

36 billion and 12 reasons to vote for change

September 23, 2015

HSA REPORT MAGAZINE, OCTOBER 2015

1. WE NEED A GOVERNMENT THAT CARES ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

A \$36 BILLION CUT TO HEALTH CARE

In 2014, the Health Accord, an agreement between the federal government and the provinces that ensures equal access, proper funding, and high standards for health care in Canada, expired. The provinces are asking for a new Accord, but the federal government has refused to strike a new deal. Instead, the Harper Conservatives plan to cut \$36 billion in health care funding after the election.

Without a new Accord and in the face of deep funding cuts, standards will fall across the country and the provinces will face increased pressure to privatize more health services. Lack of federal leadership to strengthen health care has already put the public system in crisis and allowed opportunistic for-profit clinics to push for a two-tier, America-style system.

A NATIONAL SENIORS CARE STRATEGY

Our federal government must invest in a national seniors care strategy - so that seniors receive the care they need and are able to live healthier lives in their homes and communities.

Seniors deserve to live with dignity. A strategy for seniors care that includes national standards, funding for innovative health care programs, and legislation to ensure people have the support they need as they age, should be a priority for Canada's next government. A federally funded strategy would reduce stress and financial hardship for seniors and their families. Unless changes are made to provide appropriate care for seniors, aging members of our communities will continue to face unnecessary hospital stays, which puts their health at risk and causes system-wide inefficiencies.

UNIVERSAL PHARMACARE

We need a federal government that will implement a national Pharmacare plan so that everyone has equitable, affordable, sustainable access to the medications they need to stay healthy.

Canada remains one of the few OECD countries without a national drug plan. Right now, an average of one in ten people in Canada (and as many as one in four in some provinces) can't afford to fill their prescriptions.

A national drug plan would provide access to prescription drugs for everyone and could save up to \$11 billion every year through measures such as a national, evidence-based formulary and bulk buying that have reduced drug costs in many countries.

Federal leadership to address health care challenges is crucial. Find out where the parties stand on health care from the [BC Health Coalition](#) and the [Canadian Health Coalition](#).

2. WE NEED A GOVERNMENT THAT PROMOTES EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

STILL STRUGGLING FOR EQUITY

More women than ever before are graduating from university, entering new professions and running for public office. Yet women continue to earn just 71 per cent of what their male peers earn for the same work, are more likely to be poor, and do twice as much unpaid work at home. Since 1980 over a thousand Aboriginal women and girls have been murdered, and each day more than 8,000 women and children seek protection from a shelter.

Vote for a party that will:

- **GET SERIOUS ABOUT ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS** - Take a comprehensive approach to addressing the root causes of violence against women in Canada, including the extreme levels of violence against Aboriginal women and girls. Provide support for survivors, hold perpetrators accountable, challenge sexism that perpetuates violence, and show leadership on the international stage to end violence against women in all forms.
- **TAKE ACTION TO END WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INEQUALITY** - Address growing economic inequality and income gaps, including between women themselves. Recognize women's contributions to the economy and society, and fund public services and social programs that help lift women out of poverty, beginning with universal childcare, affordable housing, and fairer immigration policies. Significantly increase the percentage of Canada's international development budget that is specifically allocated to advance gender justice and women's empowerment.
- **SUPPORT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP** - Recognize the fundamental role that women's organizations play in bringing about positive social change, and re-invest in Canada's organizations and institutions that champion justice and equality for all women. Create a Canadian fund to support women's organizations and women's human rights defenders.

Find out where the candidates in your area stand on these issues by asking questions like:

- How will your government encourage women to enter occupations that are typically male-dominated and ensure that they receive equal pay for equal work?
- What specific actions will your government bring in to change the culture of violence against women in Canada?
- What will you do to make sure that childcare and senior care services are provided?
- What steps will your government take to support women's rights organizations and the advancement of gender equality through international assistance?
- Check out "[Up for Debate](http://upfordebate.ca)" for more information on where the parties stand on these issues upfordebate.ca.

