



# **A Fiscally Conservative PC Leader?**

## **2014 PC Leadership Candidate Survey**

Derek Fildebrandt

Canadian Taxpayers Federation

T: 1-800-661-0187

E: [dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com](mailto:dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com)

## About the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) is a federally incorporated, non-profit and non-partisan advocacy organization dedicated to lower taxes, less waste and accountable government. The CTF was founded in 1990 when the *Association of Saskatchewan Taxpayers* and the *Resolution One Association of Alberta* joined forces to create a national taxpayers organization. Today, the CTF has more than 84,000 supporters from coast-to-coast.

The CTF maintains a federal office in Ottawa as well as provincial and regional offices in British Columbia, Alberta, the Prairies, Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Provincial and regional offices conduct research and advocacy activities specific to their provinces in addition to acting as local organizers of nation-wide initiatives.

CTF offices field hundreds of media interviews each month, hold press conferences, utilize social media like twitter, Facebook, YouTube and our own blog, as well as issuing regular news releases, commentaries and publications to advocate on behalf of CTF supporters. The CTF's flagship publication, *The Taxpayer* magazine, is published four times a year. *Action Update* e-mails on current issues are sent to CTF supporters regularly. CTF offices also send out weekly *Let's Talk Taxes* commentaries to more than 800 media outlets and personalities nationwide.

CTF representatives speak at functions, make presentations to government, meet with politicians and organize petition drives, events and campaigns to mobilize citizens to affect public policy change.

All CTF staff and board directors are prohibited from holding a membership in any political party. The CTF is independent of any institutional affiliations. Contributions to the CTF are not tax deductible.

Canadian Taxpayers Federation - Alberta Office  
2625 Shaganappi Trail NW,  
PO Box 84171 Market Mall  
Calgary, Alberta T3A 5C4

Phone: 1-800-661-0187  
Email: [dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com](mailto:dfildebrandt@taxpayer.com)  
Website: [taxpayer.com](http://taxpayer.com)

Derek Fildebrandt  
Published in September 2014

## Introduction

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) regularly surveys candidates for public office during federal, provincial and major municipal elections. This is done for the purpose of providing an overall summary of where candidates stand on important issues to CTF supporters and to the broader public.

The CTF strictly abstains from endorsing or supporting any candidate for elected office, but hopes that this survey will better educate voters as to where candidates stand.

## Participation

The CTF invited all three candidates for the Progressive Conservative (PC) Leadership to participate. Of these both Thomas Lukaszuk and Ric McIver participated, while no response was received from Jim Prentice.

All three campaigns acknowledged that they received the survey and were given time extensions of several days if required.

## Questions

The CTF asked each candidate five short 'yes' or 'no' questions. The questions were:

1. If elected PC Leader will you commit to not introducing any sales or value-added tax?
2. If elected PC Leader, will you commit to not raising taxes/ markups on any beers sold in Alberta, or in raising any protectionist barriers against beers imported into Alberta?
3. If elected PC Leader, will you commit to not reintroducing the healthcare premium/tax, raising income taxes, or in any way undoing Alberta's single-rate income tax?
4. If elected PC Leader, will you commit to stopping the practice of debt-financing, stop the Debt Clock, and balance the full, consolidated budget?
5. If elected PC Leader, will you commit to a transparent calculation of the surplus/deficit reflecting total revenues less total expenditures (including capital)?
6. If elected PC Leader, will you commit to restoring – in their entirety – the *Government Accountability Act* and the *Fiscal Responsibility Act*?

---

## Answers and Interpretations

---

Where candidates found a 'yes' or 'no' answer overly restrictive, a space was left for a short written answer. These written answers are generally only included when they diverge significantly from the standard 'yes' or 'no.' Where candidates refused to circle a 'yes' or 'no,' the CTF has done its best to interpret their answers, but has included their written answers. In several cases, candidates gave a nominal 'yes' or 'no,' but provided a contradictory written answer. In these cases, their answers have been interpreted by the CTF with the candidate's written answers provided. In some cases, a candidate's answers were too unclear or ambiguous for the CTF to make a determination. In these cases, they are listed as 'unclear' and their written answer is provided.

