



Federal Election 2021

Bay of Quinte Riding Candidate Q&A



Finishing the fight against COVID/Workforce Recovery and Business Competitiveness

As we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, Ontario businesses need strategic support from the federal government to strengthen the key enablers of competitiveness, including access to interprovincial and global trade, capital and talent.

Question 1 - Businesses have struggled during the pandemic to attract and retain the talent and labour needed to be successful. Do you feel the Canada Recovery Benefit has contributed to this problem and if elected, what would your approach be to CRB and other support programs?

NDP

STEPHANIE BELL

I have been working for small businesses in the Bay of Quinte for most, if not, all of my working life. I have worked in retail, farming, the service industry, and I was an entrepreneur when I ran my own gardening business. So when I read this question I thought it was important to check in with some business owners from here in our communities. The answer from folks was clear: It's not about CRB but affordable housing.

People want to work here but can't afford to live here. Most people can no longer qualify for CRB, so in my opinion this is just to distract from the real issues. CERB and CRB were necessary programs so folks could stay home when we needed them to, in order to control the spread of COVID. We should still work towards a Guaranteed Basic Income so when these situations arise it's commonplace, that we can SURVIVE any crisis.

The REAL problem is that repeated governments have underfunded housing, education, childcare and healthcare while subsidizing people who are already ultra wealthy. We desperately need to build housing that is attainable and that is not at the mercy of the investment market. The NDP are committed to that, and I believe them. I don't believe anyone else is truly prioritizing housing. They are continuing to just talk about it.

GREEN PARTY

ERICA CHARLTON

The pandemic has emphasized for a lot of Canadians that there is a serious issue of the distribution of wealth in North America, as many people struggle to find the money to pay rent even after working 40+ hours a week: our biggest earners continue to profit off their struggles. For some there is a little incentive to a workforce where they feel undervalued, overworked, and underappreciated. Creating a national Guaranteed livable income will give Canadians the security and financial stability they need to be an engaged workforce. The pandemic has shown Canada's market volatility and unpreparedness in the event of a crisis, we have this opportunity to learn from those mistakes as we consider how Canadian life will continue to change as the result of the climate emergency. By taking a unilateral approach to financial stability, and providing everyone with an equal opportunity for skills upgrading and retraining, we can begin the transition into a green economy that promotes localised industry and farming succession planning.





LIBERAL NEIL ELLIS

As a former small business owner like many in our region, I understand their needs and advocate to support the sector rigorously. The Liberal Government's small business support programs were used by many all throughout our region. I have directly heard from many owners who thank the Liberal Government for programs such as the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy, Canada Emergency Business Account, and the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit, which allows their operations to continue and their employees to stay safe. We now know that it is through vaccination and effective support services that business will be able to stay open and operate through this time. We see this today in our riding, nearly all businesses are operating as we emerge from our successful vaccine roll out and delivery of support services that allowed us to re-open. The Liberal Party made sure that Canada has the lowest combined small business tax rate in the G7.

A re-elected Liberal Government will extend the Canada Recovery Hiring Program to assist businesses in hiring more workers. Moreover, we launched a Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot to bring skilled newcomers to smaller communities and help local economies grow. We will provide the tourism industry with temporary wage and rent support of up to 75%, such a plan has been welcomed by the CEO of the Hotel Association of Canada. To meet our labour demand we will provide Temporary Foreign Workers a path to become permanent residents. Build on the Mobility Pathways pilot, which allows refugees to become skilled labourers. Also, improve Canada's foreign credential program. Introduce a tax credit for those in the trades to encourage it's sector growth and mobility. Launch a career extension tax credit for seniors. Moreover, implement \$10 childcare, which allows more individuals to enter the workforce.

PPC JANINE LECLERC

While the CRB was initially set up as an aid to small business and to people who were not able to work during the "pandemic," they benefitted a small fraction from this program, the fact that we are now 19 months into the "2 weeks to flatten the curve" has benefitted no small business.

