



*A Better Plan*  
for People.



Newfoundland & Labrador  
**ELECTION PLATFORM** 2021

## Fighting for you

**N**ewfoundlanders and Labradorians continue to take care of each other in hard times. Whether shovelling out neighbours after St. John's biggest-ever snow event, crowd-source fundraising in Labrador so people can travel for medical care, or taking daily precautions to ensure we were spared the worst effects of COVID-19, the people of this province do what is right.

Elected governments in this province, in contrast, have always been more focused on doing what works for their well-connected donors and buddies. The decisions made by decades of Liberal and Conservative governments have brought us to a place of financial uncertainty.

The province has faced fiscal challenges in the past, but instead of coming up with alternatives the Liberals chose to cut services people relied on, bring in a costly levy, and try to close half our libraries. The NL NDP has a different approach. We choose people over profits, power, and patronage. We are firmly against privatization and cuts to our public services.

We're proposing smart changes that will help you and your family be better off. These changes will also make our province a more attractive place to live, work and raise our families.

We know that the economy grows when government invests in good jobs for everyone. This includes a strong public sector providing the high quality public services we all rely on. Good jobs support communities, families and local businesses, and build an economy that respects our environment.

We have no way of knowing what Dame Moya will recommend before we vote. Nor will we know what the Liberals will cut until after we have voted.

I come from a working class family. My dad was a teacher, not a politician. My mother was a nurse. I was born in Corner Brook, raised on the Burin Peninsula and my family's roots are in Joe Batt's Arm. I am an economist. I have lived and worked here all my life.

I understand that people living in different parts of our province face unique challenges. Our wonderful team of talented candidates will work tirelessly for all of them.

If we want a different future for Newfoundland and Labrador, we have to make different choices. We are stronger when we take care of each other.

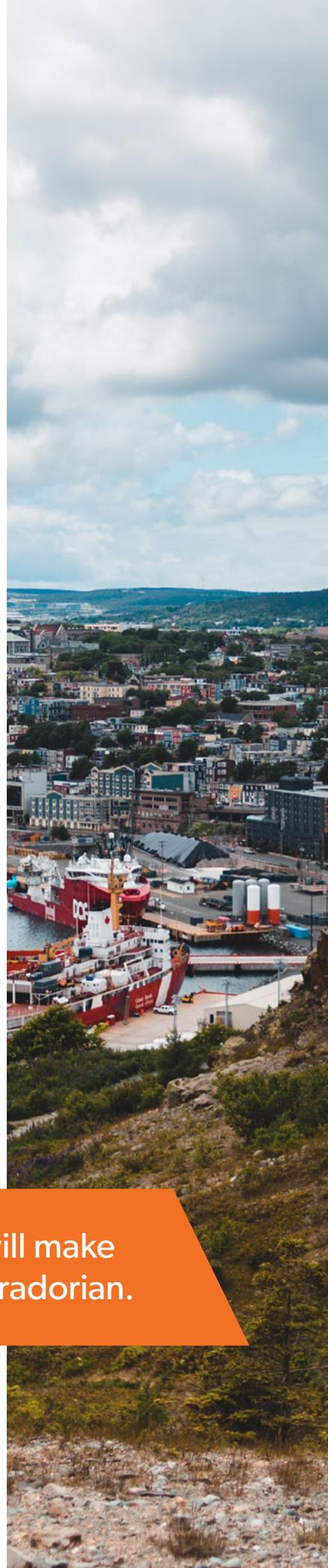
*Alison Coffin*

LEADER, NL NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

# The **NL NDP plan** will mean:



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The NL NDP plan is a series of ***practical steps*** that will make a ***real difference*** to every Newfoundlander and Labradorian.

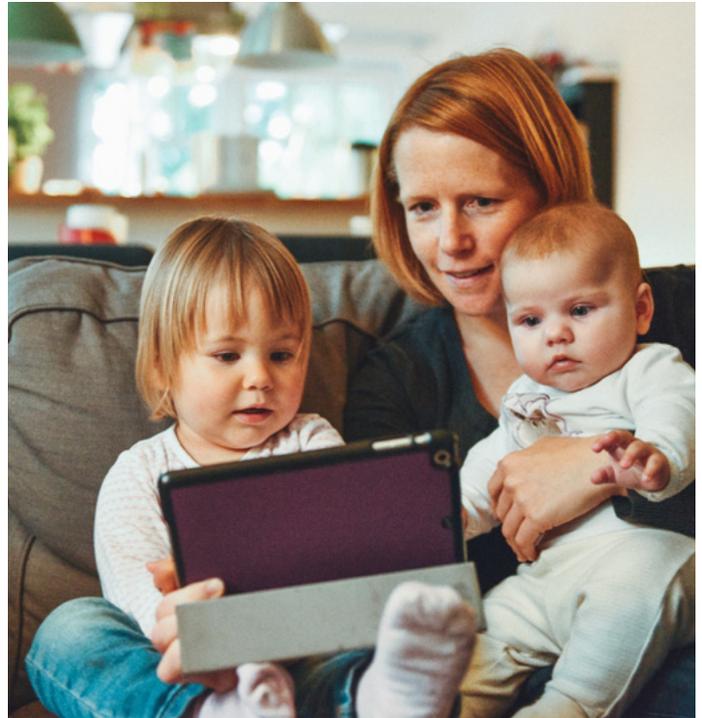
# 1. A *more affordable* everyday life

These are uncertain times. Alongside the added challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, basic household costs have been increasing – groceries, housing, medical needs, gasoline and home heating. And electricity rates will only increase when Muskrat Falls is fully operational.

The Dame Moya Greene report looms over this election. People are afraid she will recommend public service cuts and job losses. We cannot afford to lose more of the services we rely on. We know working families cannot plan for the future when they fear a lay-off slip or a program cut. Big business has Liberals and Conservatives ready to serve their interests. The only voice ready to fight for you is the NL NDP.

We have straightforward ideas that will make life more affordable and lay a solid foundation for building back our economy.

Alison Coffin and the NL NDP will work for you to make everyday life more affordable in Newfoundland and Labrador.



