



SASKATCHEWANDAY

ON PARLIAMENT HILL

FEBRUARY 18, 2016

The federal government has embarked on a strong, majority mandate to lead a more inclusive, engaged and prosperous Canada. As Saskatchewan's business leaders, we share that vision. And we're here to help bring it to fruition.

People & Skills

There is no issue more vital to the future of Saskatchewan than workforce and skills development — companies' ability to attract and retain the right talent is directly tied to their organizational success.

Our priorities:

1. The Canada Job Grant is one of the most effective government programs of the past decade. Particularly with recent changes to the federal immigration system, we must double our efforts to develop the workforce 'from within' by expanding this vital initiative and increasing its flexibility for business.
2. The Government of Canada should champion the introduction of a national industry-education strategy, focusing on experiential, hands-on learning opportunities for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth, as well as emphasized soft skills, including reading, math, comprehension, language, safety, and entrepreneurship.
3. While Saskatchewan, like most Western Provinces, continues to be impacted by the downturn in commodity prices, long-term growth targets are contingent on businesses being able to access the skilled personnel they need, when they need it. That requires a reliable, expeditious immigration system that complements, not replaces, domestic workforce development.

Innovation

It is no longer enough to simply be 'good.' Today, if Saskatchewan companies are to compete and win, they must be truly world-class, setting global standards for specialization, agility, ingenuity and service — innovating not only in terms of product, but also process.

Our priorities:

1. The SR&ED Tax Credit is an integral part of both Saskatchewan's and Canada's innovation strategy, but has suffered significant erosion in recent years. A comprehensive SR&ED program should include: Capital expenditures and marketing costs in eligibility; a minimum three-year refundability; and, a transparent, third-party appeals process, completed within 180 days of claim submission.
2. Saskatchewan businesses back the federal alignment of regional economic development agencies, to ensure support programs: Incentivize greater collaboration between businesses and public assets; and, do not create unfair competition or implied preference amongst Canadian regions.
3. There is a close correlation between after-tax business profits and a number of key economic indicators, including investment in M&E and R&D, employment levels, GDP, personal income, as well as government revenues. It's important that Canada maintain a tax regime that leads not only North America in competitiveness, but the world.



YOUR PARTNER IN SHARED CANADIAN PROSPERITY

Resource Development

Saskatchewan is a global leader in responsible resource development, creating thousands of reliable, high-paying jobs (including many in Aboriginal and remote communities), supporting social development, and driving world-class technologies that continue to reduce our nation's environmental footprint.

Our priorities:

1. Regulatory quality and compliance remain key priorities for our province; and by shifting from prescriptive action to outcomes-based regulation, we can stimulate innovation, boost competitiveness, and improve business performance.
2. By working with provinces to introduce a royalty tax credit, government can play a core role in rewarding the use of domestic and Aboriginal content in resource development supply chains.

Infrastructure

A concerted focus on infrastructure renewal, accompanied by record levels of investment, is fundamental to protecting the future prosperity of our province.

Our priorities:

1. Given its mandate surrounding infrastructure investment, the federal government should aggressively assist Saskatchewan by investing (through the application of a transparent open tendering process) in the rapid development of north-south trade corridors and other key interprovincial and east-west transportation arteries.
2. The ability of Saskatchewan producers and extractors to move their commodities is directly tied to economic growth — farmers must ship their grain to purchase new equipment, and mining companies must transport their resources to invest in new jobs and technologies. The federal government must capitalize on all levers available to improve rail access in terms of frequency, modal choice, and cost competitiveness.

Market Access

Saskatchewan is a province built on exports. That is why fair and reciprocal access to both domestic and international markets is fundamental to stimulate investment, create jobs, and drive long-term growth.

Our priorities:

1. Saskatchewan businesses support the ratification and quick implementation of both the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European Union and the Trans-Pacific Partnership.
2. The prompt renegotiation of the *Agreement on Internal Trade* is central to national economic prosperity — particularly in an age of mounting interprovincial and international integration. The New West Partnership Trade Agreement can be a model for that framework.

Saskatchewan Day Participants

Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
Saskatchewan Construction Association
Saskatchewan Mining Association
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters
Saskatchewan Manufacturing Council
Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association
Merit Contractors Association of Saskatchewan
Saskatchewan Trade & Export Partnership
Economic Development Regina
Saskatoon Reginal Economic Development Authority
Global Transportation Hub Authority

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