



Submission to
Seniors Vote 2016

February 22, 2016

A Message from Brian Pallister

Seniors built this province. Seniors made this province what it is today. Seniors need a government that understands and respects this. Manitobans need a new government they can trust, with fresh energy and new ideas – a government that demonstrates Manitoba values each and every day in every decision it makes.

The five values that we believe reflect the hopes of Manitobans eager for change are: trust, compassion, common sense, inclusion and teamwork.

Trust to bring integrity back to government, compassion to put caring at the centre of our work, common sense to ensure value, inclusion to create opportunity for all, and teamwork to partner for prosperity – these will be our guiding values should we be privileged to form government.

We look forward to continuing an open dialogue and working in partnership with all Manitobans. There is nothing wrong with Manitoba that can't be fixed by what's right with Manitobans. We appreciate your voice, commitment and passion in working together to address the issues that affect our seniors - the builders of our province.

It is our pleasure to share some ideas we have brought forward to date. We look forward to sharing additional details of our better plan for a better Manitoba with all Manitobans in the coming weeks. We will do so with the understanding of the troubling condition of our province's finances.



Since becoming premier, Greg Selinger has spent an average of \$6 million more than he has brought in... every day. As a result, low and middle-income families and fixed-income seniors pay some of the highest income and sales taxes in the country.

Despite paying more in income taxes and a higher 8% PST, Manitoba seniors are getting less and less in services. This is no way to run a government, but that is the record of the Selinger NDP.

This premier looked you in the eye and vowed he would not raise the PST. He then did the exact opposite and took \$1 billion directly out of your pocket.

What we have today in Manitoba is broken trust from a broken government. Promise after promise has been broken. First it lost its integrity and now it has lost its way.

We will work collaboratively with Manitobans to restore trust and engage in meaningful partnerships to realize the full potential of our great province.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian'.

Affordable Housing

Part of our commitment to Manitoba seniors, and indeed all Manitobans, is to undertake a review of all program spending to ensure money being spent on the part of government is achieving intended outcomes and providing for those in need of services, such as quality and accessible housing options and opportunities.

One of the ways we have committed to improve quality of services and programming for Manitobans, including those in need of supportive housing, is to eliminate the waste in government so that all funds support frontline services that Manitobans depend on. There are concrete examples of waste in the Department of Housing. For example, last year, the Cooperative Promotion Board, an entity that is in place to develop and promote cooperative housing organizations, spent more on administrative expenses than it did actually providing grants to service providers and organizations.

Social Engagement/Participation

The Progressive Conservative Party believes in the importance and benefits of strong supportive centres that offer our seniors valuable programming and opportunities for increased social participation.

We are committed to ensuring a preventative approach and building a strong model to enhance quality of life and decrease potential risks of disability and mobility decline with our increasingly aging population.

We are committed to strengthening partnerships with all of our stakeholders in order to find synergies and work together to maximize the impact of our current programming capacity.

Health Care/Homecare/Dementia

We agree the health care system is in crisis. Beginning to address this issue starts with focusing our efforts on the fundamental barriers to care for seniors and all Manitobans.

ER wait times are the highest in Canada. At Concordia Hospital, Manitobans wait an average of 7 hours, more than double the Canadian average. At more than \$500, ambulance fees are the highest in Canada. More doctors are leaving our province than coming in.

Up to 1,500 people are waiting for placement at personal care homes due to the NDP government's failure to plan for the future and take action to address the needs of our seniors.

The Progressive Conservative team believes it is time for a better plan for Manitoba health care. Our seniors built this province. They deserve the best care and best support possible. It is long past time to embrace compassion and caring once more as a core value for government - for seniors and the sick, for children and families in poverty. For those who need our helping hands and those who just need a hand up at this time in their lives.

We believe it is important to pursue membership in the New West Partnership and increased bulk buying in order to lower the costs of drugs and medical expenses.

We will reduce ambulance fees to alleviate the financial burden placed on Manitobans, particular fixed-income seniors. Leaders in your organization know some seniors have made the choice not to call 911 because of high ambulance fees. That must change. It will under a new Progressive Conservative government.