There are only two ways to create more wealth and prosperity; we can either work more or work more efficiently through increased productivity. But it is impossible to do either when we keep force locking down our business and calling for only essential businesses to remain open. Every business is essential. Whether you are selling worms in a gas station, to a small clothing boutique, or a hair salon to a small appliance repair shop. All businesses are essential. Just ask any mother or father who desires to continually put food on their children's table.





CONSERVATIVE RYAN WILLIAMS

Yes, the CRB has contributed, but also has our inability to attract labour to the region, and ensure that we are developing the skilled labour we need in the area long-term. I'm aware of this problem as an employer, through QuinteVation, when we hosted Canada's first Rural Innovation Summit, as past Vice Chair of QEDC, and as past founder of Bay of Quinte Living – where we worked on the region's first Immigration portal and campaigns with QHBA to attract skilled trades to the area. If elected, I will be meeting immediately with employers, the Chambers, the Centre for Workforce Development, and multiple other organizations to ensure we work on real employee training and attraction strategies that ensures we fill our job vacancies. The Conservative government will start to ensure those on CRB transition out. Our government is enacting the Canada Job Surge Plan to pay 25% of the salary of employees who are leaving CRB and reentering the workplace. We will pay up to 50% for those off work for more than 6 months. Further to that, I believe we can enact training programs to get low skilled employees into skilled positions. We have a massive training plan in Canada's recovery plan including:

- o Doubling the Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit for the next three years to help create more places for apprentices.
- o Investing \$250 million over two years to create the Canada Job Training Fund. The Fund will provide grants to organizations including employers, apprenticeship training delivery agents, unions, post-secondary institutions, and community organizations for projects that:
 - o Give laid-off workers immediate access to training
 - o Reach out to traditionally underrepresented groups,
 - o Help tourism and hospitality workers who have been hit hard by the recession,
 - o Support the talent needs of small businesses, and
 - o Otherwise help workers get the training they need – focusing on areas where there are shortages of skilled workers.
- o Create the Working Canadian Training Loan to provide low interest loans of up to \$10,000 to people who want to upgrade their skills, empowering workers to determine



Creating 21st century opportunities /Healthy People and Prosperous Communities

COVID-19 has exposed and amplified challenges for those who call Ontario home. To ensure an inclusive post-pandemic recovery in our province, Canada needs to invest in community wellbeing through reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, child care, and health care.

Question 2 – If elected what will you do to advance opportunities for women and others displaced by technology adoption and pandemic-related job losses to support an economic recovery for everyone?

NDP

STEPHANIE BELL

As a woman, I feel, and see more so, the lack of affordable childcare, healthcare services, and affordable housing as detriments to all genders, making it difficult to situate themselves in the workforce. We have a shortage of staff across all sectors and fields in our area. I don't need to tell you this.

The NDP encourages affordable, accessible education so we can train an innovative, effective workforce. We plan to work towards affordable, sustainable and efficient housing, so that people can afford to live where they work, in houses that are designed to be inexpensive to maintain.

We will implement affordable childcare. Childcare has been talked about and promised by the Liberal government for decades. So we know for certain, they will continue to talk about it. But will they implement it? I doubt it.

Business owners should also have access to affordable housing, childcare services, medication, dental care and mental health services. I know too many of you, with businesses, who don't have access to the services you need. We're all in this together.

GREEN PARTY

ERICA CHARLTON

The plan for economic recovery requires simultaneous efforts to increase the availability of sustainable transit, affordable housing and universal daycare. As most Canadians struggle to pay their rent, the options for affordable places to live are pushing people further away from their prospective job opportunities. Breaking down financial barriers such as childcare, education and transit will increase the availability of women and other vulnerable sectors. Investing in green innovation to solve critical environmental and social needs will encourage new wave of job opportunities, particularly in the way of developing an energy grid in Canada that will service every customer with completely renewable energy.





LIBERAL NEIL ELLIS

Helping vulnerable Canadians, the middle class and those looking to join it is at the core of our Liberal Government's commitment. Reconciliation efforts are the bedrock of any plan and I invite all parties to join me in a united front supporting our indigenous communities.