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## **The right thing to do is:**

**Increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour – as a start.** One in three workers in Newfoundland and Labrador earns poverty wages of less than \$15 an hour. More than half of minimum wage workers are women. Many who earn minimum wage were designated essential during the 2020 states of emergency when they worked so our families could have continued access to essential food and supplies.

Forcing workers to live on a poverty wage during a global catastrophe or at any time is unethical. It impacts gender economic equality and drives young people out of the province.

Big corporate retail and service companies are happy to pay workers in BC, Alberta and Ontario much more than they pay workers in Newfoundland and Labrador. And the provincial

Liberals and Conservatives don't seem to mind local workers earning \$3 an hour less than workers in other provinces.

The NL NDP supports increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2022. Our eventual goal is to see the minimum wage become a living wage through regular increases.

**Get Serious about Early Learning and Childcare.** Newfoundland and Labrador families need affordable childcare – and so does our economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously affected women's employment. Women's participation in the workforce is at an all-time low since the 1980s.

Economic recovery and increased employment require affordable, quality childcare. The NL NDP views childcare as a public necessity and not just a business opportunity. Studies show that investing in childcare creates jobs in the

sector and supports overall job creation, increasing tax revenue and stimulating the province's economy.

The NL NDP has long advocated for a public, universal, affordable childcare system. \$25-a-day is just a start. The NL NDP believes in working with childcare advocates, associations, workers and parents to lay the groundwork for a childcare system that completely works for families and their children. The good news is we have a strong ally in the federal NDP. We join our voice with theirs in demanding a universal and public nation-wide childcare program.

about being left out in the cold. Successive Liberals and Conservative governments have reacted to the challenges facing our provincial economy by yanking the fuel rebate from people who need it – while still continuing to give millions of dollars to oil companies.

The NL NDP believes a home heating fuel rebate for seniors and low income households should be automatic with tax return filing.

**Collaborate with the Public Utilities Board (PUB) to develop a realistic rate mitigation plan.** Over five years in government, and three extensive reports from



**Stop taxing menstrual products.** The cost of living already outpaces working wages. The necessities of life should be as affordable as possible. More disposable income means people can focus more on reducing debt, building savings, and improving their quality of life.

**It's time to remove the provincial sales tax on menstrual products.** This is a sexist tax. The Canadian government removed the GST/HST on sanitary products in 2015. The provincial PCs promised to remove the PST in 2015 and did not. The Liberals have had plenty of opportunity to remove the "menstrual tax" and did not. The NL NDP believes the right thing to do is to immediately remove this unfair tax on people who menstruate.

**Reinstate the Home Heating Fuel Rebate.** People living on a low or fixed income should not have to worry

the PUB – and the Liberals still have not offered a plan to deal with a dramatic increase in energy costs. They have offered a Rate Mitigation Team that won't be reporting until after this election.

The NL NDP is committed to keeping electricity rates affordable at 13 cents a kilowatt hour. We will engage with the PUB and develop a realistic mitigation plan.

We will work with the federal government for financial support as well as explore other innovative solutions such as the transfer of federally-held Hibernia shares to the province.

**Improve energy efficiency programs.** The NL NDP suggests an energy efficiency program that offers direct assistance to lower and middle income households. Providing funding for retrofitting will achieve two goals: it

will create much-needed skilled jobs while helping families lower their energy bills. A separate small business retrofit program would be a sustainable fix for unaffordable costs.

**Keep post-secondary education accessible and affordable.** The NL NDP supports the current tuition freeze at the province's post-secondary institutions. A fair society does not expect new graduates to start their working lives saddled with huge debt loads that they see little prospect of repaying in a timely fashion. Our long-term goal is to progressively reduce tuition fees. The province must reinstate the full needs-based grants program and ensure that the College of the North Atlantic and Memorial University are properly funded.

A grant program supporting graduate and post-doctoral studies and research important to the economic development of the province would be an important part of a provincial retention and recruitment plan to keep young people in the province.

**Invest in affordable housing for seniors.** More than half of Newfoundland and Labrador's seniors have low enough incomes to qualify for the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Many are struggling with high housing costs, often in family homes that are much larger than they need (and more expensive to maintain) because there are no affordable downsizing options for them.

The NL NDP would invest in the creation of more affordable and accessible seniors' housing units. We would also create new portable rental supplements and increase funding to the Provincial Home Repair program.

**Support food production systems.** Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest rate of food insecurity in Canada. Too many people have limited access to affordable healthy foods. The number of people relying on food banks continues to increase. We need an aggressive, comprehensive plan for food security and to address poverty and hunger.

The first step is to engage with the experts: farmers, fish harvesters, food experts and local food security organizations to develop a robust food security plan. A relatively small investment in developing our food production system would pay huge dividends in nourishing our people. Important measures to support agriculture could include a co-operative marketing agency, a cold storage network, mentorships, paid internships, a farm buy-back program leasing working farms to young farmers, support for homesteaders,

and a processing fund. We would invest in agricultural sciences research conducted by Memorial University and the Labrador Institute.

**Explore Livable Basic Income.** Widespread unemployment and poverty steal dignity from thousands of people, cause long-term inequities in education, health and opportunities, and hurt our economy. Liberal and Tory governments have introduced band-aid solutions rather than having the courage to tackle the issue at its roots. An improved social safety framework will ensure that more people can afford the basic necessities. One option to explore is a guaranteed basic livable income.

When the NL NDP introduced a motion for government to strike an all-party committee to explore the concept of what basic income might look like in Newfoundland and Labrador, all parties voted to unanimously adopt the motion. When the Liberals called this snap mid-pandemic winter election this important committee was dissolved before it could start its important work.

The NL NDP will reinstate this committee and will continue to work with anti-poverty experts and our colleagues in Ottawa to explore how best to alleviate poverty in our province.

