

## Briefing Note

# The Federal Green Party 2019 electoral platform

September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

### **SUBJECT:**

The federal Green Party revealed its platform for the 2019 federal election. This briefing note highlights some of the critical points of direct relevance to the ACCH membership.

Link to the Green Party website: <https://www.greenparty.ca/en>

Link to their platform (PDF format):

[https://www.greenparty.ca/sites/default/files/platform\\_2019\\_en\\_web\\_-\\_update\\_sep17.pdf](https://www.greenparty.ca/sites/default/files/platform_2019_en_web_-_update_sep17.pdf)

### **BACKGROUND:**

A general federal election is taking place in Canada on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019. ACCH is seeking to keep its members informed of the various parties' positions on topics of relevance.

### **SUMMARY:**

As can be expected, a large part of the Green Party's platforms focuses on elements related to the environment, wildlife, natural resources, and the energy sector. However, the platform also covers a wide range of elements. This briefing note focuses on commitments which are of interest to the ACCH membership.

#### Reconciliation:

- The Green Party has a wide number of engagements towards reconciliation and Indigenous policies. Those presented here focus more closely to elements of relevance to the ACCH mandate.
- Establish processes for self-governing Indigenous Peoples and nations to transition out from under the Indian Act.
- Affirm the inherent right of Indigenous communities to determine child and family services. Support kinship ties and ensure sufficient funding and resources so that families are kept together.
- End drinking water and boil water advisories by investing and upgrading critical infrastructure to ensure safe water access in every community.
- Prioritize high quality safe and affordable housing, particularly in the north, and ensure an equitable distribution of resources for energy efficiency retrofits.

- Support health-care services that incorporate traditional practices and recognize the role of extended families and elders.
- Together with First Ministers and Indigenous leaders, revisit the Blueprint on Aboriginal Health: A 10-Year Transformative Plan abandoned in 2006.
- Devote sufficient resources for maternal and infant care, mental health services and treatment for diabetes and tuberculosis.
- Sustain the Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative to continue capacity building in the health care profession for Indigenous communities.

#### Research:

- Establish a portal where all government science, including the evidence the government uses to make decisions, is available to Canadians in an understandable form.
- Adopt policies similar to Europe's "Plan S" to ensure that scientific publications based on publicly-funded research are available in open access journals or on the portal.
- Supports NSERC's Framework on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in scientific research, and commit to strengthening Canadian scientific and engineering communities to include the full participation of equity-seeking groups, including women, visible minorities, Indigenous Peoples, people with diverse gender identities and people with disabilities.

#### Healthcare:

- Expand the single-payer Medicare model to include Pharmacare for everyone as well as free dental care for low-income Canadians.
- Create a bulk drug purchasing agency and reduce drug patent protection periods.
- Negotiate the Canada Health Accord to prioritize the expansion of mental health and rehabilitation services, reduction in wait times, access to safe abortion services and access to gender-affirming health services such as hormones, blockers, and surgery (See Section VI Advancing the Just Society: Advancing LGBTQI2+ Rights)
- Uphold Jordan's Principle in full, ensuring Indigenous People receive the health care they need without being delayed by bureaucratic disagreements over jurisdiction.
- Implement Calls to Action 18-24 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, improving health care for Indigenous Peoples.
- Support First Nations, Métis and Inuit in (re)building traditional knowledge systems around healing and wellness, including the formal inclusion of traditional healing within mental wellness and home and community care programs. This process must be led by First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations.
- Reorient Health Canada's mandate towards mental health and addictions, health promotion and disease prevention, and the health risks of climate change.

- **Address the opioid crisis as a health-care issue**, not a criminal issue, by declaring a national health emergency. Recognize that fentanyl contamination is why deaths are more accurately described as poisonings than overdoses. Drug possession should be decriminalized, ensuring people have access to a screened supply and the medical support they need to combat their addictions. Increase funding to community-based organizations to test drugs and make Naloxone kits widely available to treat overdoses.
- Establish a national mental health strategy and a suicide prevention strategy to address the growing anxieties plaguing Canadians regarding inequality and affordability, the growing precariousness of work and housing, the climate crisis, social isolation, resurgent racial and ethno-nationalism and other harms and risks.