As it pertains to technology adoption, we need to strengthen our workforce and businesses to be able to service the digital economy. A Liberal Government will create the Canada Digital Adoption Program. The program will provide a \$2,400 grant to offset the cost of new technology. Create training and work opportunity for 28,000 people so they can assist small businesses in adopting new technology. Offer zero interest loans to purchase larger technology projects. Our plan will allow privately owned Canadian controlled businesses to immediately expense up to \$1.5 million of growth-enhancing investments, which includes areas like software and technology.

1 million, that's the number of new jobs our Liberal plan will create. A Liberal Government will strengthen job recovery and job creation through not only supporting our business owners, but through strengthening support for our workforce. Some of our workforce support includes the following. \$10 childcare will allow more women to enter the workforce. In addition to providing funding to indigenous businesses our government has created the Indigenous Skills and Training Program to assist our Indigenous community members in finding employment. Moreover, we introduced the Canada Training Credit, which is a new tax credit to help individuals with the cost of training fees.

A re-elected Liberal Government will ensure that all those looking to enter the workforce are supported and provided the training they need to succeed.

PPC JANINE LECLERC

Any and all people who have suffered these draconian lockdowns should qualify for financial aid or a low interest business start up re-investment loan or payment plan recovery of such loans.

I do not see more government intervention in the economy as the answer to our economic challenges at this present time. Every time the government takes an additional dollar in taxes, or borrows it, this is a dollar that individuals or business people will not be able to spend or invest.





CONSERVATIVE RYAN WILLIAMS

First of all – I’m the biggest advocate for entrepreneurs and small businesses. It’s not just entrepreneurs, but those in jobs with skills that support entrepreneurs. Our government has launched the Main Street Tax Credit which will give 25% back to those who invest up to \$100,000 in a new business. This could, in fact, include new Day Care Providers, as our Day Care Plan includes giving back up to 75% to families for day care right now, to drive more women and families into the workforce. I will ensure that our region’s entrepreneur culture is built back up, and that we are encouraging small business support and new growth in the years to come. Further to that, we are going to make some changes to BDC to ensure that more small businesses get support. These changes will:

- o Reform the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) to ensure that its loan programs are accessible to small businesses.
- o This will include broadening BDC’s mandate to have it guarantee a portion of loans that Canada’s banks make to small business, in the same way that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation guarantees mortgages.
- o Look for ways to make it easier to start a business and reduce the time that entrepreneurs spend dealing with government when they should be concentrating on their business.
- o Fix the mortgage stress test to stop discriminating against small business owners, contractors, and other non-permanent employees including casual workers.



Getting the fundamentals right/Resilient Infrastructure

*Infrastructure connects Ontarians to jobs, education, goods, services, and the people they love.
The federal government should be a critical partner in building modern, low-carbon
infrastructure to drive our economic recovery.*

Question 3 – To ensure Ontarians can access the jobs of the future, what would you do if elected to increase digital and other types of infrastructure in our region?

NDP

STEPHANIE BELL

Did I mention affordable housing? Seriously though, our entire plan has been to combine infrastructure, climate action, and social services, into one ultimate, transformative plan because we really need all of these things, right now.

We so desperately need to jump headlong into climate action, leaving no one behind. We can create whole new vibrant and innovative sectors. We can lower consumption, re-vamp and expand transit, invest in sustainable agriculture, transition to renewable energy sources, plant trees, reduce emissions overall, reduce food waste, tax heavy polluters and - and - and - everything needs to change!

We will create jobs by doing many of these things. We will make life more affordable for many by making our homes and businesses more efficient. Our communities will be stronger than ever because we took the climate crisis seriously and didn't wait until it was too late. New Democrats and I know it's possible. We are the leaders our country needs, right NOW!