***Widespread unemployment and poverty steal dignity from thousands of people, and cause long-term inequities in education, health and opportunities.***

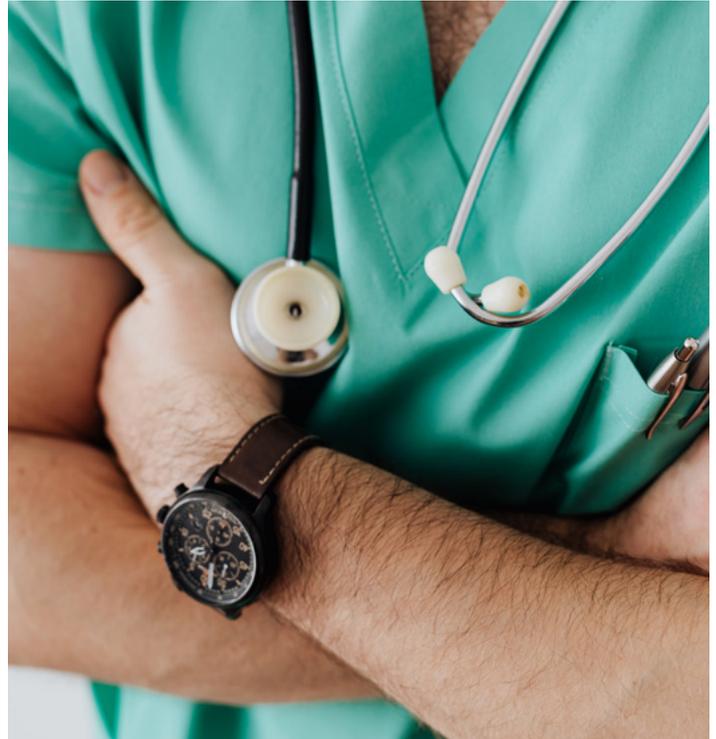
**Stop the CERB clawbacks from families on income support.** People who rely on income support faced many of the same extra costs as everyone else. Yet the provincial Liberals opted, in direct contradiction of Ottawa's recommendation, to demand repayment from the province's most vulnerable people.

The right thing to do is to acknowledge that everyone faces extra challenges because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and stop this unjust clawback.

## 2. Protecting *public health care* for everyone

A robust public healthcare system, offering everyone equal access to health care no matter their income level, is one of the major defining factors of Canada. It is our obligation to protect our public health care system. Privatization and service fees would put vital treatments out of reach for many. Successive Liberal and Conservative governments have ignored the growing challenges in our health system while increasingly allowing private industry to turn a profit from our much-needed new facilities.

We don't need an inquiry, a roundtable or a study. The people who work in our hospitals, clinics, ambulances and other medical facilities have been telling Liberal and Conservative governments what the problems are for decades. Ensuring full access to physical and mental health services would cut down on long-term consequences, and the costs that come with them. We know that lack of access to a family doctor means visits to more expensive emergency care, that early intervention on nutrition or mental health concerns can prevent or reduce severe consequences in later life.



**Alison Coffin** and the **NL NDP** will work for you and act to ensure families, young people, and seniors have the ***services you count on*** when and where you need them. The NL NDP understands that early medical intervention is the key to ensuring we have a more ***cost-effective health system***.

### **The right thing to do is:**

**Invest in primary health care.** It is 70 years after Confederation with Canada and one in five Newfoundlanders and Labradorians do not have a family doctor. Primary health care is an investment in a healthier population with fewer chronic conditions. In those 70 years, Liberal and Conservative governments have repeatedly chosen to throw money at flashy announcements rather than maintaining the basic obligations of government.

The NL NDP will work with public sector unions and professional organizations representing healthcare workers to identify a plan ensuring all residents of the province can access a doctor, nurse practitioner or primary health care team when they need it. It's possible to have a primary health care system that works for patients and professionals, helps retain graduates from Memorial's Faculty of Medicine and enables Nurse Practitioners to practise in clinics under the public health care system.



**Fix staff shortages in health care.** We are fortunate to have a public health care system with skilled compassionate professionals providing high quality, safe, and accessible health care. But as managed by the Liberals and Conservatives, every aspect of that system features work overload, forced overtime, denied holiday leave, staff fatigue and the casualization of work for thousands of skilled health care providers. These have serious implications for both them and patients.

The NL NDP will ensure there are recruitment staffing strategies in place to make the workplace better and eliminate 24-hour shifts. Proper staffing will help improve patient care, make life better for health care providers and save money.

**Ensure Long Term Care is an accessible, publicly funded health care service.** The death of thousands of seniors from COVID-19 in provinces that have almost completely occurred in privatized long-term care outside of the public health care system is a warning to us. The NL NDP will protect and strengthen the care of our seniors and stop the Liberals from moving to a health care model that puts profit before people.

The NL NDP opposes the privatization of Long Term Care facilities. We recognize that care of our family members in

long-term care must be top priority for government and will pressure the federal Liberals to make long-term care part of the Canada Health Act.

We must meet the health, safety, and social needs of residents which we can only do with more qualified and registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and personal care attendants. The NL NDP will reach the national goal to have four hours for every resident for personal care and nursing care daily.

**Invest in home care for seniors and persons with disabilities.** Too many people are forced to leave their homes when they need personal care because adequate home care services are not available. The Conservatives and Liberals have presided over a system that sees people pulled from their home communities to facilities sometimes hundreds of kilometres away – when a few more hours of weekly home care could have allowed them to stay at home.

The right thing to do is to improve the quality of life of seniors and persons with disabilities with a full homecare system that lets people stay in their homes and communities. The NL NDP believes adequate home care is an alternative to warehousing people and is committed to making home care a comprehensive part of our public health care system, an essential public service managed and regulated by government with fully-trained workers.

**Make prescriptions affordable.** Too many people can't afford the medication they need. If you can't take your prescribed medicine, you get even sicker; this costs our healthcare system millions of dollars a year. While Liberal and Conservatives have implemented patchwork solutions, only the NDP has consistently called for a single payer, national public pharmacare program as a part of our public health care system. The NL NDP believes that affordable medicines for all must be part of the Canada Health Act.

**Increase access to dental care.** Too many people in our province face serious health consequences because they cannot afford dental care. If you are missing teeth or in constant pain, it's hard to get adequate nutrition. Poor dental health also reduces a person's self-confidence and leads to difficulties in finding work, among other consequences. Liberals and Conservatives just don't seem to get that dental health (including preventative care) is an important part of overall health.

