

BLAIR VISSCHER

**GREEN PARTY OF CANADA CANDIDATE
VERNON-LAKE COUNTRY-MONASHEE**

Let's Set the Record Straight!

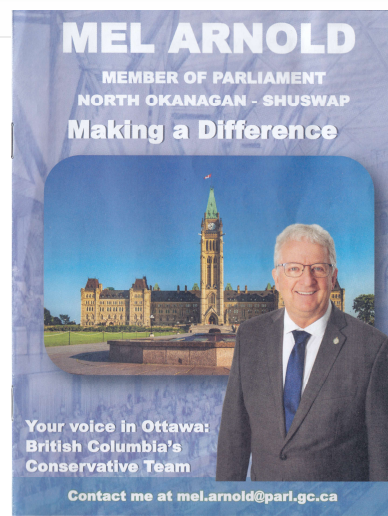


**A new voice in Ottawa:
British Columbia's
Honest Green Team**

Contact me at blair.visscher@greenparty.ca

Hi Everyone

Some months ago we found in our mailbox, a 16-page leaflet from Mel Arnold, Conservative MP for the North Okanagan–Shuswap federal riding. The leaflet contains short reports attributed to each of 13 B.C. Conservative MPs. Each report makes a lot of bold statements about their great work—or how the Trudeau government has failed—on issues as varied as regional economic growth, crime, the opioid crisis, community disaster relief, and Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD).



Some of the content seems plausible, but many statements are either factual distortions or even completely untrue! We think our MPs did not really expect us to read these reports. Our diligent researchers were curious to fact-check the entire document. The results are here. We have prepared a Green Party response to the key claims made by each Conservative MP. We urge you to spend a few minutes reading through our comments and complaints on each topic. Then please consider whether you really want these folks to be your MPs... or whether this election, it is time for a change: Let's elect DYNAMIC, HONEST people with fresh ideas: with commitments to social justice for all, and to build a sustainable economy based on small business and regional trade.

The challenges we face require bold action based on truth and not propaganda. We can build a future where we take care of each other, protect our environment, and create new opportunities for generations to come. The first step is to understand who really has our best interest in mind.

Elect me and I promise I will be accountable to the people of Vernon–Lake Country–Monashee.

Sincerely,

Blair Visscher
Green Party of Canada Candidate
Vernon–Lake Country–Monashee
www.VoteBlairVisscher.ca

B.C.'s Green Team – Let's Do Things Better!

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DISASTER MITIGATION

Dan Albas (MP for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola) complains that following the devastating impacts of the 2021 floods on Merritt, Princeton, and Abbotsford, these communities were not granted immediate funding through the federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Funding (DMAF) program.

Mr Albas misses the point: DMAF was not created for disaster relief. With a budget of \$2 billion over 10 years, DMAF funds efforts to reduce both disaster occurrence, and the extent of the damage disasters cause, *before* they occur. The Community Futures Development Association of B.C., funded by PacifiCan, contributed \$5.5 million for disaster relief across B.C. in 2022, claiming to support 900 small businesses and 4,500 jobs. Likely this was insufficient given the need, but Mr Albas should get his facts straight! Moreover, community needs must be properly assessed before funds are spent. Better coordination is needed among the multiple levels of government to streamline provision of long-term solutions for disaster-mitigation, and to ensure communities that suffer disasters are given prompt assistance to recover.

The Green Party's *Vision for Climate Action* advocates for comprehensive disaster preparedness—so that all affected communities receive equitable access to necessary resources. We call for a doubling of federal funding for disaster mitigation and for communities disproportionately vulnerable to climate change. Our vision demands substantial, science-based investments in community flood and wildfire protection, infrastructure upgrades, and climate-resilience.

This also requires shifting away from fossil fuel dependence to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Instead of pitting disaster relief against clean technology, we want more investments in both areas, paid by reallocating the billions of dollars presently subsidizing the fossil energy sector.

There must be more transparency and accountability in how funds are spent on all communities vulnerable to the growing impacts of global climate change. The Green Party insists on rigorous oversight of public spending and is deeply concerned about reports of misallocation of funds and conflicts of interest. Mr Albas also tars the Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) program as a “green slush fund” ... “which misallocated funds and ignored conflict-of-interest policies.” It is clear there were major problems with SDTC, but they were related to specific projects and not applicable to all green investments. SDTC aims to fund clean technologies, an area critical for Canada's transition to a sustainable economy. Ensuring that funds for clean development and disaster relief are allocated appropriately and effectively is essential to maintaining public trust.

DISASTER MITIGATION

Dan Albas, MP

Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola

In 2021, floods severely impacted Merritt, Princeton, and Abbotsford. Despite Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's promises to support these communities, they were denied funding from the federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Funding program (DMAF). MPs Ed Fast, Brad Vis, Taka van Pelt, Mark Strahl, Dane Lloyd and I have demanded reconsideration for these hard-hit areas, highlighting the gap between the government's promises and actions. Unfortunately, this rejection came at the same time as the Auditor General reported a scandal in the Liberal-funded Sustainable Development Technology Canada program, now known as the “green slush fund,” which misallocated funds and ignored conflict-of-interest policies. The audit revealed \$59 million was awarded to 10 ineligible projects, and 90 cases involved nearly \$76 million with breached conflict-of-interest rules. From March 2017 to December 2023, this program approved \$836 million in public funding without proper over-

sight, contrasting with the neglect faced by Merritt, Princeton and Abbotsford. The denial has left these communities in a lurch, struggling to rebuild and protect against future disasters. Comments from a joint press conference held by three Mayors show the frustration and contempt for the Trudeau Government's rejection, having relied on government guidance throughout the application process and spending hundreds of thousands in engineering studies. I empathize with their frustration while tax dollars have been funneled into pet projects without scrutiny, raising ethical concerns, while these flood-stricken communities are turned away. This highlights the challenges our communities face in securing disaster prevention funds and stresses the urgent need for fair resource distribution to aid vulnerable areas in recovery.