As far as digital infrastructure goes, I will quote this section of our platform: "As more Canadians have become accustomed to working from home as a result of the pandemic, more than half of Canadians living in rural areas still don't have access to high-speed internet. We will make sure that every Canadian has access to affordable, reliable high-speed broadband within four years. This will include taking the first steps to create a Crown corporation to ensure the delivery of quality, affordable telecom services to every community. Supporting more remote work will reduce commuting times and support efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions." I highly recommend checking out the full platform at: ndp.ca/commitments





GREEN PARTY

ERICA CHARLTON

It is important to be resilient and acknowledge that the rapid succession of technology will continue to replace some jobs in Canada by taking a proactive approach to supporting our workforce as we prepare for this inevitable truth. I would like to see competitive Canadian business opportunities that reflect the national market trends to compete with US business that continues to dominate the Canadian economy and syphon money out of the country. An example of this could be a national ecommerce platform that uses our current postal system, encourages both local and inter-provincial/territorial sales, and that can be easily used by all levels of technical and business proficiency. Internet access remains inconsistent across our area and limits our constituents opportunities for work and education as more remote options become available every day.

LIBERAL

NEIL ELLIS

As the former mayor of Belleville and current Member of Parliament for the Bay of Quinte, it has brought me great joy in championing infrastructure projects, both digital and brick & mortar in nature. Infrastructure investments have been a core pillar in our economic development strategy, moreover, the Liberal Government is the first government to launch the Canada Infrastructure Bank.

Digital infrastructure is pivotal to building back better and accessing jobs of the future. We are helping Canadians not only access jobs, but also become entrepreneurs by investing in internet access for everyone. The Liberal Government created the Universal Broadband Fund to connect rural communities to high-speed internet. Brick and mortar investments include, launching the \$2 billion Regional Relief and Recovery Fund which is supporting local businesses through Regional Economic Development Agencies, including business that don't qualify for CEBA. I personally alongside Liberal Rural Caucus Members, have advocated for renewed funding particularly to rural Service Canada locations to allow for strengthened and targeted job search support. Furthermore, the Liberal Government created a fund to build public transit in rural communities. Thus, allowing for community members to expand their radius of employment opportunities.

A re-elected Liberal Government will require those that have purchased the rights to build broadband actually do so. Canada's larger national carriers will be required to accelerate the roll-out of high-speed internet in rural communities by meeting broadband access milestones between now and 2025. If these milestones are not met, a Liberal Government will mandate the resale of spectrum rights and reallocate that capacity to smaller, regional providers.





PPC

JANINE LECLERC

I do not support, nor does our party, the urgent low-carbon push with our infrastructure. In fact, the Party, as well as myself also fully support the abolishment of the carbon tax completely. The Liberal government has done a bang up job at selling many of our companies and factories to China and since China emits (28% or 10.06 Billion metric tons) United States (15% or 5.41 billion metric tons) India (7% or 2.65 Billion metric tons) Russia (5% or 1.71 billion metric tons) and then Japan at (3% or 1.16 billion metric tons) of carbon, While Canada hasn't even been included on the "Share of CO2 Emissions by Country" chart. Perhaps Mr. Trudeau should be asking China to pay our Carbon taxes since they have many of our plants.

If elected as the member of parliament by the people of my riding I will be leaning on the Chamber of Commerce from each City to consult with them about what they think are the best policies and unlike the other parties that have party whips, I would have the latitude to make initiatives and private member bills to advocate for certain polies without being overly beholden to party line.

CONSERVATIVE

RYAN WILLIAMS

We need high speed internet, and we need it now. I will ensure that we look quickly, as will my government, to new technology including Starlink and Telesat, to fill the gaps we see in high-speed internet access. This, combined with the already existing investments in Xplornet, will ensure we meet high-speed internet targets by 2025 – earlier than any other government.

We also need infrastructure of all types, especially if we are to beat the housing crisis we have in the region. That includes water, sewer, updates to roads, and bridges.

Our government will release \$6 billion from the failed Infrastructure Bank to get infrastructure projects moving now, in our region. That includes monies in Quinte West for a new swing bridge in Carry Place. Erin O'Toole has promised money for CFB Trenton Air Base Expansion when he visited me here last month.

Most importantly, I will focus on housing supply. I will be working with the municipalities, as well as the province to ensure we do this quickly, first with our rental market, and then with our housing supply. We need help now, and we need new leadership to ensure we have action on this file or face a worsening housing crisis for years to come.

