

Heath MacDonald - Liberal Candidate for Malpeque

1 - Intro: Tell us a bit about yourself and why you want to represent Malpeque in Ottawa as Member of Parliament? (max. 100 words)

I have spent my entire life living, working, and building stronger communities right here in PEI. For the last six years as an MLA and former Minister of Finance and Economic Development, I have focused on investing in Islanders, developing robust programming to help those who need it most, while leaving our province in a stronger, more fiscally sound position. I want to represent the people of Malpeque because I believe we must continue to grow our economy by investing in sustainable technologies, fostering the proper supports to allow small businesses and primary industries to grow and thrive, all the while ensuring that the proper social programs are in place to help those who need it most. I am proud of the work we as Canadians can accomplish when we work together, and I believe my experience at the national and provincial level could be an asset as the residents of Malpeque look to the future.

2 - Workforce: We hear from our members frequently about the pressure of labour and skills shortages across a wide range of sectors. It is especially concerning because we see higher rates of unemployment than we did before the pandemic, yet there are still hundreds of jobs being left unfilled. What is your plan to deal with these shortages, and how might you and your party achieve this?

The Liberal Party plan will see the Canada Hiring Benefit extended, so that small businesses, like many of your Chamber members are, can increase their ability to hire more workers and create more good paying, secure jobs right here at home. Additionally, we will implement \$10/Day childcare, which the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has identified as major economic incentive, to allow many families, and predominantly more women, to re-enter the workforce, as they will not be forced to choose between going to work or needing to pay large fees for childcare, while also creating 250,000 new childcare spaces, so every child has equal access. Childcare is not just a social program. It's an economic booster. By investing in Canadians, we will continue to create jobs, re-train workers to fill new and vacant positions, while also creating more opportunities right here at home. As well, the Liberal Plan will develop and implement a National Agriculture Labour strategy to help producers address and meet the labour needs in the agriculture industry.

3 - Small Business Support: Small businesses have been through a stressful and tiring past eighteen months. While there have certainly been business support programs to help, businesses will feel the impacts long after the pandemic is gone. What will you and your party do to support our small businesses and economic recovery after COVID-19?

Small business was faced with many challenges over the past 18 months. As I have outlined in the question above, the Liberal Plan will extend the Canada Hiring Benefit, so that businesses are better able to hire the professionals they need while creating more jobs right here at home. On top of that, the

Liberal Plan will see tourism business, who were and remain among the hardest hit, be able to access wage and rent support of up to 75% so that they are better able to recover and rebuild from the challenges COVID has posed for them. We know that the fight against COVID is not over, and that until it is, business and service providers will need to be wary. That's why the Liberal Party has promised to legislate on mandatory vaccines, so that businesses who choose to implement mandatory vaccinations will be protected by law, allowing more customers and staff to safely participate more fully in our economy.

4 - Affordability: A major issue throughout this election has been overall affordability for Canadians. Due to the rising inflation, the rise in housing and rent costs, and the rise in cost of everyday life, people are finding it harder and harder to get ahead. We see it in our businesses and our communities everyday. When Islanders have to devote more of their hard-earned income to necessities like food and housing, it means less disposable income for them to spend within our business community. What will you and your party do to make life more affordable for everyday Canadians?

No discussion on affordability can take place with out highlighting the Liberal Party's commitment to delivering universal \$10/day childcare for every family in the country. This plan will cut child care costs by more than two thirds in some cases right here in PEI. That is saving families more money, allowing them to use their hard earned savings more flexibly. It's putting real money back in parents pockets, while also helping to rebuild a fairer, more sustainable workforce and economy. Additionally, the Liberal Party's housing and affordability plan was ranked as the single best plan on offer by independent, non-partisan organization GenSqueezed, which is an organization advocating for increased affordability for Canadians under the age of 50. The Liberal Plan will see 1.4 million homes built, increasing housing stock and availability of options for buyers and renters alike. It will also see the the introduction of a new tax-free First Time Homebuyers savings account, which will allow first time homebuyers to save up to \$40,000 towards their first home completely tax free. The Liberal Plan will also double the first time home buyers credit, putting \$1500 back in the pockets of Canadians, while also reducing the price charged by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation on mortgage insurance, which will save a typical person \$6100.

5 - Pandemic Debt: COVID-19 has required our federal government to make immediate and necessary investments during the pandemic to ensure Canadians, families, and businesses were taken care of. While much of this was necessary during the initial months of the pandemic, many of our members have expressed concern for the extensions of some programs and, more importantly, how the government plans to pay back the massive debt accumulated during the pandemic and beyond. In fact, this was a key component of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's election platform, *What It Takes to Grow*. What will you and your party do to deal with the pandemic debt?

The Liberal Plan will continue to ensure that Canadians are supported and are provided with everything they need to succeed. When our people succeed, our country succeeds. We will continue to grow our economy by creating jobs, investing in sustainable technologies, and helping small business grow and flourish. But we know that isn't enough. That's why the Liberal plan will see us raise corporate income taxes on the largest most profitable banks and insurance companies who earn more than \$1 billion per

year. We will also introduce a temporary Canada Recovery Dividend that these companies would pay in recognition that they recovered faster and stronger than most other industries. We would implement a tax on luxury items such planes, as was outlined in budget 2021, and we will work with our international partners to implement a global minimum tax so that the biggest most profitable companies in the world are not able to avoid paying the taxes they owe in Canada.