For ease of use, the CTF has highlighted answers corresponding its positions and policies in dark green, answer partially but not fully corresponding in light green, answers in contradiction in red, unclear answers in yellow,

Where answers are highlighted in light green or yellow, CTF supporters are strongly encouraged to read the written answers and decide on the meaning for themselves.

---

# Responses

## Summary

Question	Lukaszuk	Mclver	Prentice
If elected PC Leader will you commit to not introducing any sales or value-added tax?	YES	YES	NO ANSWER
If elected PC Leader, will you commit to not raising taxes/ markups on any beers sold in Alberta, or in raising any protectionist barriers against beers imported into Alberta?	YES*	YES*	NO ANSWER

<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to not reintroducing the healthcare premium/tax, raising income taxes, or in any way undoing Alberta's single-rate income tax?</p>	<p>Yes*</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>
<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to stopping the practice of debt-financing, stop the Debt Clock, and balance the full, consolidated budget?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>UNCLEAR*</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>

<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to a transparent calculation of the surplus/deficit reflecting total revenues less total expenditures (including capital)?</p>	<p>UNCLEAR*</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>
<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to restoring – in their entirety – the <i>Government Accountability Act</i> and the <i>Fiscal Responsibility Act</i>?</p>	<p>NO*</p>	<p>UNCLEAR*</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>

**Written Answers**

Question	Lukaszuk	McIver	Prentice
<p>If elected PC Leader will you commit to not introducing any sales or value-added tax?</p>	<p>I will not raise income taxes, corporate taxes, or introduce a sales tax. I cannot look Albertans in the eye and ask them to pay more in taxes unless I am absolutely certain our tax dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively. Let's focus on efficiency and removing regulatory burden.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>
<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to not raising taxes/ markups on any beers sold in Alberta, or in raising any protectionist barriers against beers imported into Alberta?</p>	<p>We do need to find ways to strengthen craft beer production in Alberta, but I have no plans to increase taxation on beer.</p>	<p>Yes, I commit to not raising taxes, but I am open to incentives for brewers who produce beer in Alberta.</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>



<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to not reintroducing the healthcare premium/tax, raising income taxes, or in any way undoing Alberta's single-rate income tax?</p>	<p>Again, I won't raise income taxes, corporate taxes, or introduce a sales tax.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>
<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to stopping the practice of debt-financing, stop the Debt Clock, and balance the full, consolidated budget?</p>	<p>No. We need to address our current infrastructure deficit and build for our future. We cannot continue our economic growth without building and modernizing roads, schools, hospitals, seniors' homes, daycare centres, arts and culture facilities. We cannot pay for all of this with cash up front. We will need to look at alternative financing. Overall, the annual operating budget must be balanced, including the cost of amortizing, operating and staffing that infrastructure.</p>	<p>I have committed to legislating a balanced budget within three years based on the same accrual budgeting used by the Harper Conservatives. I will also introduce a legislated debt retirement plan.</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>

<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to a transparent calculation of the surplus/deficit reflecting total revenues less total expenditures (including capital)?</p>	<p>If elected, I will increase transparency in our budget format. This will be written in a way Albertans can understand, not in a format designed for accountants and investment houses.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>
<p>If elected PC Leader, will you commit to restoring – in their entirety – the <i>Government Accountability Act</i> and the <i>Fiscal Responsibility Act</i>?</p>	<p>The culture of government will change. We shouldn't require legislative amendments to be accountable and transparent. I am open to any idea that increases accountability, but I'm not committed to this particular suggestion.</p>	<p>I have committed to legislating a balanced budget within three years based on the same accrual budgeting used by the Harper Conservatives. I will also introduce a legislated debt retirement plan.</p>	<p>NO ANSWER</p>