To help seniors on a fixed income with the NL NDP is committed to a senior's dental program as a first step towards reaching universal dental care as proposed by our colleagues in the federal NDP. That first step includes restoring the seniors dental program in consultation with dentists, denturists and dental hygienists who understand the needs in our community. We're also urging other political parties in the province to join us in supporting Jack Harris's federal NDP Private Member's Motion advocating a national dental care plan.

*Proper staffing will help improve patient care, make life better for health care providers, and save money.*

**Fix medical transportation.** People in many rural and remote regions of Newfoundland and Labrador rely on air and road ambulance services to access health and emergency services. Others face massive costs in road travel, accommodations, and other necessary costs associated with travel for treatment, tests, or medical appointments. Significant wait times for ambulances threaten the quality of life and standard of care available

to many in rural areas. The paramedics that staff our ambulances are stressed and overburdened by a system that too often leaves no ambulance available for people in critical need.

The right thing to do is properly determine appropriate levels of coverage and commit the necessary resources to ensure ambulance services and a medical transportation program that work for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The NL NDP has proposed the first step: raise the MTAP reimbursement level from \$500 to \$1000 and stop forcing families to pay first and wait for reimbursement.

**Prepare Newfoundland and Labrador for the next crisis.** When COVID-19 hit our province, we learned what happens in an overwhelming health crisis when government has been neglecting its duty to be prepared. Personal protective equipment languished outdated in warehouses. We can't allow this to happen again.

An NDP crisis preparedness plan would include public health officials, health care unions and other experts to ensure that there is adequate up to date, and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is immediately available for everyone who needs it and allowing working people to have paid sick days.

**Make mental health services a priority.** Despite decades of activism, mental health continues to be underfunded and neglected by government. Patients, advocates and experts have long called for improvements to mental health care. The Towards Recovery report from the All-Party Committee proposed by the NL NDP is just the latest document to recommend more community resources. The Liberals stated they would implement all 54 of the report's recommendations by March 2022, but we are still a long way off from that goal. The pandemic exposed many of the gaps in our mental health system, as people reaching out for help found long wait times.

A new structure replacing the Waterford Hospital is a much-needed improvement over the existing antiquated building, but clearly more needs to be done. Meanwhile youth who have received the help they need turn 18 and discover the flaws in the adult system. Community-based services help people when and where they first need it.

The right thing to do is complete the outstanding recommendations of the *Towards Recovery* report.

### 3. Good jobs and a *strong, fair economy*

Newfoundland and Labrador has a crisis – a jobs crisis.

We have lost more than 13,000 full-time jobs since 2015. Our growing unemployment rate is more than 13 percent – and that doesn't reflect those who have left the province, stopped looking for a job altogether, or are working in the gig economy with no benefits. In addition to major job losses more than half of our workers are employed in jobs that pay less than \$15 an hour. This does not help create a vibrant, strong economy.

In response, both Liberal and Conservative governments have focused on keeping the minimum wage low instead of helping to create jobs. We have a widening inequality gap and more money is going into corporate pockets. Even our provincial income tax system benefits high earners. Those earning top dollar in Newfoundland and Labrador pay significantly lower taxes than in other Atlantic provinces.

Our economy has suffered Liberal and Conservative governments' bad decisions, and cuts to public services. Each year we see an erosion of our public services, with more cuts expected when Dame Moya Greene's committee makes its recommendations. Austerity budgets by both Liberal and PC governments have not resulted in economic growth, but have created more inequality and poverty in our province.

We cannot cut our way to prosperity. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians know austerity hurts working families, their communities and our economy. Cuts, either direct or indirect, do not stimulate the economy but only make matters worse and force people, especially young people, to leave. Economic fairness and good labour practices bring more people into the economy.

The **NL NDP** is committed to a ***diversified economy*** that respects our environment and builds a better future for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The choices we make now will set the stage for the ***future of this province*** and who has a place in it.



They create stable, healthy communities and revenue for the government. If we're going to "reimagine" Newfoundland and Labrador then it's time to make the changes we need to build a stronger, more resilient economy that works for everyone.

In September 2020, the federal government gave the province a \$320 million federal NL Offshore Oil and Gas fund, suggesting it should be used to support affected workers and support renewable energy development. Andrew Furey's Liberals proceed to give 90% of it to oil companies! That's just the latest missed opportunity – we cannot continue to make those mistakes going forward.

New Democrats know we can make better choices to build a strong economy and a more equal and fair society. A strong economy needs investment in a strong social sector and quality public services, which will in turn, stimulate private sector investment, a fair taxation system and stronger labour laws that address the realities of today's world of work.

## The right thing to do is:

### Create a “Good Jobs for All” Strategy.

The real crisis facing Newfoundland and Labrador is the high and rising rate of unemployment, and the lack of a real jobs strategy. Liberal and Progressive Conservative handouts and tax breaks to corporations and the rich have not worked. Public sectors cuts have never resulted in more jobs or a stronger economy, especially in an economic downturn. It’s time for a new approach.

The NL NDP says it’s time to bring the experts– labour, business, academics, community, local governments and equity-deserving groups – to the table to create a labour market strategy that works for everyone, grows our economy, and makes our province one where people will want to live and work. Protecting existing jobs in all sectors safeguards the foundation for current economic activity and future economic growth. Workers’ voices must be part of that plan if we want a well-prepared, well-trained and supported workforce to meet the province’s future needs.

Planning for jobs and the future and ensuring a well-trained and skilled workforce is available when needed, will be paramount, as will ensuring that any jobs strategy provides decent, fair and safe work for all.

The NL NDP knows we must invest in a strong public sector and quality public services. We must develop a clear plan with strategic investments in physical and social infrastructure, including green infrastructure.

The NL NDP knows we must facilitate and encourage private sector investment in the green economy and help workers transition into the jobs of the future.

The NL NDP knows we must target alternative energy and conservation, including building retrofits, which will

*We must develop a clear plan with strategic investments in physical and social infrastructure, including green infrastructure.*

create much needed jobs while helping families in older homes benefit from lower heating costs.