THE NDP/LIBERAL 30X30 PLAN

Bob Zimmer, Conservative MP for Prince George–Peace River–Northern Rockies, complains about “the radical NDP/Liberal 30x30 initiative...” He claims creating protected areas “restricts hunting, fishing, and nearly always bans resource development.” This is untrue: Protection does not mean eliminating all human activity. Many protected areas allow for sustainable resource use, including ecotourism, non-invasive agriculture, and traditional land management practices by Indigenous communities.

The Green Party does not propose outright bans on development: it supports collaborative, community-driven decision-making processes that enable conservation which respects local livelihoods and First Nations rights, while ensuring long-term health of ecosystems. Responsible forestry practices, for example, can allow for some timber harvesting while managing wildfire hazards, and assist forest adaptation to rapid climate change.

Protecting the natural environment is not a simple trade-off for economic prosperity—it is part of creating a sustainable economy. By investing in clean energy, sustainable resource management, and ecotourism, all of which create meaningful jobs, we can ensure that communities can thrive while protecting natural resources for future generations.

As custodian of a vast land area with a very low average human population density, Canada has a major responsibility to protect natural ecosystems for global benefit. The 30x30 initiative is part of an international effort to combat the global crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.^{1 2}

Mr Zimmer claims “30x30 is an arbitrary number that has no basis in science.” This too is incorrect: The concept was first proposed in 2019 by a team of experts under the title “A Global Deal for Nature”³, and had been adopted by over 100 countries by 2022. 30x30 is a central component of Canada’s obligations under the international Convention on Biological Diversity⁴.

The Green Party supports 30x30 as an essential, scientifically-based program to maintain the critical roles of wilderness regions for wildlife conservation and global cycling of water and carbon, while helping to prevent needless industrial developments.

THE NDP/LIBERAL 30X30 PLAN Bob Zimmer MP

Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies



The radical NDP/Liberal 30x30 initiative will rapidly expand Canada’s protected areas by 2030, an area the combined size of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Adopting this UN biodiversity target, Trudeau’s government seeks to protect 30% of Canada’s marine and terrestrial areas by 2030, with a milestone of 25% by 2025. This initiative often restricts hunting, fishing, and nearly always bans resource development.

As of 2022, national parks and protected marine areas in Canada covered only 13.6% and 14.7% of the country, respectively. Trudeau aims to more than double these areas within a few years, a historically unprecedented increase. The Liberal purported protection process often only pretends to listen to local input and instead prioritizes radical environmental organizations that openly campaign for indiscriminate closures. This approach sacrifices Canada’s economic interests to purportedly “protect” nature. To meet the 25x25 goal, Canada

must restrict access to 1.2 million square kilometres of land by 2025, roughly the combined area of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. To reach 30%, they will also add an area approximately the size of Alberta. The marine component requires “protecting” 638,000 square kilometres, almost three times the size of the Gulf of St. Lawrence by 2025, and another Gulf-sized area by 2030. “Protecting” 30% of Canada’s area is an arbitrary number that has no basis in science. It does not differentiate between fragile and robust ecosystems but instead shuts down entire regions with little to no justification. The 30x30 initiative severely impacts Canada’s economic sectors and regional communities dependent on natural resources. It’s time for a Conservative government that supports true conservation. Let’s bring home real conservation policies that reflect the will of the Canadian people, rather than radicals.

¹ <https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/global-biodiversity-framework-30x30-target>

² <https://www.nature.org/en-us/what-we-do/our-priorities/protect-water-and-land/land-and-water-stories/committing-to-30x30/>

³ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6474764/>

⁴ <https://www.cbd.int/information/parties.shtml>

KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE

Conservative MP, Mr Frank Caputo (Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo), claims lenient bail policies have caused surges in violent crime in B.C. and Canada-wide. Though violent crime rates have increased since 2015, Caputo exaggerates the statistics, paying no regard to the underlying socio-economic causes of crime, and blames only Trudeau's bail policies. He also claims his proposed amendments to the Criminal Code would ensure accused individuals prove their detention is unjustified. This ignores the likelihood that many members of marginalized communities will not get proper legal advice.

The Liberals reviewed Canada's criminal justice system and attempted to reduce inequalities—notably disproportionate conviction and incarceration of marginalized citizens, including Indigenous, racialized minorities and at-risk youth⁵. This review resulted in several important recommendations for change and improvement.

A major over-haul takes time, but it should be recognized that the Liberals have introduced some important changes, though much remains to be done. Bill C-48 aimed to strengthen the bail system and reduce public safety risks resulting from intimate partner violence and repeat violent offenders⁶. Bill C-75 tried to further modernize and clarify bail conditions and improve justice for youth^{7 8}.

We need public safety policies that hold criminals fully accountable. But the Green Party does not accept a punitive, “one-size-fits-all” approach to justice. Bail reforms must be based on evidence and data, rather than dog-whistle fear-mongering;

they must enhance public safety while treating all accused criminals fairly. We strongly favour restorative justice approaches which allow rehabilitation more than retribution—to reduce repeat offences while creating safer communities over the long term. We also endorse programs that provide better community support for young and marginalized people—including access to affordable housing, mental health services, and addiction counselling.

Mr Caputo also notes “We must transform our systems to one that adequately hears from victims, who are currently told to fend for themselves.” The Liberals have in fact recently introduced changes to make it easier for victims to get justice⁹. However, the Green Party agrees that crime victims must be better supported and recognized by our justice system. We demand increased funding for victim services and programs to provide emotional, financial, and legal support; but we also need a justice system that prioritizes healing and reconciliation with victims fully involved in the process.

KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE

Frank Caputo, MP
Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo

This Liberal government ignored problems with bail, contributing to a dramatic rise in crime and violence across Canada. Laws that once targeted the most serious offenders have been watered down by Trudeau and his team. This approach has led to dangerous consequences for public safety. I hear this sentiment from people throughout my riding.

