

NOVA SCOTIA ELECTION – 9 JUNE 2009 QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES AT THE DOOR

1. **DID YOU KNOW THAT** the general procedure in Nova Scotia is to claw back 70% of earnings of persons on income assistance?? Removal of this exorbitant tax is an important step to help people work their way out of poverty.

QUESTION: What is your party prepared to do about this unfair and unproductive clawback policy??

2. **DID YOU KNOW THAT** families receiving income assistance are expected to survive on incomes which are 30% to 50% below the poverty level?? The 127% increase in demand for emergency food relief in Nova Scotia since 1997 tells us that many people are unable to afford food. This means that families in low wage jobs or on Income Assistance are often dependent on food banks for survival and that healthy eating is beyond their wildest expectations.

QUESTION: What is your party prepared to do to increase Income Assistance for our fellow citizens who are dependent on it for survival??

3. **DID YOU KNOW THAT** for the period 1 January to 31 December 2008 52,095 shelter beds were used by 1252 individuals in HRM?? Since 1999 a total of 308 affordable, self-contained rental units and 60 shelter beds have been added to HRM's affordable housing stock, with an additional 136 units under construction as of December 2008.

QUESTION: What is your party prepared to do immediately to increase affordable housing in HRM and indeed in Nova Scotia??

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4. **DID YOU KNOW THAT** the Government of Nova Scotia released in April 2009 **Preventing Poverty. Promoting Prosperity. – Nova Scotia's Poverty Reduction Strategy**?? This followed from a report prepared by the Poverty Reduction Working Group which was established in January 2008 to provide the Government with a plan for a poverty reduction strategy and its implementation.

QUESTION: What will your party do to move this policy forward, including putting in place a ministerial committee to guide and direct the strategy implementation and the appointment of a Coordinator of Poverty Reduction to act on the direction of the ministerial committee and to be responsible for supporting evidence-based policy and program development??

5. **DID YOU KNOW THAT** Nova Scotia has licensed child care spaces for only 10% of children who need them, a 50% staff turnover rate, and unaffordable fees for a majority of parents??

QUESTION: What investments will your party make in early child care and education with appropriate benchmarks, targets and timelines for the optimal development of children aged 0 to 6 years??

6. **DID YOU KNOW THAT** at the Convocation of Atlantic School of Theology, 2 May 2009, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, when speaking to the assembly named the renewal of society and the whole of creation as a responsibility of the Church in carrying out God's mission?? In this regard he suggested that the achievement of the United Nations' Millennium Goals (which includes the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger) was a part of God's plan for the world.

QUESTION: What will you as a person of faith and a voter in Nova Scotia do to take your part in bringing in God's Kingdom??