The NL NDP knows we must encourage and support locally-owned businesses and a “buy local” campaign.



The NL NDP is committed to a diversified economy that respects our environment and builds a better future for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The choices we make now will set the stage for the future of this province and who has a place in it.

The NL NDP says it’s time to lobby the federal government to return to Newfoundland and Labrador the 8.5% share of Hibernia oil returns held by the federal government.

**Ensure fair and sustainable development of our natural resources.** Our natural resources belong to all of us. How we manage and take care of them will determine the economic, environmental, and social well-being of the province for years to come. We have to stop giving money and valuable resources away to multi-national companies, and start developing them in a sustainable manner which ensures Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are the principal beneficiaries for employment and business opportunities. We will put in community benefits agreements as we develop our natural resources.

**Fully benefit from our mineral resources.** Newfoundland and Labrador is a province rich in minerals but we rarely see the full benefits of our resources. The

status quo – where we just let large corporations ship our raw resources away – is just not good enough. The NL NDP believes Newfoundland and Labrador needs comprehensive mining plan that includes secondary processing in this province.

**Bring our fisheries into the 21st century.** The Newfoundland and Labrador fishery is a billion-dollar a year renewable industry. Yet it is often treated as an afterthought in policy, as government chases the latest bright shiny idea rather than reinvigorating the industry that sustained us for centuries.

The NL NDP wants our fisheries to thrive and grow, continuing to provide employment, and supporting our coastal communities for years to come. Modernizing regulations doesn't cost much. For example, removing barriers to the loan guarantee programs would better support young people and new entrants who want to become enterprise owners. We will enact laws prohibiting processing companies from having controlling agreements in the inshore fishery and introduce strict penalties and fines for companies violating those rules. Let's make sure those new opportunities in groundfish are available to support thousands of workers in coastal communities for many years to come.



**Make fish price negotiations fairer for our harvesters.** When fish harvesters are negotiating the year's price for their catch, only one side (the processing companies) has all the information available. The Liberals seem to be happy with this imbalance, but the NL NDP believes transparency in fish price negotiations is essential for fair labour relations.

The right thing to do is commit to collecting production information and pricing from processors on all products processed in Newfoundland and Labrador, and make this collective information available to all parties in collective bargaining. It's also time to amend the Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act to make a second reconsideration to a pricing decision the law.

**Develop the aquaculture industry – but do it right.** Aquaculture has the potential to deliver good year-round rural jobs in a sustainable resource industry. But it has to be done right, not the way the Liberals did it: by giving \$30 million to an international company, then releasing this development, in the pristine fishing waters of Placentia Bay, from environmental review. Then in 2019, fish harvesters in Fortune Bay raised the alarm after the clean-up of a massive salmon die-off brought unexplained substances to their fishing grounds.

The right thing to do is protect our valuable existing marine resources while developing new ones. We will require any new aquaculture enterprise to ensure that our marine environment is fully protected and that locally farmed fish is processed locally. The NL NDP favours a transition from open aquaculture to land-based.

**Bring vibrancy back to our forest industries.** Newfoundland and Labrador forests are a vast, eternally renewable resource that once supported large swathes of the central and western parts of the island with reliable well-paid jobs. Neglect by successive governments has seen mills close and thousands of jobs lost.

The NL NDP believes we can create and protect forestry jobs by diversifying domestic and export markets and implementing a sustainable forest management strategy. This starts with a science-based review of the forest ecosystem management regulations for harvesting and silviculture to ensure biodiversity is upheld.

**Invest in public infrastructure.** Decades of government neglect has resulted in public infrastructure – our hospitals, university, schools and college buildings – deteriorating to the point where some are dangerous to use.

The NL NDP believes it's vital to invest in public infrastructure. This not only preserves the facilities, but also creates jobs. Let's leverage available federal funds to restore infrastructure.

**Increase the minimum wage.** Over 50,000 workers in Newfoundland and Labrador are paid less than \$15 an hour. The right thing to do is to immediately implement steps to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by the end of 2022 – as a start. If that's followed up with subsequent annual increases to bring the province's minimum wage to a living wage, we'll have an economy to be proud of.

**Eliminate the small business tax.** Everywhere in the province, small- and medium-sized businesses create jobs, develop resources, and encourage innovation. For a decade, the NL NDP has advocated eliminating the small business tax. It's time to help small businesses grow and create jobs and completely eliminate the small business tax.

**Enact pay equity legislation.** Newfoundland and Labrador has the largest gender pay gap in Canada with women still earning 37 per cent less than men (and that's a pre-pandemic statistic). Our provincial Human Rights Act stipulates equal pay for equal or similar work, but still doesn't recognize the basic principle of pay equity: equal pay for work of equal value. Liberal and Conservative governments have refused to enact pay equity laws.

The NL NDP believes the right thing to do is expand the law to include pay equity provisions to address the continuing gender wage gap.

**Strengthen laws that protect and support working people.** The NL NDP would review existing labour laws with the goal of making them fair and relevant for today's workplaces.

**Enact anti-replacement worker legislation.** A labour dispute is supposed to be fairly balanced. But rather than engaging in negotiation, employers sometimes hire replacement workers to undermine legitimate strikes. This removes any incentive for an employer to negotiate a fair end to a strike or lockout. No provincial government has ever taken a stand against this unfair practice. Allowing employers to use replacement workers has been proven to prolong labour disputes. There have been several such labour disputes in our province. We need strong legislation to ensure the Collective bargaining process is respected, including the right to strike, and that every effort is made to ensure good faith bargaining.

**Ensure continuity of workers' rights.** Sometimes the third-party provider on a contracted job changes. This means that the workers on that job can be left without a contract. Currently, government sees no problem with that unfairness.

The NDP believes that bargaining rights related to contracted work must be maintained even if the third-party provider changes, and that labour law should be changed to reflect that.

*We believe in expanding the law to include pay equity provisions to address the continuing gender wage gap.*

**Reinstate card-based certification.** Workers have the legislated right to join a union. If the majority of workers in a workplace sign a union card, then they should be automatically certified. This right was taken away from workers in NL by Liberal government of Clyde Wells. More recent amendments to the process making it easier for workers to join a union were taken away once again by the PC government. A vote is now required even after a majority have signed cards, making it easy for employers to intimidate and threaten employees seeking to unionize.