The impact of lenient bail policies has been stark. Communities like mine in Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo are grappling with surges in violent crime, as are Canadians around the country. The latest StatsCan data shows that after nine years of Justin Trudeau, violent crime has increased 50%, homicides are up by 28% and gang homicides have nearly doubled.

In response to this escalating crisis, I introduced legislation to reform the bail system to better protect the public in the form of Private Member's Bills C-274 and C-313. My bills would make it harder for repeat firearm offenders

and those alleged to have committed multiple serious offences in a short period to secure bail. These measures are designed to ensure that those who repeatedly commit serious offences, especially those involving firearms, remain in custody pending what should be speedy trial dates.

As a Conservative, I am committed to fixing the broken justice system. We must transform our systems to one that adequately hears from victims, who are currently told to fend for themselves. I will not stop fighting until this happens.



⁵ <https://www.canlii.org/en/commentary/doc/2020CanLIIDocs3562#!fragment/>

⁶ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pl/pscbs-cprslscc/index.html>

⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2023/12/reforms-to-strengthen-canadas-bail-system-and-help-keep-communities-safe-to-become-law.html>

⁸ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/redu/index.html>

⁹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2023/10/reforms-giving-victims-a-greater-voice-in-our-justice-system-and-that-strengthen-the-national-sex-offender-registry-are-now-law.html>

SUPPORTING RECOVERY

Mr Marc Dalton (MP for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge) claims “Canada’s once-safe towns and cities have become rife with crime, chaos, drugs and disorder”, linking this to the Liberal Government’s approach to treating opioid addiction using “taxpayer-funded hard drugs” that “has been an astonishing failure”.

Such knee-jerk accusations are both gross exaggerations and fail to recognize the opioid crisis in Canada results mainly from deep systemic problems: poverty, mental health failures, trauma, and inadequate addiction treatment services. Not about “handing out hard drugs”, harm reduction methods, including supervised consumption sites and providing opioid users with safer alternatives to street drugs, reduce the risks of overdosing and infectious disease spread. Evidence from research in numerous countries shows these harm reduction efforts save many lives, and provides little support for the common belief they have significantly worsened Canada’s opioid crisis.

The Green Party demands a compassionate and evidence-based approach: addiction must be treated as a health issue rather than as a crime. We advocate for better access to mental health services, subsidized housing for individuals in need, and more research into alternative addiction treatments. The Green Party supports Mr Dalton’s proposals for greater investment in opioid addiction treatment and recovery.

Mr Dalton adds that he tabled Bill C-411, the Anti-Arson Act, “to make it a criminal offence to intentionally burn down a place of worship or start a wildfire”. It stretches credulity to

suggest that arson was not already a crime! The Green Party advocates for combining enforcement with prevention and social investment. Proactive measures to address the root socio-economic triggers

for arson are needed, plus more fire prevention and suppression resources, and increased support for Indigenous-led land stewardship in rural areas. Such measures require a multi-faceted program of action on climate change, better land management, and community education.

SUPPORTING RECOVERY

Marc Dalton, MP
Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge

The Liberal Government’s experiment of taxpayer-funded hard drugs has been an astonishing failure, yet politicians and officials within the Liberal-NDP Government are refusing to accept this obvious fact. That British Columbia’s radical NDP Government were downplaying an internal document which stated that the diversion of lethal opioids would be an inevitable consequence of the Liberal-NDP’s taxpayer-funded hard drug program. Only a Conservative Government will stop handing out taxpayer-funded hard drugs, ban them and invest in treatment and recovery so that we can bring home our loved ones drug free. This is why in the 43rd Parliament, I tabled Motion M-88, a Federal Framework For Addiction Recovery so that we can bring our loved ones home safe and sober. After nine years of Justin Trudeau, Canada’s once-safe towns and cities have become rife with crime, chaos, drugs and disorder.

This Parliament, I tabled Bill C-411, the Anti-Arson Act, to make it a criminal offence to intentionally burn down a place of worship or start a wildfire. As Chair of the BC Caucus our weekly meetings in Ottawa are focused squarely on supporting British Columbians. Our Conservative Team in BC is ready and equipped to stop the crime, build the homes, bring home safe streets, and axe the tax.



A LIFELINE FOR CANADIANS

Todd Doherty (MP for Cariboo—Prince George) states succinctly: “Suicide is a deeply personal issue which impacts us all.” The Green Party agrees and commends Mr Doherty and the Conservative Party for bringing a motion to the House of Commons to make the 9-8-8 suicide prevention hotline available across Canada, and for continually pushing, over a 3-year period, for its eventual implementation.

The Green Party welcomes this major contribution, but it should be emphasized that nobody opposed the motion and that setting up the infrastructure to make 9-8-8 operational took time and resources. The hotline will save lives and help individuals in distress. However, it is important to recognize that mental health problems require more than a sympathetic person who will listen and provide advice during a personal crisis—it demands a comprehensive, well-funded system of care. Mental health is a non-partisan issue, and cross-party collaboration is crucial to achieving meaningful progress. Creation of the 9-8-8 service should be seen only as an important first step. The Green Party has long championed mental health as a priority; our platform calls for a National Mental Health Strategy to make mental health services, including crisis intervention, counselling, and long-term care universally accessible.

A LIFELINE FOR CANADIANS

Todd Doherty, MP
Cariboo—Prince George

Suicide is a deeply personal issue which impacts us all. Years of hard work and personal advocacy paid off when, on November 30th, 2023, 9-8-8 went live.

More than 1000 days after the House of Commons unanimously passed my motion to bring 9-8-8 to Canada — and only after relentless pressure by Conservatives, Canadians struggling with their mental health finally have access to a simple, easy to remember, three-digit suicide prevention hotline.

Thanks to Conservative efforts, over 700 cities and municipalities across the country passed resolutions to bring 9-8-8 to their communities.

Staffed by expert crisis responders, 9-8-8 is available 24/7 by phone call or text. It is a valuable tool in our arsenal to reduce the tragic consequences of mental illness.

