

*Issue*

*PC*

*Liberal*

*NDP*

**Common Front for Social Justice's comparative grid of political parties**  
NB Election 2003

<b>Issue</b>	PC	Liberal	NDP
<b>Minimum Wage</b> - 6,00\$	- Raise the minimum wage per cent from 6\$ to 6.60\$ per hour within four years starting with a 20 cent increase effective Jan. 1, 2004.	- Liberals promise to raise the minimum wage to \$7,10 over their first term with four \$0,25 increments.	- Would support an increase. However, feels a small increase in the minimum wage is not the best way to put more money in people's pocket.
<b>Auto insurance:</b> - privately operated - expensive - dramatic increases - less accessible to people in the north	- All insurance companies would be required to offer a new basic "no frills" insurance package that would cost between \$500 and \$1000 annually.	- A pledge to reduce automobile insurance rates by an average of 25 per cent within 90 days of taking office. - If the insurance doesn't cooperate, the Liberals would consider moving to a public system. - Promise that the rate will go down in any case.	Publicly-run and publicly regulated insurance plan: - financially self sufficient agency - offer compulsory, universal insurance - operate at a lower cost than private insurers - offer lower rates than private insurers - make insurance services readily available to all New Brunswickers
<b>Pay equity</b>	- Awaiting report of the wage gap round table.	- Immediately set about extending the current Pay Equity Act to all parts of the civil service.	- Set-up a work-place based pay equity benefit.

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<b>Low-income senior's benefit</b>		Increase the amount of the benefit.	Build flexibility into the cut-off for the low income seniors plan
<b>Income assistance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- An automatic, one-time extension of health-care benefits to social assistant recipients who have been on assistance for at least one year, helping them make the transition to work for up to one year depending on the availability of an employer plan.</li><li>- A one-time transition benefit of up to \$300 for people who have been on social assistance for at least one year and who could succeed in the workforce if helped with specific expenses such as transportation costs.</li><li>- Access to dedicated skills training and supplemented work experience.</li><li>- Post-employment counselling to help people who have made the transition into the workforce deal with issues that may arise after they start working.</li><li>- Increase the basic rate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Increase the allowable earnings that can be retained from part-time work for people who are on social assistance.</li><li>- Provide start-up funding for community-based businesses that provide social assistance recipients with the opportunity to earn money and acquire skills.</li><li>- Provide enhanced day care assistance during the transition to full-time work.</li><li>- Increase the Comfort and Clothing allowance for persons living in residential facilities.</li><li>- Review the definition "economic unit" to encourage the development of support systems for individuals in need of assistance.</li><li>- Provide adequate income support by reviewing the current rates paid to recipients and the programs available.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Would support an increase.</li><li>- Would modify the definition of "economic unit" to allow people to pool their resources.</li></ul>

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<b>Prescription drugs</b>	<p>- Enhance the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program, capping catastrophic drug costs, and give new drug cost protection for many currently uninsured families and seniors. This would affect 40 000 people and cost \$15M./year.</p>	<p>- Initiate a review of the Prescription Drug Program which would raise the ceiling on income eligibility for senior citizens benefiting from the program, implement a yearly automatic cost-of-living adjustment and introduce the <i>Living Healthier Drug Program</i> to assist those who have high prescription costs in relation to their income.</p>	<p>- Publicly administer Blue Cross.</p>
<b>Affordable housing</b> <p>- The government has signed a \$30m deal with the federal government to create several new housing units in the new year. The agreement also provides additional rent supplements to low to moderate income residents. It is estimated that \$40 000 households in NB have some type of housing need.</p>		<p>- Cut property tax assessment on non-profit housing by 50% at a cost of \$1.5 M/year in lost revenue. Promise to fund 500 new rent supplements in the province at a cost of \$1.8 M./year.</p>	
<b>Nursing Homes</b>	<p>Establish a multi-year nursing home infrastructure plan that would see the construction, replacement and renovation of 10 nursing homes in four years. Cost \$8 M.</p>		

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<i>Issue</i>	<i>PC</i>	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>NDP</i>
<b>Anti poverty legislation</b> - There is no law	- Opposed to legislation.	- Willing to discuss it with the Common Front..	- Willing to discuss it with the Common Front.
<b>Day-Care</b> - 25 000 children currently are subsidies - The family income threshold for subsidies is \$15 000. - Daycare assistance is a maximum of \$18,50 for children under two, \$16,50 for children over two.	- Raise the family income threshold for a full daycare subsidy to \$22 000 per year at a cost of \$5.8 M. - Increase daycare assistance program benefits, making the daily subsidy rate \$22 per day for children under two, \$20 per day for children over two, \$10 per day for children in after-school day care programs		- Invest in and fight for fair federal dollars for special needs child care spaces so all children may benefit from accessible, affordable early childhood education programs. - Salaries of the staff that care for and teach our children must be brought up to the competitive level to attract the best and brightest people to the child care profession. - Offer existing staff the means of upgrading their skills.
<b>Tax relief</b>	- 5 % cut for all taxpayers.		- NDP does not favour tax cut. Feels that HST relief would better serve people - Remove 8 per cent provincial tax from essential products.