The NL NDP has always supported card-based certification and would ensure that labour legislation would be amended to that effect.

**Create an independent offshore safety regulator.** After the Cougar tragedy, the Offshore Helicopter Safety Inquiry recommended a separate safety regulator to oversee both worker safety and environmental protection.

The NL NDP believes it is long past time to create this board and make worker safety regulation separate from the body that supports industry development.

**Protect Pensions.** It's happened too often: a company goes bankrupt and its workers are left without the pensions they have paid into for years. Workers deserve



stronger protections when companies close their doors so they're not left out in the cold. Both provincial and federal governments have never strengthened the rules, and thousands of Newfoundland and Labrador retirees have been left with no or reduced pension incomes – deferred wages that belong to the workers.

The NL NDP says the right thing to do is stand up for workers by bringing in pension insurance legislation to protect private pensions in the event of a company's bankruptcy.

**Increase funding for artistic creation.** Musicians, writers, actors, visual artists, and filmmakers make huge contributions to our province and the economy. Governments have been happy to talk about our arts in tourism ads, but still too many artists survive on below-poverty-line earning.

The NL NDP would increase the Arts NL grant to \$5 million to support necessary arts creation and development work, and work to find creative and productive ways to keep our arts community employed.

**Give support to our tourism and culture industry.**

Small business, cultural industries, travel and hospitality are significant economic drivers in our communities and are vital to our economy. The Liberal government seems content to do nothing substantive to support these industries to accelerate the recovery in an extremely hard-hit sector.

The NL NDP supports creating a Tourism and Culture Task Force that brings together small and large operators, municipal representatives, cultural organizations, not-for-profits, and labour, and then acting on the ideas coming out of the task force's work.

## 4. *Stronger communities* and a clean environment

Our communities are where we live, work, share, and support each other. Our community is where we grow up, build friendships, and learn about the importance of volunteering. It is where our families are. To thrive, communities need access to high quality public services, including education and health care.

While successive governments have often taken them for granted, our municipalities face many challenges: low tax bases, aging populations, effects of climate change, and barriers to creating sustainable economic development. Our towns and cities need better solutions to improve and upgrade infrastructure, to provide clean drinking water, implement waste management plans, and deliver basic community services.

Around our province, voluntary, non-profit organizations add to the well-being of our communities. For instance, many communities rely on voluntary fire services to protect their homes. Volunteers staff food banks, build museums, maintain walking trails, and do a thousand



important pieces of community service. Alison Coffin and NL NDP recognize the important work of this sector and will be an active partner in finding solutions to local challenges. Our communities do a lot of heavy lifting, the NL NDP will work to lighten the burden.

**Alison Coffin** and the **NL NDP** recognize the important work of this sector and will be an active partner in **finding solutions** to local challenges. Our communities do a lot of heavy lifting, the NL NDP will work to **lighten the burden**.

### The right thing to do is:

**Give municipalities a seat at the table.** Our municipal leaders know what will work in their communities. For decades, they have brought sensible suggestions to provincial governments, only to have their solutions fall on deaf ears.

The NL NDP is committed to establishing a new provincial-municipal partnership to explore regional approaches to municipal government increase the local tax base, and ensure needed public services.

**Revitalize our rural communities.** Rural municipalities are faced with unique challenges, such as declining tax bases, overstrained emergency services, and a lack of resources for enveloping economies.

The NL NDP believes it's time to develop a comprehensive Rural Revitalization Plan that will help municipalities navigate issues in order to find regionally specific solutions.

**Create a framework for regional services.** It's one thing for federal and provincial governments to legislate and provide funding for drinking water and wastewater

treatment facilities, but quite another for small communities with diminishing tax bases to maintain these facilities.

The NL NDP knows municipalities want to do what's right for residents and need a different funding model to do it. We're committed to looking at the options and helping to find a solution that works for our towns and cities.

**Make driving electric an easier choice.** As electric vehicles become more efficient and affordable, we need the infrastructure to ensure its viability in our province. The Liberal government has taken small steps with 14 stations on the island, but so far it's not much use for people who plan to leave the Trans Canada Highway.

The NL NDP believes it's time to work with industry and the federal and municipal governments to invest in more charging stations across the province. In particular we should encourage the Federal Government to install charging stations at rural post offices. It's time to transition to the electrification of public transport and find a way to provide rebates on electric vehicles.



**Re-open the Labrador Affairs Office.** Our commitment is to help towns and communities navigate the challenges they face. To this end, we will rescind the Liberal closure and re-open the Labrador Affairs Office in Labrador West to work for Labradorians.

**Improve Immigrant Retention.** In the face of an aging population and declining birth rates, we all know the province has to do a better job of attracting and retaining immigrants.

***We know municipalities want to do what's right for residents and need a different funding model to do it.***

The NL NDP believes government should boost investment in programs, including language training for non-permanent residents, enhanced employment opportunities, community supports for newcomers, and diversity training and education for workplaces, schools, and the general public.

**Enhance funding for Women's Centres.** The province's Women's Centres do important frontline work throughout the province, advancing women's causes from workplace equality to surviving intimate partner violence. Employees and volunteers work tirelessly to promote feminism and ensure there are sufficient community, mental health and social supports specifically tailored for women, especially in areas that have traditionally been underserved. Yet they still have to spend time repetitively writing grant applications to secure the funding need to do this work. Successive governments have declined to stabilize funding for the Women's Centres of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The NL NDP recognizes the value of the regional women's centres and will continue in our belief that they deserve multi-year funding so that they can focus more on doing their work and less on worrying about paying the bills.

**End Gender-Based Violence.** Domestic violence requires immediate attention; the serious problem only became more obvious with the stresses of 2020. We all know that our justice system must do better serving victims of sexual assault, that teaching the concept of consent consistently in our schools is a vital step, and that gender-based violence affects not only the home but the workplace. When the NDP held Justice for Survivors: A Panel Discussion on the Need for Justice Reform to Better Serve Victims of Sexual Assault, attendees told us loud and clear – no more round tables. No more discussions. It's time to act.