This is a truly momentous occasion for mental health policy in Canada. When minutes and even seconds count, 9-8-8 is the lifeline

that so many Canadians need. Please, if you are struggling with mental illness, know that you don't have to suffer alone. Call or text 9-8-8, because help is available. In the darkest days, there are people out there that are fighting for you.



MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

In his critique of the expansion of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD), the Hon. Ed Fast (MP for Abbotsford) claims “the Trudeau government had agreed to include the mentally ill under Bill C-7, Canada's MAiD regime, despite opposition from a majority of Canadians, including a host of mental health professionals and care providers.” In fact, Bill C-7 simply removed the legal requirement that a person’s natural death be reasonably foreseeable in order to qualify for MAiD¹⁰. This legislation was required in response to a 2019 Supreme Court ruling that previous MAiD laws did not apply equally to all Canadians, thereby violating Charter Rights and Freedoms. C-7 did not include individuals with mental illness alone as eligible for MAiD, though it attempted to address cases where mental illness was paired with other severe chronic conditions.

Approximately 75% of Canadians support MAiD for those wishing to end suffering from terminal illness, but fewer than half agree that those with mental illness alone should have access^{11 12}. While recognizing the complexity and sensitivity of discussions around MAiD, the Green Party endorses these opinions. But we seek, as a matter of urgency, nationwide comprehensive mental health care, including access to therapy, social support, and medication before MAiD is considered.

Mr Fast goes on to suggest “The Liberal government even signalled that it was

prepared to extend availability of assisted suicide to young children without their parents’ consent.” This is inaccurate. The joint committee of MPs and senators concluded that minors deemed to have the appropriate decision-making capacity should be eligible, but this recommendation was never included in the Bill¹³. The law remains clear that individuals under the age of majority cannot access MAiD without parental consent or the involvement of a competent medical professional.

The Green Party believes in the right of anyone to make decisions about their own body, including the decision to end their life in cases of extreme suffering. But there must be safeguards to ensure these decisions are informed and voluntary: No-one should feel compelled to choose MAiD because they don’t have access to mental health care, social supports, or palliative care.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Hon. Ed Fast, MP
Abbotsford



After the federal election of 2021, I had the honour of leading the fight against the expansion of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) to include the most vulnerable in our society. More specifically, the Trudeau government had agreed to include the mentally ill under Bill C-7, Canada's MAiD regime, despite opposition from a majority of Canadians, including a host of mental health professionals and care providers. The Liberal government even signalled that it was prepared to extend the availability of assisted suicide to young children without their parents' consent.

In response to these dangerous developments, I brought forward Bill C-314, which would have rolled back that portion of the assisted suicide law that captured mentally ill persons. Although Bill C-314 was narrowly defeated in the House of Commons last year, it forced the government to postpone the expansion of MAiD for three years. Conservative leader

Pierre Poilievre has promised to rescind the expansion of MAiD to the mentally ill when a new Conservative government is elected. I trust he will do this. There is absolutely NO national consensus to expand Canada's MAiD laws. It is frightening to think of where this policy will lead us. Who's next? Veterans with PTSD? The homeless? The drug addicted? Why are the vulnerable not getting the mental and social supports they deserve? I believe the measure of a compassionate, caring society is how it treats its most vulnerable citizens. Assisted suicide is not, as some have suggested, a form of healthcare. Rather, it is the willful abandonment of the most vulnerable within our midst. I will continue to fight against the expansion of MAiD and to speak out for those who have been left with no voice.

¹⁰ <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/JUST/Brief/BR10971560/br-external/EuthanasiaPreventionCoalition-e.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.dyingwithdignity.ca/media-center/2023-poll-support-for-medically-assisted-dying-canada/>

¹² <https://leger360.com/medical-assistance-in-dying/>

¹³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-services-benefits/medical-assistance-dying/independent-reviews.html>

THE SAFE HOSPITALS ACT

Kerry-Lynne Findlay (MP for South Surrey–White Rock) introduced Bill C-391, The Safe Hospitals Act, in spring 2024, responding to recent accounts of frontline healthcare workers being exposed to contamination by toxic drugs in their workplace. She declares “Canadians no longer feel safe in our hospitals.”, and that: “Patients are now faced with the dangerous reality of weapons in hospitals while they receive treatment.” To explain these alarming trends, she asserts “Trudeau’s reckless hard drug legalization experiment has wreaked havoc on our hospitals and continues to put our healthcare workers and patients in danger.” She concludes: “Conservatives will ban hard drugs”, and stop public funding of safe injection sites, focusing instead on addiction treatment and rehabilitation.”

To suggest Canadians do not feel safe in Canada’s hospitals is fear-mongering. There are approximately 15 million visits to ERs and 3 million overnight stays in Canada’s hospitals each year^{14 15}. For sure, some very horrible incidents have occurred, seemingly with growing frequency^{16 17}. The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) documented the rise in verbal abuse and physical violence experienced by frontline hospital workers nationwide¹⁸. The B.C. Nurses Union reports that exposure to fentanyl and other illicit drugs occurs frequently in some hospital workplaces, stating that “employers have failed to provide effective policies that prevent consumption from taking place within a hospital setting.”¹⁹ But, contrary to Ms Findlay’s claims, CFNU does not link increased workplace violence to decriminal-

ization or harm-reduction programs. Resolving the problems of weapons and drugs in hospitals requires strict rules and enforcement. Premier David Eby made it very clear in April 2024: “You’re not allowed to smoke tobacco in hospitals and you’re sure not allowed to smoke crystal meth or fentanyl or other hard drugs.”—adding that weapons are “just prohibited, period.”²⁰ Clearly, metal detectors and extra security staff may be needed at hospitals in high-risk neighbourhoods; EMTs should be legally allowed to check patients for illegal drugs or weapons.

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Health reported on violence against Canada’s healthcare workers in 2019, recommending: creation of a violence-prevention framework; holding perpetrators of assault accountable; funding for violence-prevention infrastructure; and training and recruitment programs to overcome healthcare staffing shortages²¹. The CFNU and Green Party endorse these recommendations²².

