

Election 2015 Candidate Survey from GSA : Entry # 274

Information about you

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Riding

Burnaby North - Seymour

Party

Liberal Party

Survey Questions

1. In light of the recent Marathassa oil spill in English Bay, what do you see as the top three priorities for improving marine oil spill preparedness and response on BC's west coast?

First, we will ensure that all federal departments and agencies mandated to protect our delicate ecosystems are given the mandate and resources they need to uphold the law and punish offenders if spills do occur. We will restore the Canadian Coast Guard base at Kitsilano and invest in marine safety and oil spill response on the B.C. coast.

Second, we have committed to a moratorium on crude oil tanker traffic on British Columbia's North Coast, including the Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait, and Queen Charlotte Sound, to ensure that ecologically sensitive areas and local economies are protected from the potentially devastating impacts of a spill.

Finally, the public must be assured that any proposal that necessitates an increase in tanker traffic goes through a thorough and objective process based on evidence and science. This process must include as much regulatory oversight as with issues of on-land transportation, and must include a real dialogue with our community and key stakeholders. This is why we are promising to restore the integrity of the review process conducted by the National Energy Board (NEB). The Board needs to operate in an objective, transparent manner, and citizens need to be able to trust that it is taking their concerns relating to public safety and environmental protection into account. The Liberal party has also committed to ensuring that any major energy project must gain the trust and support of local communities and partner First Nations if it is to proceed.

2. What specific actions can the federal government take to ensure that local communities are meaningfully involved in oil spill planning and response?

Canadians no longer feel that they can trust their federal government to protect their best interests when it comes to the environment. Mr. Harper treats the duty to consult with Indigenous Peoples as an afterthought. He has weakened our environmental protections and approvals processes.

The Liberal Party has made a clear commitment that any major energy project, including those that could result in a spill, must have the support and trust of local communities, including the support of partner Indigenous Peoples, and must implement sufficient safeguards to protect our lands and waters.

We recognize that we need infrastructure to get our resources to market, but these projects must interact more fully with the impacted community in a responsible manner, hearing their input relating to spill response or otherwise. To ensure such trust is possible for future projects, our party has been consistent in calling for a more substantive review process of these projects, noting the serious shortcomings of the current NEB process.

a) The establishment of a Citizens Advisory Council to facilitate citizen input into and oversight of Canada's marine oil spill preparedness and response regime?

We are committed to ensuring the meaningful participation of citizens and citizens groups in the environmental assessment process, giving members of our community a chance to express their concerns relating to oil spill preparedness and response. A Liberal government will replace Mr. Harper's changes to the environmental assessment process with a new, comprehensive, timely, and fair process that:

Restores robust oversight and thorough environmental assessments of areas under federal jurisdiction, while also working with provincial and territorial governments to ensure that processes are not duplicated;
Ensures decisions, including conditions for projects to proceed, are based on science, facts, and evidence, and serve the public's interest;
Provides ways for interested Canadians to express their views and for experts to meaningfully participate in assessment processes; and
Requires project proponents to choose the best technologies available to reduce environmental impacts.

b) Federal funding for local governments to ensure that they are adequately prepared to play their part in a coordinated spill response, and manage the impacts of an oil spill on their community?

As indicated, we are committed to working with members of the community to ensure that their concerns are heard prior to a project being allowed to proceed. If a community feels that a particular project places them at undue risk and that they are not comfortable with the response mechanisms in place, this will need to be addressed. Without the support of the community, including the support of partner Indigenous Peoples, energy projects cannot be allowed to proceed.

3. Do you support or oppose Kinder Morgan's proposed TransMountain pipeline expansion project?

The Kinder Morgan pipeline impacts our riding more than almost any other riding in Canada. The pipeline itself runs through the front yard of my home on Inlet Drive, and it is a regular topic of discussion both on the doorstep and among my neighbours.

