



## Canadian Taxpayers Federation

Dear Mr. Stone,

Congratulations on seeking the leadership of the BC Liberal Party.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation has been advocating on behalf of taxpayers for more than 25 years.

We want lower taxes, less waste and accountable government.

Our supporters are smart, savvy and they vote.

They want to know where you stand on issues that are important to them. Below we have posed ten questions. If you could answer each of them in 250 words or less, that would be appreciated. We will reproduce your answers in a final document that will be shared directly with our supporters in BC.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Kris Sims

BC Director, Canadian Taxpayers Federation

1) If you were elected Premier, would you commit to balancing the BC budget within your first term?

Yes. Keeping British Columbia's economy strong must be the foundation of all we do. For me, balancing the budget, keeping taxes low, growing jobs, and keeping our economy strong are core values and are at the centre of all I would do as leader. That will allow us to ensure that we are using that strong economy to invest in the things that will make life better for B.C. families such as tackling affordability, investing in healthcare, education, and other programs and services that help make B.C. the best place in the world to live.

2) If you were elected Premier, would you commit to canceling the carbon tax in BC within your first term?

As part of my platform and my commitment to reclaiming BC's role as a climate leader, I am committing to measures that not only protect the environment, but help grow our economy by making our cities and regions more livable and creating jobs. Part of this includes reversing the NDP's tax grab by returning BC's carbon tax to being revenue neutral. I would also reinstate exemptions for carbon heavy, trade intensive industries as well as re-implementing transparency and public reporting around the carbon tax cancelled by the NDP.

- 3) If you were elected Premier, would you commit to turning ICBC into a co-op, owned by ICBC policy holders, and open it up to competition from private insurance providers for basic auto insurance in BC?

My commitment with ICBC is to do everything in our power to keep insurance rates as low as possible for good BC drivers. That means being willing to look at a variety of options from increased road safety measures, higher insurance rates for bad drivers as well as increased fines to deter dangerous driving behaviours, as well as product reform. However, to date, I have not seen any viable proposals that would warrant a move away from our public system for basic insurance rates.

4) If you were elected Premier, would you commit to completing the construction of the Site C Dam frugally and efficiently?

Yes. The Site C Dam represents an opportunity to ensure 100 years of affordable, renewable energy for future generations of British Columbians. We have some of the lowest electricity rates in North America today because of a similar investment made by the government of former Premier, WAC Bennett. We owe it to our children and our grandchildren to carry on that legacy and continue to invest in infrastructure such as Site C, but also to ensure that investment is made as efficiently and prudently as possible with the greatest respect to taxpayers.

5) If you were elected Premier, would you commit to eliminating the Vote Tax imposed on BC taxpayers as a “transition fund” to get big union and corporate money out of politics?

With campaign finance reform taking effect, a renewed BC Liberal Party will also need to change how we raise money to support our campaigns and our work without relying on taxpayer subsidies. I was the first BC Liberal leadership candidate to commit to not accepting a penny of the NDP’s planned taxpayer subsidy. To me this is a matter of principle.

To beat the NDP, BC Liberals must raise smaller amounts of money from more people. I believe this is an opportunity to make sure our work and our message is resonating with our supporters so that they are inspired to support us financially.

We must never do anything to jeopardize the ability of the BC Liberal Party to grow, prosper, and especially our ability to compete against the NDP and win. But I am firmly committed to the principle that not accepting taxpayer subsidies is foundational to our values as a party and foundational to our respect for taxpayers.

6) If you were elected Premier, would you urge municipal governments to cut red tape in the Metro Vancouver region to allow for more housing, condos and apartments to be built to ease the housing crunch in the Lower Mainland?

Increasing housing supply is critical to addressing housing affordability. As leader, I am committed to working with local governments to find ways to reduce red tape and support them in speeding up the approvals process, including approving more densification along transit or transportation corridors.

But key to this is also ensuring that the homes being built meet the needs of a range of families. That's why I would look at a program to provide a 10-year property tax waiver for new purpose-built rental housing that meets the needs of a range of families. I would also look at other measures such reducing red tape on the building of secondary or basement suites for rental purposes.

In addition, I believe BC's property transfer tax puts too difficult a burden on many first-time homebuyers. That's why I would work towards the elimination of the property transfer tax for BC resident buying their first home.

7) If you were elected Premier, would you make every effort to stop municipal politicians who are trying to outlaw and ban the use of natural gas for heating and cooking in private homes and businesses in the Lower Mainland?

The replacement of fossil fuels with cleaner renewable energy sources is a laudable goal. But it cannot be rushed or implemented in a way that unnecessarily increases costs for British Columbians before affordable alternatives are available. Currently natural gas is amongst not only the cleanest burning sources of fossil fuels as well as an affordable source of heat and energy. Banning its use based on ideology is irresponsible and it not something I would support as leader.



8) If you were elected Premier, would you make every effort to reduce the number of people appointed to panels, boards and advisory councils that are paid with ratepayer and taxpayer dollars and to reduce the rates at which they are paid? For example: The current head of TransLink is paid more than the Prime Minister of Canada. Would you limit the number of taxpayer-funded panels and boards one person can sit on, and reduce the amount paid to these advisors and panelists?

I believe that we absolutely must be responsible with how we spend taxpayer dollars. This is amongst our most important jobs as elected officials. That means ensuring and demonstrating value for money spent in all areas of government, including boards and panels as described in the question. Our government has already taken action on this front by reducing executive compensation and board remuneration within crown corporations and a variety of other areas. This is something that would continue to be a focus under my leadership to ensure we are getting the best and brightest in positions of leadership, while also making the best use of the tax dollars sent to Victoria by hard-working British Columbians.

9) If you were elected Premier, would you make every effort to encourage the governments and Mayors Council in Metro Vancouver and the Lower Mainland to ease congestion through things like traffic flow changes, infrastructure improvements and traffic light coordination? Would you discourage the repeated attempts by TransLink and its panels from imposing new taxes, fees and tolls on commuters? For example: TransLink is now considering “congestion fees” akin to London, England.

As leader and as Premier, I would work with all levels of government and Translink to continue to improve Metro Vancouver transportation, ease congestion, and create more livable, affordable neighbourhoods. This means expanding the Skytrain network, including planning to extend rapid transit further into Surrey, along Broadway in Vancouver, as well as beginning long-term planning for expansion to new parts of the region. I would also work with the region to move away from a piecemeal approach to funding these vital improvements in favour of a funding sources that treats all transportation users equitably.

10) If you were elected Premier, would you make every effort to encourage the responsible development of our natural resources in British Columbia and Canada, including fishing, logging, mining, oil and natural gas?

Resource industries such as forestry, mining, oil and gas, as well as other traditional activities such as fishing, have built our province and will continue to do so for years to come. We need a plan to support these industries, foster innovation and technological transformation, encourage growth, and make sure we are getting our resources to market. This includes working with communities, First Nations, and industry to get to 'yes" on LNG. Our natural resource industries hold so much potential to drive BC's future and so much opportunity for our families and our children, but key investments do need to be made to keep these economic drivers strong into the future.