Sadly, many of the triggers for violence are similar to those for drug-addiction: mental illness, family strife, homelessness, and lack of prompt access to treatment and care. Most hospital workers support decriminalization and harm reduction policies, where safety of staff and patients is assured²³. Rather than reversing progress on opioid harm reduction, the Green Party advocates for increased funding to address the core social problems along with creating safer hospital environments.

THE SAFE HOSPITALS ACT Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay, MP South Surrey–White Rock

For generations, hospitals have been sanctuaries of healing, safety, and care. Sadly, after nine years of Justin Trudeau’s radical left and weak on crime agenda, Canadians no longer feel safe in our hospitals. The B.C. Nurses Union has repeatedly sounded the alarm and revealed that doctors and nurses on the frontlines here in our province are being exposed to toxic hard drug smoke in their workplaces. Patients are now faced with the dangerous reality of weapons in hospitals while they receive treatment. Trudeau’s reckless hard drug legalization experiment has wreaked havoc on our hospitals and continues to put our healthcare workers and patients in danger. To address the growing and serious safety concerns in our hospitals, I introduced Bill C-391, The Safe Hospitals Act, this Spring. The Safe Hospitals Act will: Create an aggravating factor for the purposes of sentencing if a

criminal brings a weapon into a hospital; and end the Health Minister’s power to grant exemptions under s.56 of the Controlled Drug and Substances Act if the exemption would allow people to use dangerous illicit drugs like fentanyl and meth in hospitals. Common Sense Conservatives will ban hard drugs, stop giving out taxpayer-funded opioids, and re-invest that money in treatment and recovery so we can bring our loved ones home drug-free.



¹⁴ <https://www.cihi.ca/en/hospital-stays-in-canada-2023-2024#>

¹⁵ <https://www.cihi.ca/en/nacrs-emergency-department-visits-and-lengths-of-stay>

¹⁶ <https://www.canadiansecuritymag.com/b-c-nursing-student-attacked-with-knife-during-first-clinical-placement-union/>

¹⁷ <https://www.castanet.net/edition/news-story-540628-3-.htm#540628>

¹⁸ https://nursesunions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CFNU_Enough-is-Enough_June1_FINAL_low.pdf

¹⁹ <https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/safety-and-ppe/nurses-exposed-to-illicit-drugs-in-bc-hospitals/484643>

²⁰ <https://vancouver.citynews.ca/2024/04/16/bc-hospitals-drugs-clarification/>

²¹ <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/HESA/report-29/>

²² <https://nursesunions.ca/campaigns/violence/>

²³ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-northern-health-illicit-drugs-memo-1.7163121>

END THE REVOLVING DOOR

Tracy Gray (MP for Kelowna–Lake Country) presented Private Members Bill C-283 (“End the Revolving Door Act”) to amend the Criminal Code to allow anyone detained in a federal penitentiary to request they serve their sentence in a designated addiction treatment facility. Bill C-283 would also have legislated mental health assessment for inmates on request²⁴.

The Green Party recognizes the need to resolve addiction and mental health issues within the criminal justice system. Bill C-283 would have achieved some of these aims, but did not address the systemic issues that contribute to recidivism, such as poverty, lack of housing, and inadequate access to mental health care outside of the prison system. Moreover, programs to provide addiction treatments and mental health support within federal penitentiaries should be part of a broader strategy that includes prevention, and aims to reintegrate released individuals suffering from addiction and mental health issue. The Green Party favours rehabilitation over punishment—including better access to community-based treatment programs, housing, and employment opportunities for individuals released from custody.

Ms Gray claims the Liberal and NDP parties “doubled down on failed policies”. She ignores the scientific evidence that harm reduction strategies, including supervised consumption and safe drug supplies save lives and reduce pressure on our criminal justice system. The Green Party supports “decarceration” to reduce the over-reliance on prisons for addressing social issues,

particularly for non-violent offenders, and favours an approach which balances harm reduction with greater investment in treatment and recovery services. Criminalizing addiction only exacerbates the cycle of poverty and incarceration.

END THE REVOLVING DOOR

Tracy Gray, MP
Kelowna—Lake Country



Between a worsening addiction crisis, a mental health crisis, and a broken bail system, the criminal justice system has become a revolving door for too many people. This affects both those suffering from addiction, as well as the neighbourhoods these individuals come back to.

Conservatives believe that reducing recidivism and providing hope for those struggling with addiction must go hand in hand. To that effect, I brought forward Private Members Bill C-283, the “End the Revolving Door Act,” to provide tools to help those suffering from addiction who are sentenced to serve their time in a federal penitentiary.

The End the Revolving Door Act would have legislated a mental health assessment and allowed the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada to designate all or a part of a federal penitentiary as an addiction treatment and recovery facility offering curative treatment. Reports show more than 70% of people incarcerated to federal penitentiaries suffer from addiction, and recidivism is high.

Even though there was support from many who work in the criminal justice system or help those suffering from addiction, the NDP-Liberal coalition chose to vote down this common-sense Bill. Instead, they doubled down on their own failed policies, which have flooded our streets with dangerous drugs, worsened the addiction crisis in BC and across Canada, and increased crime in our communities. My Conservative colleagues and I will continue to advocate for common sense solutions to these problems caused by this NDP-Liberal coalition.

²⁴ <https://openparliament.ca/bills/44-1/C-283/>

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

Mr Rob Morrison (Conservative MP for Kootenay–Columbia) argues proposed new regulations for natural health products (NHPs) “undermine the fundamental principle of self-care and personal responsibility” and will impede access to effective new natural remedies.

The Green Party accepts there is public demand for alternatives to conventional medicines. NHPs, including vitamins, minerals, and herbal remedies, all have a role in responsible holistic approaches to health and wellness. We understand public concerns about the importance of personal decisions regarding health and self-care, but these products are not without risks.

