

## Manitoba 2023 General Election Questionnaire

### 1. Minimum Wage QUESTION:

Unpredictable increases to the provincial minimum wage can hurt the economic stability of retail businesses, and can result in lost jobs, especially amongst less experienced youth. If elected, are you prepared to follow the current legislation that links future increases to the provincial minimum wage to Manitoba's CPI formula, except during high inflation years?

#### RESPONSE:

**Our PC team is helping Manitobans make ends meet, creating a more competitive environment, and creating good jobs. Our PC team recognizes the financial challenges many Manitobans are facing as a result of global inflationary challenges. We remain committed to our balanced approach to increasing the minimum wage while also recognizing the concerns of small businesses who are struggling, while the NDP have voted against every tax relief and affordability measures we have done to date.**

### 2. Retail Safety and Crime QUESTION:

Retail employees (and their customers) are on the front line of endless threats to their safety, as a result of prolific and often violent offenders using a range of dangerous weapons and tactics, as well as complex interactions with those dealing with mental health and drug induced behaviours.

We have begun the execution of a coordinated strategy in collaboration with police agencies across the province, together with retailers, community groups and other key stakeholders. If elected, is your government prepared to continue to support the Minister of Justice established Manitoba Retail Crime Round Table, and join other key stakeholders at the table in an effort to ensure a coordinated response to retail safety and crime?

#### RESPONSE:

**Our PC team is committed to safer streets by tackling the root causes of crime with strong investments to help the homeless, expand shelters and build more housing units while also providing more addiction treatment beds. Our PC team is committed to investing more in frontline police officers to fight crime.**

**Our PC team have fought hard to tackle bail reform, taken action to hire more prosecutors, and have invested \$52 million in funding the Violent Crime Strategy with \$10 million specifically towards crime and safety initiatives in downtown Winnipeg. We will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to ensure a coordinated response to retail safety and crime. We are the only party fighting to defend, not defund, our police.**

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- 3. Fiscal Responsibility and Taxes QUESTION:** Manitoba must find the right balance to support economic growth and opportunity through low taxation and strategic investments, while meeting the needs of Manitobans. RCC supports this balanced approach and believes it should not be disrupted. If elected, are you prepared to avoid introducing additional taxes, including raising the provincial sales tax?

**RESPONSE:** Our PC government reduced the PST increase put in under Greg Sellinger, and remain fully committed to not raising the PST. We're the only party fighting for tax relief, and long-term affordability measures for Manitobans. Our PC team has worked hard to put forward a concrete action plan that provided real results of \$5500 in tax breaks, rebates or relief for the average Manitoba family.

We have increased the School tax rebate to 50% - saving the average Manitoba family more than \$770 this year alone. We're the only party that will completely remove the School tax burden on Manitobans. Our PC team has also provided \$471 million in personal income tax relief, with \$1399 in savings for the average Manitoban, while the NDP have voted against every tax relief and affordability measure we have done to date.

We will continue to work hard to attract economic development and investment in our province while reducing taxes and providing historic funding for the service Manitobans need, want and deserve. A re-elected PC government will continue this relentless effort by reducing the first provincial income tax bracket in half over 4 years, and eliminating the payroll tax over 8 years.

- 4. Retail Job Growth QUESTION:** RCC recently completed a labour market study for the retail sector that has identified significant shortages in the workforce necessary to meet current and future growth expectations. There are presently an estimated 3,800 retail vacancies across the province, and by 2028 a projected gap of 14,000 additional workers required in a range of store and management roles due to retirements and the sector's anticipated growth. If elected, would your government be prepared to work with RCC on behalf of Manitoba retailers as we investigate, and potentially implement strategies that will help address the sector's labour requirements?

**RESPONSE:** Our PC team believes that a stronger Manitoba involves a strong plan for economic development and job creation. Our long-term vision for Manitoba includes hiring 100,000 more workers over the next 5 years, and striving towards a 2 million person-strong population over the next 10 years.

By eliminating the payroll tax, we can make the cost of doing business in Manitoba more competitive. By reducing income tax in the province, we can make working in Manitoba more attractive. We believe that working together with our stakeholders in the retail sector along with post-secondary institutions and industry leaders is key in ensuring we address the labor shortage that is impacting us on a national level.

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5. **Leveraging Private Sector QUESTION:** Everyday Manitoba retail stores reliably meet the needs of Manitobans across the province, operating in efficient and innovative ways as part of a highly competitive global industry.

Across Canada most government's see retailers as valued partners, leveraging their front-line access to the public to extend accessibility of health services, bring greater convenience for liquor sales, and in other ways that allow governments to better serve their communities.

If elected, would you be prepared to collaborate with Manitoba's private sector retailers to better serve Manitobans, including potentially expanding pharmacy health services, expanding grocery liquor sales, or other potential products and services?

**RESPONSE:** Our PC team strongly believes that we need to work with our private sector partners to continue exploring options to provide better service that Manitobans expect and deserve. We will continue to take a common sense and non-ideological approach and focus on innovative and best practices common across the country for service delivery while making sure we are getting the best value for money for the taxpayer.

The NDP have continuously voted against our efforts to work with retailers across the Province to offer more choice for Manitobans, and they will continue to be driven by their ideology and stifle private sector involvement even if it means lesser services and value for money for Manitobans. We're the only party fighting for more consumer choice in Manitoba, and we look forward to revealing more as our election campaign unfolds.

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