3. WE NEED A GOVERNMENT THAT WON'T ATTACK YOUR RIGHT TO A FAIR AND SAFE WORKPLACE

YOUR RIGHTS AS A CANADIAN

Unions like HSA empower Canadians to speak their minds and assert their rights.

This leads to higher wages (for both union members and non-members alike), lower income inequality, a stronger economy, healthier public services because of a bigger tax base, safer workplaces, higher voter turnout, and increased equality for women, people with disabilities, people in the LGBTQ community, and visible minorities.

That's why the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that the right to collective bargaining is protected for all Canadians by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. But now the Conservative government has ignored the evidence of experts, the concerns of seven provinces, the objections of their own senators, and even the rules of Parliament to ram through Bill C-377, a new law that would impose unique and crippling laws on unions alone.

CRIPPLING, INVASIVE, UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The law will require unions, labour trusts and employee associations to disclose any transaction of more than

\$5,000, along with the names of the payer and payee, to the Canada Revenue Agency, which would post the information to its website. That rule could apply to anyone who receives cash from a union, including private contractors hired to do work, such as construction, maintenance, or photocopying. Unions, like other organizations in Canada, already disclose their finances as part of existing regulations, and the law is considered unconstitutional.

Furthermore, the federal privacy commissioner has warned that the law violates Canadian privacy laws.

REDUCED MEMBER SERVICES

This law, if allowed to be enforced, will place huge financial burdens on HSA, divert valuable resources from member services while providing no useful information to members of the union or the public.

4. HIGHER INCOME INEQUALITY HURTS US ALL.

Income inequality is growing in every province. It's grown by 10% across the country since 1981, and shot up by 14% and 19% in Ontario and Alberta.

5. A STRONG ECONOMY DEPENDS ON GOOD JOBS.

There are six unemployed Canadians for every job vacancy, but tighter eligibility rules mean that less than half of unemployed Canadians now qualify for EI. The CIBC says the quality of Canadian jobs hasn't been this bad for 25 years.

6. AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE HELPS KIDS, FAMILIES AND THE ECONOMY.

A TD bank study found that every dollar invested in early childhood education earns back between \$1.50 and \$3. And yet Canada remains the only G7 country without a national early childhood education program.

7. IT IS BETTER TO BUILD THAN TO CUT.

Since taking office, the federal Conservatives have forgone an estimated \$43 billion a year because of tax breaks that primarily benefit the wealthy and large corporations, in addition to cuts to the GST. In the meantime we've suffered deep cuts to the programs that give all Canadians a fair shot, and the nation's productivity and prosperity have declined.

8. A DIGNIFIED RETIREMENT FOR ALL IS WITHIN REACH.

Only one in four working Canadians are covered by a traditional pension plan. In other words, 11 million working Canadians don't have a workplace pension. With an investment of a few dollars a day, the CPP will have the resources to support those without workplace pensions.

9. A STRONG ECONOMY DEPENDS ON A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT.

In 2014, Canada ranked dead last among the world's 58 most industrialized countries when it came to making progress on cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

10. WE MUST STOP BREAKING OUR PROMISES TO INDIGENOUS CANADIANS.

First Nations schools receive \$3,000 less per student than non-First Nations schools and income inequality between people living on reserves and people living in the rest of Canada grew between 2000 and 2011.

11. FREE AND FAIR DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS ARE AT RISK.

The Conservatives have been convicted of or pleaded guilty to breaking election laws in all three federal elections since 2006. They have also stripped from Elections Canada the authority to enforce laws that protect people's democratic rights, and even made it illegal for Elections Canada to encourage people to use their right to vote.

12. THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST TERRORISM IS EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT, NOT FEAR.

Bill C-51, which gave our intelligence services unchecked new powers to spy on all Canadians, was strongly opposed by a broad range of Canadians and organizations, including four former Prime Ministers (Joe Clark, Jean Chretien, Paul Martin, and John Turner), the Canadian Privacy Commissioner, and hundreds of law professors and business leaders.

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