Lab studies have found that some NHPs barely contain any active ingredients, while others contain significantly more than claimed on the label. Clearly there is a need for potency regulation of NHPs. Another concern that requires much greater scientific investigation is the potential for dangerous side effects when NHPs interact with prescription medications.

We believe regulations are needed to ensure NHPs are safe and of high quality, and that claims of their benefits are neither exaggerated nor fraudulent. The Green Party calls for more public education on NHPs, to highlight benefits, risks, and appropriate uses. There must be collaboration among industry, consumers and regulators, to foster innovation while not putting public health at risk. Regulations are applied to new pharmaceuticals, new vaccines and new surgical procedures: Why should NHPs be handled differently?

The Green Party believes personal health decisions should be evidence-based—which requires information gathered from rigorous scientific testing. This can be carried out at reputable laboratories in Canada or elsewhere. Approvals must be streamlined without compromising testing standards. Reliable information must become available promptly, while harmful products, or those with misleading claims, are kept off the market. Stronger regulations will empower consumers by ensuring product information is accurate and up-to-date, and clearly and completely explained on labels and literature. Regulations must balance the need for safety and truthful information, but allow consumers to make the best personal choices for their health.

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

Rob Morrison, MP
Kootenay–Columbia



Canadians understand that natural health products play a crucial role in promoting wellness and supporting overall health due to their reliance on natural ingredients and minimal processing, which is why I fought legislation immediately after it was introduced by supporting the NHP businesses and users. These products encompass a wide range of items, including vitamins, minerals, herbal remedies, probiotics, and traditional medicines. All of which benefit everyday life. Natural health products often offer holistic benefits that can complement conventional medicine. They are perceived as gentler alternatives with fewer side effects, appealing to individuals seeking more natural treatment options.

I sponsored Petition e-4474 which received 14,951 signatures agreeing that the regulations in Bill C-368 (C-47) could undermine the fundamental principle of self-care and personal responsibility, which could impact Canadians' ability

to make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

The proposed regulations that the NDP / Liberal government voted in favour of for natural health products in Canada raises concerns about the extensive registration process that delays the availability of new products and innovations in the market, which can deprive Canadians of access to potentially beneficial remedies and makes it essential to strike a balance between ensuring product safety and allowing timely access to products that may contribute to improving public health.

I will continue to represent you and ensuring your right to access the vitamins, minerals, herbal remedies, probiotics, and traditional medicines that benefit your everyday life. Common Sense Conservatives are working hard to guarantee that your access to safe, natural health products is protected.

STOPPING THE CRIME IN B.C.

Mr Mark Strahl, Conservative MP for Chilliwack–Hope claims that since the Liberals came to power in 2015, “violent crime has increased in British Columbia by 51 percent. Homicides are up 26 percent, and extortion is up a whopping 550 percent.”

Statistics Canada data reveal an overall *decrease* in crime in B.C. since 2009, in spite of a significant increase in population. By 2023, rates of homicide, attempted murders, and violent crimes (per 100,000 population) had approximately halved ²⁵. (If “assaults” are included, the overall decrease was almost one third.) It is true that violent crime rates, Canada-wide, dropped during the Conservative era from 2006 to 2014 and have since increased somewhat. In B.C., sexual assaults have risen steadily, and sex crimes involving children have more than doubled. The huge increase in extortion crimes is not related to Liberal government policy: it is a global problem, due mainly to online scams originating outside Canada.

The Green Party is very concerned about public safety, but crime trends reflect a complex interplay of factors, including poverty and lack of decent housing, along with mental illness and drug addiction. Simply blaming the current justice system for perceived increases in crime misses these root causes and does nothing to solve them. We support *evidence-based* crime-reduction using multiple strategies to address the causes and prioritize prevention.

Mr Strahl also claims “Trudeau’s Bill C-75

has all but guaranteed that even the worst violent offenders will be released on bail shortly after they’re arrested while Bill C-5 has taken away mandatory jail time for even the most serious offences.”

The Green Party recognizes that more reforms to the bail system are needed: while these must prioritize public safety, they must also ensure that accused criminals are treated fairly. We oppose a return to mandatory minimum sentencing, which reduces judicial discretion and is known to punish marginalized communities disproportionately, with little impact on recidivism.

STOPPING THE CRIME IN B.C.

Mark Strahl, MP
Chilliwack–Hope



After nine years of Justin Trudeau, I am hearing from my constituents that they have never felt less safe, and with good reason. Since Trudeau became Prime Minister, violent crime has increased in British Columbia by 51 percent. Homicides are up 26 percent, and extortion is up a whopping 550 percent. Last year, the Chilliwack crime rate was ranked third worst in the country. It's clear what is causing this surge in crime. Trudeau's Bill C-75 has all but guaranteed that even the worst violent offenders will be released on bail shortly after they're arrested while Bill C-5 has taken away mandatory jail time for even the most serious offences. As a direct result of Trudeau's dangerous catch-and-release agenda, 256 homicides were committed in Canada by offenders who were out on release in 2022 alone. Crime, chaos, drugs, and disorder have become so common in Canada that every single provincial and territorial Premier has written to Justin Trudeau, asking him to reverse his reckless catch-and-release policies that are endangering Canadians' lives. Our Common Sense Conservative team has asked for emergency meetings to work together to stop the crime. But Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh are not listening. I am focused on ending the crime and chaos, and bringing home safe streets to our community by ending the NDP-Liberal government's failed taxpayer-funded hard drug programs, removing drug dens that are located near our families and our schools, and investing in treatment and recovery to bring our loved ones home drug free. Our community, our province and our country deserve better. Only our Common Sense Conservative team will bring home safe streets by ending Justin Trudeau's catch-and-release justice system and bringing jail, not bail, for repeat violent offenders.

²⁵ Data are freely available from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510018401>, but some effort is required to extract useful information.