#### Poverty:

- Establish a universal Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) program to replace the current array of in-come supports, such as disability payments, social assistance and income supplements for seniors. Building on the MBM, payment would be set at a “livable” level for different regions of the country. The negotiation to implement a livable income across the country would take place through the Council of Canadian Governments. Unlike existing income support programs, additional income would not be clawed back. Those earning above a certain total income would pay the GLI back in taxes.
- Enhance the use of Community Benefits Agreements to increase economic inclusion and opportunity for marginalized communities of colour.

#### Housing:

- Legislate housing as a legally protected fundamental human right for all Canadians and permanent residents.
- Appoint a Minister of Housing to strengthen the National Housing Strategy so that it meets the needs for affordable housing that are unique to each province, and oversee its implementation in collaboration with provincial ministers. This recognizes that housing is provincial jurisdiction. The target would be 25,000 new and 15,000 rehabilitated units annually for the next 10 years.
- Increase the National Housing Co-investment Fund by \$750 million for new builds, and the Canada Housing Benefit by \$750 million for rent assistance for 125,000 households.
- Provide financing to non-profit housing organizations and cooperatives to build and restore quality, energy efficient housing for seniors, people with special needs and low-income families.
- Change the legislation that prevents Indigenous organizations from accessing financing through CMHC to invest in self-determined housing needs.

### Gender Equality:

- In collaboration with women's and Indigenous organizations, develop a comprehensive Canada-wide plan of action – with a timetable and dedicated funding – to eliminate violence against women, girls and gender-diverse people.
- Implement all the recommendations of the Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.
- Increase access to shelters by investing \$40 million over four years in the Shelter Enhancement Program, providing more than 2,100 new and renovated spaces in first-stage shelters and hundreds of spaces in transition houses.

### Sex Workers

- Reform sex work laws in Canada with a clear focus on harm reduction, given the dangers that sex trade workers face. By making the industry legal and public, it will make it easier for those who are being trafficked to be found and saved.
- Increase funding of community organizations providing services to those driven to sex work by economic deprivation.

### LGBTQI2+ rights

- Repeal all federal laws and policies that are discriminatory on the grounds of sexuality, including Section 159 of the Criminal Code, and that refer to intersex reality as a defect, aberration, or by any other derogatory terms.
- Establish a funding program within Health Canada to support community-based organizations offering targeted LGBTQI2+ youth's mental health and well-being programs, including suicide prevention, peer support, coming out, and counselling.
- Fund community-driven education and awareness programs that lead to a greater understanding of intersex realities and the diversity of sexualities and gender identities, and referral programs to direct for trans\*, non-binary and Two Spirit people to appropriate services.
- Work with social services, community supports, emergency shelters and other frontline organizations to ensure that all LGBTQI2+ young people are cared for and protected.

### Justice:

- Eliminate mandatory minimum sentences and enable the courts to determine appropriate sentences based on the circumstances of each case.
- Re-invest in prisoner rehabilitation and preparation for reintegration in society, especially for Indigenous people and women.

## **ANALYSIS:**

- While not many details specifically relevant to harm reduction are discussed, the platform is in support of declaring a public health emergency and in some level of decriminalization of simple drug possession.
- HIV and STBBIs are also not explicitly mentioned in the platform.
- The platform often mentions a commitment to work specifically with community-based organizations on various issues and to increase funding to community-based organizations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The ACCH should remain non-partisan within the election campaign to promote good working relationships with any future government.
- The ACCH and its members should remain aware of the political parties' policies on topics which relate to their activities.
- Members should have discussions on topics of interest with their local candidates where policies might impact their programming.
- ACCH will strive to remain informed of further details of each party's commitments as they are made available.