



September 03, 2023

John Graham
Director, Government Relations (Prairies)
RETAIL COUNCIL OF CANADA
jgraham@retailcouncil.org

Re: Response to Retail Council of Canada's Election Questionnaire

Dear Mr. Graham,

Thank you for engaging in this critical election. We appreciate the advocacy from Retail Council of Canada and all that your members do to serve Manitoba families and provide good jobs.

Growing the economy to attract new businesses and create good jobs is one of the most important goals of any government. We also know that costs are rising all the time – and have committed to affordability measures that will make a real difference for Manitoba businesses, including cutting the provincial gas tax, saving you 14 cents a litre, and freezing hydro rates for residents and small businesses.

A Manitoba NDP government will work with all sectors to ensure Manitoba is a competitive place for businesses to grow and thrive, supporting an excellent quality of life for families across the province.

Minimum Wage

The Manitoba NDP agree businesses need a predictable economic environment to plan for the future. At the same time, we know businesses want to pay workers a fair wage to ensure we can compete with other provinces, particularly during current labour shortages.

We want to take a collaborative approach to building a strong economy. That's why an NDP government led by Wab Kinew would seek the advice from a new Premier's Business and Jobs Council when making determinations regarding key economic issues, including the minimum wage. This would allow both businesses and workers to provide direct guidance and advice.

Retail Safety and Crime

We are concerned about rising rates of crime across the province, including retail crime that puts frontline workers and your customers at risk.

A Manitoba NDP government will be tough on crime and the causes of crime in the right way with real consequences for offenders and more support for police. We'll make downtowns safer and help families stay safe at home.

We will improve bail measures by implementing the National Police Federations recommendations on bail reform including support for better data sharing among law enforcement, investments in rural broadband to improve bail monitoring, and introducing standard qualifications for those who conduct bail hearings.

Manitobans know the smart way to reduce crime and make communities safer is to address root causes like poverty, mental health, lack of housing and addictions. We will make our communities safer and provide dignity for everyone by ending chronic homelessness in two terms following the Houston model.

If we have the opportunity to form government, we look forward to coming to the table with you to help develop and implement a coordinated response.

Fiscal Responsibility and Taxes

We have committed that we will not raise the PST, and will work with business, labour and community groups to ensure our provincial taxation systems remains fair and competitive to foster a strong economy.

Retail Job Growth

The labour shortage is a challenge not only for retailers but for every economic sector in Manitoba. The Manitoba NDP will work together with stakeholders to develop strategies that make sense on the ground. We would investigate and remove barriers to employment, invest in post-secondary education and training to prepare graduates for a full range of jobs, and support good local jobs for Manitobans and newcomers.

Leveraging Private Sector

We will work with the private sector to explore and implement strategies to build the Manitoba economy. We know the economic horse pulls the social cart and are committed to ensuring Manitoba's economy continues to grow so we can all prosper.

Thank you again for giving us the opportunity to respond. The Manitoba NDP look forward to working with the Retail Council of Canada and other industry partners to move towards a shared vision for a thriving and sustainable economy where families can raise their children and enjoy a bright future.

Sincerely,

The Manitoba NDP