Given the recent Nexen oil spill in Alberta, the spill off of the California coast, and the bunker fuel spill in English Bay, it's not surprising that our community has lost confidence in our ability to protect the environment under our current regulatory processes. The Liberal Party has made a clear commitment that any major energy project must have the support and trust of local communities, including the support of partner Indigenous Peoples, and must implement sufficient safeguards to protect our lands and waters in order to proceed. Given the level of public opposition to the project and the current amount of distrust surrounding the review process, it's difficult to argue that this kind of support for the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project presently exists. Without support, projects like these cannot proceed.

4. What are your views on the National Energy Board's pipeline review process, including its current TransMountain review?

We believe that energy infrastructure projects must earn the trust of communities, respect and uphold Indigenous rights, and not place our lands, waterways, and ecosystems at risk. Unfortunately our assessment process for these projects has become increasingly paralyzed and lacks public trust due to actions by the existing Conservative government.

We believe that Canada needs a new, comprehensive, timely, and fair process that ensures decisions are based on

evidence, support the public interest, and allow for citizens to express their questions and concerns. This is why we have announced that a Liberal government will launch an immediate, public review of Canada's environmental assessment processes. We will rebuild trust in the National Energy Board. We will ensure it has broad, regional representation and sufficient expertise in fields such as environmental science, community development, and Indigenous traditional knowledge. We will stop the practice of having federal ministers interfere in projects while they are being assessed. We will explore, consult, and work collaboratively to move towards a system where federal environmental assessments of projects include an analysis of upstream impacts and the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the projects being assessed.

5. What are the three most important steps the federal government should take to tackle climate change?

As Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau will attend the December 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, and he will invite all premiers to join him.

Within 90 days of the conference, a First Ministers meeting will be held to work together on a framework to combat climate change. Central to this will be the creation of national emissions-reduction targets, informed by the best economic and scientific analysis. These targets must recognize the economic cost and catastrophic impact that a greater-than two-degree increase in average global temperatures would represent, as well as the necessity for Canada to do its part to prevent that from happening. We believe that Harper's targets are inadequate and meaningless without a plan to achieve them. We will ensure that the provinces and territories have adequate tools to design their own policies to meet these commitments, including their own carbon pricing policies. As part of the comprehensive emissions reduction agreement with provinces and territories, we will provide targeted federal funding to help them achieve these goals.

We will work with the United States and Mexico to develop an ambitious North American clean energy and environment agreement. North America can and should be the world's most efficient and responsible energy producer. Key goals of this agreement should include the continental coordination of climate mitigation and resilience policies, as well as the appropriate alignment of international negotiation positions.

6. Would you support a cumulative effects assessment to provide information on the combined impacts of all oil, coal and LNG projects currently proposed for the Georgia Strait region?

As indicated above, we are committed to amending our environmental assessment process to ensure that citizens' voices are heard on major energy projects, allowing individuals to raise concerns relating to the broader impacts of the project. In particular, we will explore, consult, and work collaboratively to move towards a system where federal environmental assessments of projects include an analysis of upstream impacts and the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the projects being assessed to gain a more complete understanding of a given project's impact.

7. How should the federal government address the chronic problem of derelict vessels spilling fuel and releasing other contaminants into the marine environment?

The Canadian Government must be more aggressive in finding and punishing those who will despoil our coastal environment. Canada has more coastline than any major industrialized country. We have committed to a moratorium on crude oil tanker traffic on British Columbia's North Coast, including the Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait, and Queen Charlotte Sound, to ensure that ecologically sensitive areas and local economies are protected from the potentially devastating impacts of a spill. We will strengthen our Coast Guard so that it may more effectively police our coastal waters.

8. Do you have any additional comments or activities you would like to share with our supporters?

I have pledged to meet every member of our community on their doorstep to build a relationship based on trust and

hard work. A vote for me is a vote for strong representation in our community. I've got the energy and experience to make a real difference and a reputation for getting the job done. You can call me anytime and expect results. Over the course of this campaign I have knocked on tens of thousands of doors, attended hundreds of community events, and held more roundtable discussions than any other candidate. I live here, I met my wife here, I was educated here, and I started my business and non-profit here. This is our home, and I look forward to working hard to earn your trust and your support.