BUILDING A STRONG PACIFIC ECONOMY

Mr Tako van Popta (MP for Langley–Aldergrove) declares “an important part of [his] job is understanding the unique contributions of the Pacific region to the national economy, and how several key industries fit into that picture.” He then laments how the residents of Lytton are working to recover from the devastating fire of 2021, before bragging that he is working to create a new Centre for Wildfire Coexistence at UBC; and that he met with Alberta representatives to discuss “inter-provincial trade opportunities and potential for increased LNG exports.”

Evidently Mr Popka has not considered that devastating wildfires have affected B.C. residents not only in Lytton, but also in the Okanagan (2003, 2021, 2023), much of the central interior (2017), Vancouver Island (2018), and the Shuswap (2023). Major floods caused by intense storms in 2021 occurred in the Lower Mainland—destroying many homes and sub-merging hundreds of farm fields, causing extensive (and costly) damage along the Fraser Valley and the Coquihalla highway. Serious storm-induced flooding affected the Lower Mainland again in 2024. The total cost of these events is certainly in the billions of dollars, with huge impacts on the well-being and earning capacity of tens of thousands of B.C. citizens. Climate experts agree increased occurrence of extreme weather events causing wildfires and floods is triggered by global climate change^{26 27}.

But Mr Popka ignores the causes of a warming climate and instead promotes increased production and export of liquid natural gas (LNG) largely from fracking operations in north eastern B.C. and Alberta. Aside from the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to fracking and consumption of LNG product, fracking is poisoning our rivers and lakes (notably on First Nations lands) and is known to trigger earthquakes. Moreover, LNG compression requires huge amounts of energy (either electricity or gas),

along with diesel fuel used for road transport. If fracking were stopped and electrical power diverted to communities, B.C.’s GHG emissions would be greatly reduced.²⁸ In fact, B.C.’s emissions have increased greatly since 1990, and are third only after Alberta and Saskatchewan. Emissions in the six eastern Provinces have decreased since 1990, though Canada lags far behind most developed nations in Europe²⁹.

Mr Popka goes on to suggest that “the housing and affordability crises” are “pushing many Canadians out of the workforce and causing them to leave B.C.” He seems unaware that, as of the end of 2024, B.C.’s population was growing at about 125,000 per year³⁰, along with housing prices and the numbers of filled jobs. B.C. has the third lowest unemployment rate among Provinces (about 5% in the Southern Interior)³¹. Housing affordability is in crisis, but the causes are lack of supply and too many people speculating in an overheated real estate market.

When will our politicians (Conservative, NDP, Liberal) accept that their efforts to grow the economy using fossil energy production and exports is short-sighted? and that GHG emissions will relentlessly increase damage to the planet that must feed and shelter their children and ours? The Green Party argues that economic growth in B.C., and elsewhere, must be built around sustainable development, local food production and local trade, with major investments needed in renewable energy, energy-efficient housing and other low impact technologies; these will create many more jobs than the fossil energy sector will ever provide.

BUILDING A STRONG PACIFIC ECONOMY Tako van Popta, MP Langley—Aldergrove

As Shadow Minister for Pacific Economic Development, an important part of my job is understanding the unique contributions of the Pacific region to the national economy, and how several key industries fit into that picture. Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacificCan) is a government agency that provides funding opportunities intended to strengthen communities, non-profits, and industries. I also endeavour to help connect the funding where it is needed most. To do this, I visit industry stakeholders, businesses, and organizations from across the province to learn more about the part they can play in economic development and their unique needs, and also to bring their concerns and expertise back to Ottawa.

One example of this is my ongoing communication with the residents of Lytton who are working tirelessly to rebuild their community after the devastating fire in 2021, with some funding from PacificCan. I have also met with the University of British Columbia to discuss PacificCan funding opportunities for a new Centre for Wildfire Coexistence, which aims to create more resilient forests and aid communities in fire preparation. Additionally, I met with representatives of the province of Alberta to discuss interprovincial trade opportunities and potential for increased LNG exports. Another key factor in strengthening our Pacific economy is addressing the housing and affordability crises, which are pushing many Canadians out of the workforce here in British Columbia to seek more affordable communities elsewhere. In order to have a thriving economy, we need workers to be able to afford to house, feed, and raise families right here in our province. Conservatives will fire the gatekeepers and tie federal infrastructure funding to housing starts to bring affordable homes for Canadians.



²⁶ <https://cleanbc.gov.bc.ca/about-climate-change/impacts-of-climate-change/>

²⁷ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/post-wildfire-flooding-1.6253544>

²⁸ <https://thenarwhal.ca/topics/bc-lng-fracking-news-information>

²⁹ <https://www.castanet.net/edition/news-story-531339-1161-.htm#531339>

³⁰ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/data/statistics/people-population>

³¹ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/data/statistics/employment-labour-market/lfs_highlights.pdf

THE LIBERAL CAPITAL GAINS TAX HIKE

Mr Brad Vis (MP for Mission–Matsqui–Fraser Canyon), like many people, does not like paying taxes, and gives some graphic examples of how “punitive tax measures” proposed by the Trudeau government would “hurt ordinary Canadians, including farmers, entrepreneurs, small business owners and doctors.” But most of his examples have nothing to do with capital gains tax (CGT).

How would changes to CGT really affect “ordinary Canadians”? Jim Stanford, noted economist at the Centre for Future Work, wrote *Fact and Fiction on Capital Gains Taxation: A Chartbook* in 2024 to explain the proposed changes, and their implications³². Recommended reading!

Before 2024, Canadians were only liable for CGT on *half* of the capital gains they reported. The Liberal proposal (now deferred until 2026) would increase this 50% *inclusion rate* to 67%, but only on gains exceeding \$250,000. **Data from Revenue Canada show that only 0.1% of Canadian tax-payers (~40,000 people) report over \$250,000 in capital gains each year. But the now-rescinded changes—imposing higher CGT almost exclusively on wealthy individuals, trusts, and corporations—would have increased annual federal tax revenue by around \$38 billion!**

Capital gains make up less than 1% of average total income for Canadians reporting less than \$100,000 per year (and only half of those gains are taxed). More than 95% of tax-payers with incomes below \$25,000 report no capital gains at all. Obviously most “ordinary Canadians” would never notice the proposed “tax hike”! At the other end of the income spectrum, however, Canadian corporations have increased their capital gains more than 11-fold since 2000, with a record \$87 billion in 2022 following the COVID pandemic. Most gains are reported by companies

dealing in assets—not by companies that actually make stuff! More than one third were accumulated by financial firms—firms which create some very wealthy retirees but very few new jobs!

