

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY *Under embargo until speech begins*

Date: **April 24, 2015 - Summerside**

Thank you. It's my pleasure to be here this morning with other members of our Liberal team.

Over the past three weeks our Liberal team has been speaking with Islanders about our plan to move our province forward.

We have announced a number of initiatives that will make our province more prosperous and improve the financial security of Island families.

A new Generic Drug Program will cap the cost of generic prescriptions at \$19.95, leaving more money in the pockets of Islanders.

A Liberal Government will introduce personal income tax changes for low and moderate income Islanders. These changes will assist 12,000 Islanders. Of these, more than 2,000 who previously paid tax will no longer pay any personal income tax.

We will invest in our education system and increase accessibility to post-secondary and lifelong education. I truly believe education is the basis of society. It enriches our lives and it prepares us for future success.

We have laid out our Liberal plan to grow the economy and create jobs for Islanders.

We have spoken about the need for fiscal responsibility so that we can invest more in programs that matter most to islanders like healthcare and education.

As Liberals, we know that we must also invest in strong social programs to support Islanders who need it the most.

All Islanders deserve the opportunity to lead a fulfilling and financially secure life. Unfortunately too many Islanders struggle to provide for life's necessities.

As I mentioned, a Liberal Government will work to grow our Island economy and support job creation. At the same time we will strengthen and enhance social programs to provide effective community and social services.

Islanders are known for their compassion and always being there for a neighbour in need. It is part of our identity and what makes our province so special. The Liberal Party recognizes the important role Government also has in taking care of those in need.

A Liberal Government will increase funding and expand programs within social services so that more Islanders receive an enhanced benefit.

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Leader's Remarks

A Liberal Government will increase funding for home repair and renovations for low income Islanders. The Programs offer three avenues of support: The P.E.I. Home Renovation Program, the Home Renovation Program for Persons with Disabilities, and the Emergency Home Repair Program.

The additional funding will ensure more Islanders have access to the programs, which provide forgivable loans to help cover the costs of necessary repairs to homes.

As I mentioned, we committed to improving access to post-secondary education. Lack of affordable childcare is a disincentive for some Islanders to continue with their schooling. We have heard that the eligibility requirements for the Child Care Subsidy program can be a barrier for some Islanders, particularly single parents wishing to return to school to update their skills.

A Liberal Government will increase funding to the Child Care Subsidy and review the eligibility requirements so that parents pursuing post-secondary education don't face undue barriers in accessing the program.

We will expand community-based residential services for Islanders with disabilities who can no longer live at home, and increase funding for the Disability Support Program.

This program assists Islanders living with a disability to overcome barriers and live as independently as possible. Assistance is provided for a number of supports including respite care, employment and community living.

Enhancing these programs will help alleviate some of the worry Islanders feel and allow them to focus their energy more on what matters most – leading a full and rewarding life.

Prince Edward Island has many community organizations and dedicated volunteers who work to provide a variety of supports for Islanders.

A Liberal Government will work collaboratively with our community organizations to provide necessary services for Islanders. These organizations often operate on modest budgets and know how to maximize the value of each dollar. They are frontline service providers, working directly with Islanders. We will continue to work with all of our community partners to ensure Government is best responding to the needs of Islanders.

The Liberal Party is fundamentally committed to social justice. It is a commitment that extends across the full spectrum of public policy.

Together, these programs will provide additional assistance to Islanders who need it the most.

Thank you.

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