The NL NDP says it's time to legislate domestic violence leave policies in workplaces, improve resources and training for police investigating sexual assault, and let those in the field advise on the next steps to take.

**Advance Inclusion.** Canada is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and has recently enacted the Accessible Canada Act. But yet, thousands of people in our province still face barriers to employment, housing, and every other part of society.

NL NDP wants to work within the framework of the established international and national laws to work with persons with disabilities and their advocacy networks and service organizations to improve their full and equal participation in society.

**We are committed to:**

- developing and enacting an Accessible NL Act
- creating a Disability Advocate position
- re-examining the 1981 exemptions to the building Accessibility Act
- requiring adherence to Universal Design principles for public buildings, and discussing their inclusion in housing codes



- increasing the number of educational assistants, counsellors and social workers in our schools
- resourcing a more proactive school-to-work transition
- ensuring the availability of sign language interpretation
- establishing a granting program to assist non-governmental organizations seeking equity for people of differing abilities
- supporting the federal NDP initiative for a guaranteed income program for persons with disabilities

**Support the education system in uncertain times.**

COVID-19 disrupted the school system in untold ways and has created confusion and uncertainty for educators and families. As teachers, students, and parents have done their best to make online learning work, government has been content to let things drift without actively ensuring adequate action is being taken.

The NL NDP will continue to fight to ensure the education system is adequately resourced and that a clear and detailed plan is in place to navigate new public health guidelines. The guiding principle must be the health and safety of our children and school staff.

**Treat education as an investment rather than an expense.**

Parents and teachers have been telling us for years that government neglect and inattention is depriving our children of the education they deserve. Successive Liberal and Conservative governments have overlooked the fact that when students are given the tools to succeed in school, they are much more likely to succeed in life past their school years.

The NL NDP knows it's long past time to work with the NLTA to review the teacher allocation model and provide enough teachers to reduce the number of combined grades and multi-grade classrooms, and provide the classroom supports that students need to succeed.

**Resource inclusive education adequately.** Inclusive education can work – but not when inconsistent funding means our children don't have access to enough student assistants, guidance counsellors, social workers and others as needed, and ensure access to sign language interpretation is consistently available for any student who needs it.

We should work with community organizations to develop inclusive transitions programming for graduating youth with intellectual disabilities and work with those in the inclusive education system to ensure transitions planning is adequately resourced in line with other Canadian jurisdictions.

If education is an investment, we should treat it as such and give all our students what they need to succeed.

**Enhance STEM education.** The Newfoundland and Labrador technology sector has the potential to exceed \$1.6 billion in annual value; demand is expected to exceed 2000 new technology jobs over the next number of years. If this province is going to grow a technology and innovation economy, the key to fueling the talent pipeline starts with the K-12 school system. Government must abandon the piecemeal approach and take Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics education seriously.

The NL NDP is committed to providing support for students to learn coding in the classroom, and partnering with teachers, not-for-profit organizations and technology companies to implement and develop appropriate school curriculum and extracurricular activities. Our teachers and schools need professional development support, new technology, lab equipment and curriculum material to do this.

**Confront Racism** In our province racialized people are more likely to face systemic barriers to employment and when they do find work here, they also find that Newfoundland and Labrador has an 8.3 per cent racialized wage gap. Not only does this hurt our ability to retain immigrants, it is just plain wrong.

The NL NDP recognizes the inherent dignity of all people. We know that racism hurts and diminishes the humanity of marginalized people. Anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism against Indigenous peoples cannot be allowed to grow.

The NL NDP continues to be the only party to call for a task force to determine and prioritize the best ways to quickly eliminate systemic racism in government and in the province.

***For too long, governments have been content to talk about inequality in provincial workplaces. It's time for action.***

**Legislate diverse hiring.** For too long, governments have been content to talk about inequality in provincial workplaces. It's time for action.

The NL NDP says it is time for both an immediate review of provincial public service hiring policies to truly enshrine employment equity, and a strengthening of labour laws to ensure diverse and equitable hiring.

**Advance Reconciliation.** The NL NDP has consistently stood up for Indigenous rights and called for change and meaningful consultation with Indigenous groups and leaders in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The NL NDP called for the name of the June 24 provincial holiday to be more respectful and representative of the people of the province. Meaningful consultation must be done with Indigenous leaders and groups in Newfoundland and Labrador if there is to be a new name for the June holiday.

**Other vital steps in reconciliation include:**

- Working in partnership with Indigenous women, the families of missing and murdered women, and communities to implement the calls for justice in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Enshrining the rights of Indigenous Persons in legislation. The NDP will use the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons the basis of new provincial legislation, as recommended by the Truth & Reconciliation Commission. There must be mandatory consultations with free, prior informed consent before and throughout development projects.
- Improving access to mental health and addictions treatments. Individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador face long wait times in accessing mental health and addictions services. New Democrats will work with Indigenous communities on ways to deliver quality, accessible and culturally relevant mental health services. More support services in their communities would help deal with the overcrowding at the Labrador Correction Centre.

**Improve access to Indigenous-led childcare.** The NL NDP knows the best thing to do is to work with Elders of Indigenous communities (First Nations, Innu, Inuit, and Metis) to develop and to support Indigenous-led culturally-based language, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and physical development in regulated care spaces and reinstate the Day Home Operating grant to support

Indigenous Regulated Care Programs. Trauma-informed childcare must be consistently available.

**Advance the rights of Indigenous children.** The Innu Nation and the Nunatsiavut government asked Newfoundland and Labrador's Child and Youth Advocate to review the over-representation of indigenous children and youth in the province's child protection system. It took an election call to get the Liberal government to commit to action.

The NL NDP will not only ensure that inquiry goes ahead as promised, but believes that we have to disavow practices rooted in colonialism and advance the rights, protections, and interests of all Indigenous children in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Get connected.** Many rural regions of the province and Labrador continue to struggle with inadequate access to high speed internet and cellular service. Online connection allows individuals to attend school, to work, and to volunteer. New Democrats will invest in broadband and cellular infrastructure and expand access rural and remote regions of the province.

