

Lisa Raitt Conservative

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

Raitt: While inflation in Canada has remained low and stable, some costs to Halton families and seniors have been rising and putting a squeeze on budgets. Ontario taxpayers know, for example, that their electricity rates have risen significantly. The Conservative government has been determined to help. Through policies such as Tax-Free Savings Accounts, the Universal Child Care Benefit, the Children's Fitness Tax Credit and Arts Tax Credit, we're leaving more money in families' pockets.

For seniors, we will increase the Guaranteed Income Supplement by an additional \$840 per couple. And we have already introduced pension income-splitting, increased the Age Credit by \$2,000, and doubled the Pension Income Credit amount to \$2,000. So in 2011, a single senior can earn at least \$19,064 and a senior couple at least \$38,128 before having to pay any federal income tax.

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

vision and a plan to protect our environment?

Raitt: Protecting Canada's natural environment is always a priority, and the Conservative government has backed this commitment up with significant investments — including adding more than 133,000 square kilometres to the lands administered by Parks Canada. That's an area the size of the country of Greece. We've also invested in the clean-up of the Great Lakes, Niagara River and St. Lawrence River. In Halton, we invested \$750,000 in Conservation Halton parks and Bronte Creek Provincial Park.

Our election platform includes commitments to \$870 million for Canada's Clean Air Agenda, \$400 million for the ecoENERGY Retrofit program to help homeowners make their homes more energy efficient, \$200 million to assess and manage the risk of harmful chemicals, and millions more for Canada's national parks.



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?

Raitt: Halton is fortunate to be one of the most prosperous communities in Canada, but Halton Region estimates that there are some 1,200 homeless people in our community, and they need our help. In 2007, the Conservative government decided a concerted, focused effort was needed to address homelessness. So we created the national Homelessness Partnership Strategy (HPS), to work with cities, regions and provinces, to implement community-based solutions. Through the HPS, Halton Region will receive \$1.7 million over five years, to combat homelessness.

In addition, our government has invested more than \$10 million in affordable housing units in Halton, including a new building in Milton, supported by a partnership with Halton Region and the Province. Homelessness hurts us all, and we should make every effort to provide help to those who need it in our community.

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

Raitt: The single most important thing Canada's government can do to support eco-

economic and jobs growth in Halton is to continue to provide strong, steady economic management. Canada is now first in the G7 in economic growth, the first to create more jobs than were lost in the global recession, and we'll be the only ones with a budget surplus in four years.

Halton came through the recession in strong shape, but we did take some difficult blows, such as the closing of the Meritor plant in Milton. It's important that the federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments work together to provide incentives and ideas to revitalize our manufacturing jobs base, and help people support their families. A re-elected Conservative government will provide leadership to do just that.

We're also taking specific steps to help create new jobs. During the downturn, we invested more than \$3 million to support Halton business innovation and technology. Looking forward, we have proposed a \$1,000 hiring credit for small business, to encourage small firms to hire. We will also invest \$20 million to help the Canadian Youth Business Foundation support young entrepreneurs. And Stephen Harper's Conservatives have committed to protecting both business and personal tax cuts.

Judi Remigio Green

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

Remigio: The ridiculous rising cost of fuel and oil and energy are all resources that we as Canadians don't have control over. Our persistent reliance and addiction, not to mention subsidization, of these polluters have dug us into a very deep hole. The Green Party's cost effective platform hinges on the end of reliance on fossil fuel burning pollutants. The Green Party is all about the courageous shift to a 'Made in Canada' green economy using green technologies; hundreds of thousands of green jobs with real people making real things. Halton could be a leader on that front.

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

Remigio: Long-term sustainability and averting climate catastrophe kind of says it all — the Green Party is unapologetically in defense of the environment and in complete favour of the shift that will allow humans to comfortably inhabit our planet for generations to come. Please refer to Vision Green for 128 pages of plans to sustain our community, our nation and our world. The Green Party will be the national leadership to protect our environment.

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?

Remigio: We have witnessed a shift in our



social safety net where some people, through no fault of their own, have found themselves homeless or living in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. Affordable housing is paramount to quality of life in growing communities, such as Halton. As the gap between rich and poor widens in our nation, the need for affordable housing rises.

The Green Party is committed to the right of every Canadian to have affordable, safe and secure housing. "The Green Party supports the delivery of social housing dollars to provincial, territorial and municipal governments through the traditional vehicle of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)." (Vision Green, 2010, p.103).

Green MPs will advocate for this inclusion in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Green MPs will also urge the government to appoint a Minister for Housing to oversee development and implementation of a National Affordable Housing Plan, with sufficient funds annually through CMHC to community-based agencies across Canada that will build and subsidize affordable

homes with guidelines over the next 10 years using capital grants and changes in the tax and mortgage system.

Please view Vision Green, section 4.14 Ending Homelessness, for further details.

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

Remigio: As I mentioned in question one, true strengthening of Halton's economy must include long-term sustainability. The Green Party's platform is all about moving toward new green-collar jobs and green technology, with real people making real things.

Our economy is working as one of the best in the world. Bring in a Green economy and we will be doing even better. One only has to glance around as some of the innovations that can be seen at the local home shows and green living shows to see that, as Canadians, a lot of us are moving in a truly sustainable direction, creating a 'Made in Canada' green economy.

Tony Rodrigues Christian Heritage

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

Rodrigues: The only way to save Canada's future is to invest in the family. The CHP offers \$1,000 a month for a family in which one parent chooses to be the primary care giver for an aging parent disabled family member or to care for the most important Canadian asset, our precious children. When the family has no money usually the

most vulnerable, which are the children and elderly, starve.

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

Rodrigues: This is a very complex critical question (my take, not the party). It's sus-



pected the three gorge dam that was built in China tilted the earth axis a full inch. Because of this, it's believed the ice cap will melt faster in the North Pole and freeze in the South Pole.

As you know, I have been saying the humble honey bee, which is responsible for 85 per cent of our food supply, is fast disappearing, and according to some well-known scientists, one of the culprits is the over use of electronic devices. Are you willing to give up your cell or starve to death? I don't need the party to tell me we have to save the honey bee.

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?

Rodrigues: If we invest in the family homeless will be drastically reduced, or perhaps even eliminated.

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

Rodrigues: Innovation and technology are the keys for a better tomorrow. I believe in encouraging our young to stay in school. I also believe that grants should be set aside for 'A' students.