Mr Vis argues that entrepreneurs will be “forced to consider relocating their business abroad due to punitive tax measures”. There is no evidence connecting higher CGT to reduced investments in entrepreneurship. Canada’s biggest investments in technology R&D occurred in the 1980s and 1990s—when the inclusion rate was 67% or 75%.

He also claims farmers will “be hit with a crippling tax bill when attempting to pass the land to the next generation” In fact, farmers incur CGT only if they *sell* their land—notably to property developers for vastly higher prices than they would get if the land was kept in agriculture. Hence a low CGT inclusion rate actually incentivizes loss of agricultural land to urban sprawl! (Mr Vis should learn instead about *estate planning* for B.C. farmers!³³)

Green Party MPs voted for the proposed changes to CGT³⁴, advocating progressive tax policies that create economic opportunities, favour small businesses, strengthen the social safety net, and provide public services such as healthcare, education and infrastructure.

THE LIBERAL CAPITAL GAINS TAX HIKE

Brad Vis, MP
Mission–Matsqui–Fraser Canyon



As Shadow Minister for Small Business Growth and Recovery, I have heard from voices of everyday Canadians who have shared how they are being negatively impacted by the capital gains inclusion rate changes. Prime Minister Trudeau and the Liberals' claim their recent changes to the capital gains tax will only impact the top one percent. This tax hike will hurt ordinary Canadians, including farmers, entrepreneurs, small business owners and doctors—those who form the backbone of our nation. Imagine a farmer struggling to keep the family farm afloat, only to be hit with a crippling tax bill when attempting to pass the land to the next generation. Picture a doctor, already burdened by an overwhelmed healthcare system, now facing financial strain as they try to save for retirement. Or take for example an entrepreneur on the brink of innovation, forced to consider relocating their business abroad due to punitive

tax measures. These are the faces of those who will suffer under the Liberals' latest tax hike. Conservatives recognize that genuine tax reform is crucial for Canada's future. If elected Prime Minister, Pierre Poilievre plans to establish a Tax Reform Task Force within 60 days. This task force will be composed of entrepreneurs, inventors, farmers, and workers. The goal is to let workers keep more of their earnings, making Canada an attractive place to invest, hire, and manufacture. By lowering taxes on the poor and middle class and reducing bureaucracy by at least 20%, we can build a nation where hard work is truly rewarded.

³² <https://centreforfuturework.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Capital-Gains-Chartbook.pdf>

³³ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/farm-management/farm-business-management/estate_planning_2001.pdf

³⁴ <https://www.ourcommons.ca/members/en/votes/44/1/810>

UPDATING CANADA'S CRIMINAL CODE

Mel Arnold, Conservative MP for North Okanagan–Shuswap, sponsored Bill C-291, drafted by MP Frank Caputo, that replaced the term “child pornography” in the Criminal Code with “child sexual abuse and exploitation material.”

The Green Party agrees the term “child pornography” does not adequately recognize the exploitative nature of the material, and the harms it causes. This new terminology aligns with international standards and helps clarify the seriousness of crimes.

Mr Arnold claims “the rate of police-reported online child pornography *has almost quadrupled* since 2014”. A more reliable source states it increased from 50 incidents per 100,000 children in 2014 to 160 per 100,000 in 2022³⁵, but we recognize child pornography is a rapidly growing problem. Much of the increase is due to Internet and social media expansion (and driven by demand from the criminals), with much of the online material originating outside of Canada. Some people will see government efforts to control access to pornography as a curb on their “rights and freedoms”—but these people ignore the rights and freedoms of the children and youth who are being abused and exploited. Canadians can reasonably expect Government to take steps to prevent sexual exploitation of children.

The Green Party supports increased funding for policing and the justice system to combat online child exploitation and for greater

international co-operation to shut down offenders—wherever they are located. Public campaigns are needed to inform vulnerable children and their parents about the dangers of online exploitation and how to avoid it. We also demand stronger controls on technology companies to prevent the spread of abusive material.

Further, we emphasize the need for a victim-centered approach to justice which recognizes the rights, well-being and privacy of all survivors of abuse, be they children or adults.

UPDATING CANADA'S CRIMINAL CODE

Mel Arnold, MP
North Okanagan–Shuswap

Terminology in the Criminal Code of Canada must accurately describe prohibited activities, but since 1993, the Code had used the term “child pornography.” This term was a misnomer that needed to be replaced to accurately describe the gravity and reality of such material. This is why I sponsored Bill C-291, drafted by my colleague MP Frank Caputo, that succinctly replaced the term “child pornography” in the Criminal Code with “child sexual abuse and exploitation material.”

Child sexual abuse and exploitation material involves minors who are unable to consent to being involved in the material and this makes the material inherently illegal. Such material should not be considered a form of pornography; it is exploitive and abusive, and the Criminal Code must clearly reflect these realities.

Child sexual abuse and exploitation material is a growing problem in Canada as the rate of police-reported online child pornography has almost quad-

rupled since 2014. Canadians look to Parliament to take the steps, big and small, that are required to deal with problems like sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

I was honoured to see this important bill pass House of Commons and Senate review with unanimous support before receiving Royal Assent to become law and provide the Criminal Code with more concise language that aligns with terminology already being used by our international law enforcement partners to combat crimes against children.

This is but one step of many that need to be taken to strengthen Canada's Criminal Code to protect Canadians. My Conservative colleagues and I will continue fighting to stop crime by strengthening Canada's Criminal Code for the benefit of all Canadians—especially children.



³⁵ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2024007-eng.htm>