**Invest in transportation in Labrador.** Infrastructure and transportation in the North Coast of Labrador greatly impacts building costs, affordable housing, and costs of food and necessities. They deserve an appropriate vessel to deliver supplies. The NDP is committed to completing the Trans Labrador Highway and ensuring ferry service works for the people of our Labrador communities.



**Food Security for Northern Communities.** Inuit, Innu, First Nations, and Métis across the North face food insecurity levels five to six times than the Canadian national average. 60 per cent of all households on the north coast of Labrador struggle with access to food. It's shameful that provincial governments have been content to let this state of affairs persist.

The NL NDP knows it's time to take this seriously. Working with Indigenous nations, this province must develop food policy that includes the northern context, and recognizes the right to food for Indigenous Peoples.

**Create regional public transit system.** The province's dependence on automobiles means that travel within and between municipalities is becoming increasingly difficult for those who for one reason or another do not drive.

The right thing to do is to work with all levels of government to develop regional fully accessible public transit systems across the province including ferries which will provide affordable access to work and education, stimulate the economy, and reduce congestion and pollution.

## 5. Fixing our *broken politics*

The Government must work for everyone. It seems that the main purpose of government – to support the people of the province and to be responsible and accountable to them – has been lost. Our history is filled with Liberal and Conservative governments offering millions to their corporate friends, ignoring environmental concerns in the name of development, and lucratively reimbursing party insiders. The NL NDP does politics differently.

In the last sitting of the House of Assembly Alison Coffin brought forward a motion to establish a select committee on democratic reform with a mandate to review and make recommendations on voting systems and methods, voting age, funding of political parties, the role of third party groups in election campaigns, timing and date of elections.

Unlike the Liberals and Conservatives the NL NDP will put people and community at the centre of every decision. Transparency, accountability and oversight are essential for good government. It's time to stop giveaways, patronage appointments and secretive back-room deals. The NL NDP believes in fair taxation where those who earn more, pay more so that we can continue to provide the high quality public services we rely on.

We believe that we need to lower the voting age to 16. Too many of the decisions made in the House of Assembly will impact the youth of our province for decades to come. The province's youth should have a say on who will speak for them.



The **NL NDP** believes it is time we make sure **every vote counts**. It is time to **modernize our electoral system** and adopt a proportional system.

### **The NL NDP will:**

**Ensure any P3s are fully scrutinized.** The NL NDP is firmly opposed to the privatization of public services. There's no place for profit in public services. The design-build-finance maintain model the Liberals are relying on conceals project details, inflates costs, and hides public debt. All existing P3s must be made open and

transparent. The public needs accountability on the details, so we know what's happening to public service jobs, the full cost of projects over their life cycle and the complete implications for employment and debt.

**Implement social, governance and environmental criteria in procurement.** To improve long-term decision-making and act as responsible stewards of the

environment the NL NDP believes in strict application of social, governance and environmental criteria when deciding with whom to do business. These policies should be applied consistently in all procurement; for full transparency, results of the analysis must be public.



**Create an independent and non-partisan Parliamentary Budget Officer.** To increase transparency in government and improve decision-making, the NL NDP will establish a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). The PBO will provide independent analysis on the state of the province's finances and properly cost proposals for developments.

**Modernize the Elections Act.** It's long past time to modernize the province's Elections Act. The NDP supports a vigorous public discussion on issues like alternate voting methods, reformed political party financing, spending restrictions, and fixed election dates.

**Introduce a fair and proportional representation electoral system.** Every vote should count, and the House of Assembly should better reflect the will of the people. The right thing to do is to consult with the people of the province to determine the system that will work best for Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Improve representation in agencies, boards, and commissions.** Women make up 52 percent of the population and should hold 52 per cent of the seats on decision-making bodies. When decision-making bodies reflect a population, the decisions are much more likely to serve that population.

The NL NDP has long advocated for adding gender and other diversity to criteria for appointments to agencies, boards, and commissions.

**Make taxation more fair.** Newfoundland and Labrador has the challenge of being a large province, three times the size of the Maritimes, with a small population. We are fortunate to have high quality public services accessible to the majority of the people. Our public services require a sustained tax revenue base.

In 2007 a Conservative government introduced huge tax breaks, personal and corporate, that mostly benefitted the top earners in our province. No government since has ever seen fit to reverse these cuts and restore hundreds of millions of dollars to the public purse.

The NL NDP knows the right thing to do is repair our tax system so that we can better support our public services.

**Explore other revenue sources.** The NL NDP believes the province should properly explore other revenue sources including a wealth tax and we encourage the Federal government to close offshore tax havens that hurt both federal and provincial government coffers.

*Every vote should count,  
and the House of Assembly  
should better reflect the  
will of the people.*

**Pass legislation allowing municipalities to adopt alternate voting systems.** If a town or city wants to introduce a fairer voting system, such as a ranked ballot, to a municipal election, it is currently blocked from doing so by provincial legislation. The province shouldn't be able dictate how our cities and towns elect their municipal councils.

It's reasonable to immediately introduce legislation allowing municipal governments to hold democratic elections every four years (and by-elections as needed) using voting methods appropriate to the community.

A vertical photograph on the left side of the page showing a coastal landscape. The top part shows a cloudy sky over a distant hill. The middle part shows a green valley with several houses and a road. The bottom part shows a rocky coastline with waves crashing against the shore.

## Conclusion

**N**ew Democrats see things differently. We know that significant challenges lie ahead. But we cannot overcome them through painful budget cuts that just pass on our problems to future generations, when they'll be even more expensive to fix. New Democrats come up with different solutions, solutions that offer a practical alternative.

If we want to grow the economy and see our province prosper, we need long-term thinking, we need a plan that makes wise, solid investments that will deliver results. Our plan is based on a common-sense approach that invests in ordinary folks like us, the ones who keep our economy moving in the first place.

Together we can build a more prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador, one where the economy works for us, rather than the other way around.

***We need you help to make this work. We hope we can count on your support.  
Vote NDP on February 13, 2021.***