

Forestry

- permit only ecologically sound and economically sustainable forestry management methods.
- invest in research to promote good forest stewardship.
- encourage other value-added uses of Alberta's forestry resources.

Heritage Fund

- institute a policy of providing from the Heritage Savings Trust Fund when anticipated or prior annual Real Gross Domestic Product growth of Alberta is less than 2%.
- institute a policy of depositing a set percentage of government natural resource income each year into the Heritage Savings and Trust Fund.

Labour

- allow individual workers the choice to determine their membership in labour organizations.
- allow competition to the Workers Compensation Board.
- extend to workers the democratic right to a secret ballot vote on labour organization certification under the Labour code and ensure that the same rules apply for de-certification as for certification.
- restore education as an essential service under the Labour Code ensuring that no child's right to an education is denied by school strikes or lockouts.

Pension Plan

- withdraw from the Canada Pension Plan and create an Alberta Pension Plan. The Alberta plan will offer at minimum the same benefits while giving Albertans control over the investment fund.

Taxation

- oppose unfair and industry specific taxation from the federal government.
- fight for Alberta's deserved share of federal tax dollars through a more equitable distribution of federal transfer payments and contracts.
- establish a per child income tax deduction for parents or guardians.
- collect the Alberta personal income tax.
- increase the basic personal exemption to benefit the lowest income earners.
- provide greater tax deductions for charitable contributions.

Tourism

- encourage tourism as a major growth area of the Alberta economy.
- will stimulate tourism with international marketing in cooperation with tourism operators.

Transportation

- develop new transportation corridors to relieve the pressure on current routes.
- develop a comprehensive transportation strategy that recognizes the interdependence of Alberta's economy with its neighbours.

Education

Courses

- ensure that the arts, music and physical education curriculums are fully funded and encourage entrepreneurial courses in Alberta's public schools.
- enhance online educational initiatives for students.

Education Standards

- set high standards for education. These measured standards will include academic testing, teacher quality, and high school graduation rates including public reporting.
- eliminate the policy of social promotion in Alberta's schools. Students will be expected to meet standards in order to be promoted to the next grade.
- institute methods to hold educators accountable for performance.

Post-Secondary Education

- give priority for admission and funding to Alberta students to post-secondary institutions.
- work with employers, post-secondary institutions and the Alberta Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission to increase training and apprenticeships in the trades and technical sectors.
- strengthen the network of colleges, institutes and on-line learning opportunities throughout the province.

- increase research and development funding for colleges, universities and institutes and encourage private sector partnerships.
- reduce student loans by 10% per year to students in the educational and health care sectors attending accredited schools of education provided they work in underserved communities.

School Choice

- support “School Choice” Legislation.
- institute a student based funding system for financing education which will allow funding via Alberta Opportunity Scholarships to follow the student to the accredited education facility of parental choice.
- mandate that Alberta Opportunity Scholarships include all funding for student education for instruction, support and capital.

School Safety

- invest in school safety to ensure a safe secure leaning environment for students.
- establish a school violence and crime electronic data reporting system.
- work to reduce absenteeism and truancy.

Environment

Clean Water

- encourage conservation of water taken from lakes or rivers for agricultural, industrial and domestic purposes.
- impose strict regulations on effluent producing industries.
- Develop and implement an on and off-stream fresh water storage plan.

Conservation

- recognize the value of parks to society and protect these areas from intrusive activities.
- require governments to meet responsible environmental standards in their procurement, recycling and construction operations.

- conserve Alberta's environment and monitor environmental impacts with enforcement provisions while balancing economic development opportunities in the province's future.

Energy

- invest in research for clean coal technology and provide tax incentives for capital investment.

Protection

- establish an environmental ombudsman for Alberta.
- require Ecological Impact Reports for all large projects. Projects in sensitive areas that use unproven technologies, or generate significant public concern will be a priority.

