

# Halton candidates respond to questions

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With the federal election right around the corner, the *Champion* posed questions to Halton's candidates touching on a cross section of issues — cost of living, the environment, jobs and social supports — affecting area constituents. Below (published in alphabetical order according to the candidate's surname) are their answers.

## Pat Heroux NDP

**The rising cost of living has affected young families to seniors alike in Halton. How will your party address this?**

**Heroux:** As the New Democrat candidate, I'm committed to helping young families and the elderly.

NDP Leader Jack Layton is committed to more federal funds for affordable housing. We will remove the federal tax from home heating.

In Layton's platform, we will reintroduce the federal minimum wage law. I will fight for a federal child care program. Layton will ensure Halton residents have access to credit cards with interest rates no higher than 5 per cent above prime.

We will also give you control over cell phone bills. We're being gouged by gas companies and this has to be fixed. Our tax dollars go to oil companies and they get tax dollars and high profits.

**What will your party do to show national leadership and give Canada an ambitious**

**vision and a plan to protect our environment?**

**Heroux:** The first thing I will fight for is the preservation of Halton's green space and escarpment. New Democrats have long fought for green energy. Canadians can no longer bury our heads in the sand. Emissions must be lowered.

**The majority of social service agencies in Halton are experiencing increases in demand and homelessness is on the rise. What strategy has your party adopted aimed at the elimination of poverty?**

**Heroux:** As I said before, I'm dedicated to federal monies for affordable housing. Our youth need jobs.

The New Democrats will give tax breaks to small business that employ our young people, not to large corporations who send jobs out of the country.



**A good education will help the youth get good jobs. I will work with all levels of government to this end.**

The introduction of the Canada Post-Secondary Education Act will lock in adequate federal funding in exchange for provincial commitments to keep quality up and tuition fees down.

**How will your party create high-quality jobs in Halton and throughout Canada?**

**Heroux:** As part of Layton's team, I will

promote strategic investment in small businesses, not give-aways to profitable corporations.

I will propose stronger investment in education and training for high-tech, clean energy and conservation jobs. The foreign takeover rules will be reviewed and legislation introduced to protect our jobs from takeovers, and fight for a modern made in Canada industrial strategy — including auto, aerospace, mining and forestry.

## Connie Laurin-Bowie Liberal

**The rising cost of living has affected young families to seniors alike in Halton. How will your party address this?**

**Laurin-Bowie:** Without a doubt, the number one concern I'm hearing from families in Halton is the rising cost of living. From rising energy costs, to the cost of gas, to tuition costs for students, and so on, Canadians are looking to their government to help them make ends meet.

The Liberal Party platform has put forward real solutions for everyday Canadians. The Liberal Party of Canada will invest in education, child care, health care, pensions and energy efficiency to bring down these costs that are weighing heavily on the budgets of Canadian families.

The creation of an early learning strategy will have the dual benefit of saving parents on childcare costs and starting a child's education early. A Liberal government will offer \$4,000 to every student who gets the grades to attend university or college to save families on tuition fees.

The implementation of a long-term care health strategy will provide financial relief for those caring for a loved one who's elderly or ill.

Pension reform will allow seniors to live comfortably in their retirement.

Investment in energy efficient renovations

for Canadians will allow families to offset some of the high costs of energy by reducing the need for consumption.

Each of these pieces of the Liberal platform offers Canadians relief in their family budget while supporting people's ability to go to work and invest for the future.

**What will your party do to show national leadership and give Canada an ambitious vision and a plan to protect our environment?**

**Laurin-Bowie:** Living in such a diverse and naturally beautiful area, Halton residents understand the importance of environmental sustainability. Canada requires renewed leadership to protect our environment for our children and grandchildren.

The Liberal Party of Canada will act immediately to address the most critical environmental issue of our time: climate change. Scientists have concluded that in order to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change, we need to avoid an increase in global temperatures of more than 2 degrees Celsius. To achieve this a Liberal government will introduce a cap-and-trade system, capping the level of pollution by largest emitters.



A Liberal government will also create a green renovation tax credit that will offer up to \$13,500 for families who make energy-efficient renovations to their home. Reducing energy consumption will simultaneously protect our environment and help Canadians save on rising energy costs.

**The majority of social service agencies in Halton are experiencing increases in demand and homelessness is on the rise. What strategy has your party adopted aimed at the elimination of poverty?**

**Laurin-Bowie:** The issue of poverty is complex and has many contributing factors and the Liberal Party therefore supports the development of a National Poverty Reduction Plan for Canada. We need this type of comprehensive plan to address the many issues widely seen as essential to reducing poverty.

In my experience working with individuals and families who are vulnerable, addressing the issue of poverty requires investments in: early childcare and education, post-secondary education, family care, and better pension support in retirement. All of these are key planks in the Liberal platform.

I have spoken to many people at the door who aren't working because they can't afford childcare or because they're caring for a family member.

A Liberal government will also address one of the key issues in poverty reduction in Canada: access to affordable housing. We

will invest \$550 million more over the next two years to develop more affordable housing and will bring federal, provincial, and municipal governments together to create a unified affordable housing framework.

**How will your party create high-quality jobs in Halton and throughout Canada?**

**Laurin-Bowie:** To address the issue of job creation requires a long-term strategy for harvesting innovation and developing talent in Canada. Instead of focusing on corporate tax cuts that we can't afford when our corporate tax rates are already some of the most attractive and business-friendly in the world, the Liberal Party of Canada will invest in post-secondary education. This will develop Canada's next generation of entrepreneurs to drive our economic development.

We must identify emerging industries and strive to become global leaders in these fields. For example, by investing in the green energy sector we will have the opportunity to create the jobs of tomorrow.

Finally, we must also foster strong trade relationships with the future leaders of the global economy, including China and India. Strong trade relationships will provide open doors for Canadian businesses and ensure Canada continues to play a leadership role in the global market.