We will shorten ER wait times so seniors who require urgent care are not waiting longer to receive care compared to every other province.

We will keep more doctors practising in Manitoba through a comprehensive physician recruitment and retention plan.

We will focus on a patient-first approach to smarter and more coordinated care with measurable performance standards, accountability and continuous improvements.

We will ensure a broad spectrum of senior care options is available to quickly and efficiently match evolving care needs with appropriate resources, facilities and support services.

We will accelerate the construction of new personal care homes to reduce the NDP-created backlog of Manitobans waiting to receive placement.

We will focus on preventative health programs, solving problems before they occur, and lessening the impacts and the suffering of Manitobans by refocusing those resources wasted by the government on low priorities and putting them towards higher priorities. As examples, strengthening the well-being of those who suffer from mental illness and diagnosing and preventing diabetes in its early stages will be critical to our success. We are aware of the challenges we face, but to effectively face these challenges requires teamwork.

We know that health care matters to seniors. That's why we have pledged not to lay off front-line workers so we can keep the services they provide working for you.

Our front-line health care providers, including home care workers, work hard in a challenging environment to deliver critical services to Manitoba families. They are doing their part. These front-line providers and the Manitobans who rely on them are being failed by a lack of leadership and the judgement necessary at the highest levels to set targets to support patient-first health care, increase efficiency and allocate the resources necessary for superior outcomes.

We believe a positive first step in ensuring those living with dementia receive increased care is to work with all stakeholders and experts in developing a more comprehensive treatment approach.

Transportation

Providing services to seniors often involves partnership with other levels of government. We will work to develop a more collaborative partnership with the City of Winnipeg and municipalities to ensure a more effective provision of services to ensure we invest in services for Manitoba rather than process and administration.

The Progressive Conservative Party believes it is important for seniors to stay mobile and be provided with transportation alternatives to allow them to meet the demands of their lifestyles. We look forward to working with stakeholders and ensuring that seniors across our province are provided with adequate transportation solutions.

The benefits of social interaction and inclusion through increased mobility are essential to a healthy lifestyle, and we will continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure accessible transportation is available for our senior population.

Retirement Income Security

Today's NDP debt is tomorrow's NDP taxes. Reining in wasteful government spending helps keep taxes low for Manitoba families. Keeping government affordable means we can focus spending where it matters most. We owe it to all Manitobans to find savings in government. But we will do so by protecting front-line services and the workers who provide them.

This NDP government shows no common sense in the way it shops and sources contracts. Manitobans are smart shoppers. We value a good deal and we expect our government to value it too, especially when it comes to using taxpayers' money.

In the last election Premier Selinger ran on a promise not to raise taxes. He broke that pledge immediately following his re-election. Before looking for a penny of saving in his own budget, he increased your taxes by more than any other province in Canada and by more than any government in Manitoba's modern history. As a result, a family of five in Winnipeg now pays \$4,000 more in income taxes and PST than if they lived in Regina.

A new Progressive Conservative government would provide real tax relief for low, middle and fixed-income Manitobans by raising the Basic Personal Exemption to lower the income tax burden, eliminating hidden tax increases known as 'bracket creep' and lowering the PST within our first term.

We are the only party committed to lowering the PST. A lower PST will put more money back in the pockets of our seniors.

We believe that the CPP is a proven and valuable necessary means to assisting seniors financially and we will continue to support a strong and robust CPP.

Fairer taxes are about allowing you to keep more of your money and ensuring the government works harder for you, not the other way around.

Healthy Aging, Quality of Life

The Progressive Conservative Party is committed to working across government departments and working in meaningful collaborative partnerships to improve the health and well-being of all Manitobans.

By ensuring enhanced social engagement and participation, by reviewing spending to ensure we are achieving intended outcomes, by addressing the deficiencies in our health care system with lower ambulance fees, decreased ER wait times, and more personal care home beds, and strengthening the financial position of our province, we will provide the necessary leadership to promote and improve the health and well-being for all Manitobans.