

## NDP Response: Our Right to Know

### **1. There is scientific consensus that we are facing a dire climate emergency and that Canada is disproportionately responsible. Given this,**

- a. How will you monitor the efficacy of your climate action plan? What will you do if your targets are not being met?**
- b. What are your plans to mitigate the damages caused by climate change?**

The climate emergency is an urgent priority and an existential threat. It calls on all of us to be courageous, act decisively, and be accountable. An NDP government will take a whole of government approach in response, appointing a Climate Emergency Committee of Cabinet and establishing a strong Climate Emergency Secretariat in the Prime Minister's Office to coordinate our efforts and ensure that our efforts are achieving results. We will also create and fund a Climate Accountability Office to provide independent oversight of federal climate progress and make recommendations on how to achieve our goals. Finally, we will work with the provinces to put in place a framework for corporate climate accountability so that there is mandatory transparency on carbon emissions from publicly traded companies.

We also know that already marginalized communities are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Many of these communities are already facing infrastructure deficits, from affordable housing to public transit to long-term care, child care and more. This poses an opportunity for significant investments in green infrastructure that will support communities, lower emissions, address risk from climate-related disasters, and create good green jobs.

Finally, we will work with provinces, municipalities, and Indigenous governments to make sure that communities have the resources they need to cope safely with extreme weather events. This National Crisis Strategy will help communities plan for and adapt to the changing climate and the weather extremes we are already facing. This strategy will be supported with long-term funding for adaptation, disaster mitigation, and climate resilient infrastructure, including investing an additional \$3 billion in disaster-related infrastructure.

### **2. The Harper government abolished a number of government research institutes and research programs, often in the process destroying archives with the results of decades of research. They also prevented scientists from speaking at conferences and to the public.**

- a. Do you support resumption of any of these programs, efforts to reconstitute any of the destroyed archives, or a return to earlier research priorities?**
- b. Would you put any restrictions on the right of scientists to share their findings with other scientists and the public?**

The NDP fought hard against Harper's cuts to research, science, and libraries. We also tabled a motion in Parliament supporting the right of scientists to speak freely to the public and protesting against scientists being directed to alter or suppress their findings. An NDP government will never muzzle scientists or try to suppress research. Where libraries, archives, or research programs can be restored, we would support that undertaking.

**3. In 2019, Ottawa shut down the Global Public Health Intelligence Network (GPHIN), Canada's international alert system for disease outbreaks.**

**a. Will your party re-establish this agency and have it report to the Science Advisor so that cuts are not made by non-scientists?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed serious weaknesses in Canada's pandemic preparedness and response capacities. New Democrats will strengthen these systems so that Canada is never again unprepared for a global pandemic. We will reverse the Liberals' changes to the Global Public Health Intelligence Network to ensure that we receive early warnings that are critical for managing international public health emergencies. We will also provide stable, long-funding for the Public Health Agency of Canada so that they can protect public health capacity and be ready with surge capacity in the event of a crisis.

**4. Federal agencies conduct many types of inspections.**

**a. If elected will your party make publicly available the results of inspections conducted under federal mandates? This would include, for example, inspections of food, animal care and transport, transportation safety, and manufacturing.**

New Democrats believe that information is essential for safety and accountability. We will take an open government approach to data and revise Canada's access to information regime to make it easier for Canadians to access information, with fewer loopholes, stronger timelines and penalties for failing to abide by the law.

**5. Everyone who makes decisions affecting our country should have access to the best information available. What will your party do with the Office of the Chief Science Advisor? Will you:**

**a. Abolish it,**

**b. Maintain it as is,**

**c. Strengthen it by making it responsible to parliament rather than government?**

New Democrats support the role of Chief Science Advisor. We will also create a Parliamentary Science Officer who will assess the state of scientific evidence relevant to any proposal before Parliament and answer requests from committees and Members of Parliament for unbiased scientific information.

**6. Government partially or fully funds a lot of research, much of which is not available to the public that has funded it.**

**a. Do you support making all publicly funded research accessible to the public?**

**b. Are you prepared to introduce a law to this effect?**

New Democrats support making publicly funded research publicly available and accessible by default rather than as the exception. We will look at options to ensure that this is the practice across government departments and agencies that fund research.