Health Care

Care of Patients

- enforce the five basic principles of the Canada Health Act which are: Public Administration, Comprehensiveness, Universality, Portability and Accessibility.
- provide coverage for authorized out of province medical treatment that is unavailable in Alberta.
- ensure the care of persons with a disability to ongoing access of medical benefits.
- develop a Medical Machinery and Equipment Plan that ensures existing medical diagnostic and care equipment is adequately staffed, fully utilized and properly maintained and that provides for future investments in new equipment and technology.
- establish and fund a fully independent Health Ombudsman in Alberta.
- fully fund and implement a mental health initiative.
- focus funding on patient care and reduce wasteful spending in the system.
- provide expanded home care and palliative care services to assist chronically and terminally ill patients with supportive home environments as an option to institutional care.

Delivery

- performance measures that are annually audited and publicly reported.

- build a unified, universal and cost-effective health services information network that will improve care and reduce long-term costs.
- give all citizens better access to their medical records and treatment histories.
- institute a Health Management System that rewards cost effective cost-saving administration by providing incentives to doctors, nurses and health care professionals.
- encourage and support innovations in the delivery of health care.
- alleviate pressure on emergency room services by expanding the funding for and the number of multi-disciplinary 24-hour-a-day community based health care centres.
- work with non-profit societies to develop an Intermediate and Long-Term Care Facilities Plan which will address the needs of our aging population including increasing capacity.
- establish a rural and remote health initiative to ensure Albertans get the care they need.
- implement legislation protecting the “conscience rights” of healthcare professionals.

Funding

- provide health care funding that will follow the service to the health care provider and approved facility of choice.
- increase funding for home care, supported housing, assisted living, long-term care facilities and palliative care hospices to provide less expensive and more patient-friendly alternatives to hospital care.
- reduce transportation and lodging costs for rural patients who receive treatment that is not locally available by developing a rural medical travel assistance program.
- ensure that patients living at home in palliative or long term care are entitled to the same pharmaceutical benefits they would have received as in a hospital.
- deliver an annual individual statement of benefits to each resident of Alberta.

Training

- expand training and post-secondary programs to graduate more Health Care professionals.
- develop and implement a retention and recruitment plan in full consultation with health care service providers.

Wellness

- institute a preventative health care and wellness program.
- increase funding for physical fitness and amateur sports.
- enhance efforts and funding to prevent drug and alcohol abuse and addiction.

Justice

Courts

- institute a program where all sentences given in provincial court will be subject to a truth in sentencing provision..
- support the right of compensation from convicted persons to the victims of their crimes.
- introduce initiatives for Maintenance Enforcement to bring about improved compliance with maintenance and visitation orders.
- support legally enforceable arbitration between all parties in a legal dispute to settle non-criminal actions.
- all Albertans have access to legal representation and justice.

Policing

- expand the role of sheriffs to handle Provincial justice issues.
- ensure sufficient funding for municipal policing to allow for effective policing and protection of Alberta people.
- require young offenders to participate in crime prevention courses and other measures.

System Confidence

- work to ensure that the rights of crime victims take precedence over those found guilty of committing crimes.

Social

Equality

- recognize that all Albertans have equal rights, privileges and responsibilities.

Arts and Culture

- encourage and support through funding community projects and school programs for arts and cultural activities as an essential enrichment of life and integral part of Alberta's communities and cultural diversity.

Families

- implement educational activities to help the abused overcome the effects of abuse and to stop further abuse from abusers. Access to therapy will be provided where required.
- work with foster parents to help them improve the care and placements of foster children.
- enhance and increase the training, resources and authority of social service providers to properly protect children at risk and improve services to families.
- earmark a significant portion of the revenues generated from gambling for the rehabilitation of gambling addicts and for educational programs aimed at reducing gambling.
- collaborate with non-profit societies and commit funding for emergency residences for victims of violence.
- ensure people fleeing violent situations are provided with sufficient time and support including increased stays in transition houses as necessary.

First Nations

- create a permanent First Nations Forum to provide aboriginal citizens living on and off reserves direct communication with government about their priorities and ideas to materially improve their quality of life.
- devote special attention and resources to addressing the challenges and needs of aboriginal women and youth.

Responsibility

- Support social responsibility within the framework of a free enterprise economic system and promote compassionate service, volunteerism, individual responsibility and care for those unable to care for themselves.

Social Assistance

- Implement a timely and effective Social Assistance to work program.