



**VOTE FOR
PUBLIC
SERVICES**

Federal Election 2004

CUPE VOTERS' GUIDE

	Liberal	Conservative	NDP	Bloc
Health care	Health care spending promises are a mishmash of new and old funding commitments – some one-time, some contributing to the base. No guarantees that the money won't go into privatized health care.	No commitment to assume a fixed share of public health care costs. Open door to provinces that want to privatize delivery of services as long as the costs are paid through public insurance.	Increase health care funding to take the federal share to 25% in two years. Continue to increase funding in line with provincial costs. Start a national home care program and a national drug plan, beginning with catastrophic drugs. Amend <i>Canada Health Act</i> to stop privatization of hospitals and medically necessary diagnostic services.	Demand that the federal government substantially increase its health care contributions to Quebec without conditions.
Child care	\$5 billion over five years on top of already-promised (modest) funding to begin a national program. Provinces will be expected to deliver regulated (but not necessarily public or not for profit) services at affordable rates. Made same promise in famous Red Book of 1993.	Nothing on child care and they would allow provinces to opt out from new national social programs. Stephen Harper's party believes the "responsibility for the well being of citizens rests first and foremost with the individual and family."	Ambitious plan to create 200,000 child care and early childhood education spaces in four years.	Ensure Quebec receives its share of any federally funded early learning and child care program. Ensure federal government turns over \$1 billion it has saved in child care tax deductions since Quebec introduced its provincial child care program in 1997.



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Cities	Phase-in over five years a 5 cents per litre transfer of federal fuel tax to municipalities, generating \$2 billion annually by the fifth year. No new infrastructure funding announced.	Transfer “at least” 3 cents of fuel tax to cities, but phase-out current infrastructure program.	Immediately transfer to municipalities half the fuel tax (5 cents per litre) with no conditions for matching funds from provinces. Create a permanent national infrastructure program and comprehensive agenda to manage water resources.	Wants a new program for repairing infrastructure under the jurisdiction of the Quebec government.
Privatization	Liberals promise spending but offer no guarantee money won't go to private services. The Liberals push public private partnerships.	Conservatives would drastically cut government spending, making private service delivery appear the only solution.	The NDP opposes privatization and would push for more social investment in public services.	The Bloc says the role of government is to ensure universal access to public services.
Social Programs	Martin cut spending by 40%, resulting in drastic cuts to health, education and social services. Martin calls for more reliance on what he calls “entrepreneurial non-profits” to meet vital community needs.	Conservatives promise increased spending in only two areas, health care and defence. The only way they could both cut taxes and raise spending is to make major cuts in other areas, or run deficits.	NDP spending package is the biggest of the three parties, promising to boost federal spending on programs from 11.9% of GDP to 12.4%.	End fiscal imbalance to ensure provinces have resources required to meet responsibilities. Withdraw from federal programs in areas of provincial jurisdiction with full compensation for Quebec.
Post-secondary Education	No specific promises beyond those in last budget to allow students – including students from middle income families – to borrow more.	Allow even higher tuition and student debt, while speeding corporate involvement and privatization in post-secondary education.	Pass a Post-Secondary Education Act to reestablish federal role. Cut post-secondary tuition fees by 10% and then freeze them at the lower level. Move from loans to needs-based grants, with a tax deduction for interest on student debt.	100% rebate of the GST for public education institutions. Increase transfers for post-secondary education. Remove restrictions on foreign students working while attending university.



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Pay Equity	Nothing on pay equity and no response to Pay Equity Task Force recommendations.	Nothing on women in their platform.	Commitment to introduce effective pay equity laws.	Implement guiding principles from Canadian Human Rights Commission report to end social injustice created by ignoring value of work done primarily by women.
Housing	Expand existing programs, providing \$1.5 billion in new funding for housing over five years. (35,000 to 60,000 new units)	Affordable housing is not a priority. Conservatives do not believe federal government should help communities and provinces build social housing. Tax cut agenda threatens existing programs and social investments.	Put housing front and centre, creating 10-year national program to build 200,000 affordable and co-op housing units and renovate 100,000 existing units. Provide rent supplements to 40,000 low-income tenants and tax incentives to renovate buildings in city core.	All governments should invest 1% of their budgets in social housing.
Unemployment Insurance	Promise to “correct anomalies” in the EI system but provide no further detail.	Eliminate the EI surplus by cutting premiums.	Reform EI to create a separate EI fund. Set new qualifying threshold of 350 hours and end two-week waiting period. Expand eligibility for maternity/parental leave, including for some self-employed workers.	Create a reimbursement plan for EI to make it more accessible to women, youth and seasonal workers. Establish a reserve in the case of an economic crisis.



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Human Rights	Promotes individual rights, such as women's right to choose and those protected by the Charter, but does not create equal conditions. For example, access to abortion is limited by where you live.	Promotes individual rights, including rights to property, which overrides rights of equality-seeking groups. Opposes the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> .	Supports both individual and collective rights, such as gay and lesbian rights, women's rights, the right to choose, Charter rights; rights of Aboriginal peoples; labour rights; rights of children.	Support for aboriginal self-government. Opposes military intervention that contravenes international rights. Support for women's right to choose; labour rights.
War, Peace and Global Development	<p>Martin says he supported decision to stay out of Iraq, but named a pro-invasion hawk, David Pratt, as his defence minister. Commits billions more in defence spending, calling for offensive hardware. Foreign policy should be more "compatible" with the US. He would bring Canada into the dangerous Star Wars missile defence system.</p> <p>Martin pushes P3s as the way to solve the problem of global poverty.</p>	<p>Stephen Harper would have taken us into Iraq. Wants to boost military spending by \$7 billion over five years, to buy aircraft carriers rather than increase wages for soldiers. Would increase Canada's offensive capabilities and bring our policies more into line with the US. Part of bigger "security agenda": locking us into Star Wars missile defence as well as economic and military integration with the US.</p> <p>No commitment to funding international development. Instead, Conservatives tie development policy to free trade agreements, free markets and so-called war against terrorism.</p>	<p>Strong opposition to the Iraq war and Star Wars missile defence. Calls for peacekeeping under auspices of United Nations, a full review of Canadian defence policy, and concerted action on global inequality and environmental decline.</p> <p>Committed to reach the foreign aid target of 0.7% of GDP. Cancel the debt that robs countries of much-needed resources and makes it impossible for many countries to fund social programs and public services.</p>	<p>Opposes military interventions that contravene international law. Opposes Canada's participation in the US "missile defence" scheme and militarization of space. Opposes integration with the United States and massive military spending increases. Supports peace-keeping.</p>



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Environment	Support Kyoto but don't have an implementation plan. Continue to subsidize the oil and gas industries. Money from privatization of Petro Canada to be used for environmental technology. Support trade agreements that open up local water resources to corporations.	Rejects Kyoto, calling the accord "irrelevant". Pushes integration with the US. Climate change under a Harper government would only increase, as he supports Bush's call for a continental energy strategy, further implicating Canada in environmental damage. Platform is vague on water, making no mention of federal standards or adequate funding.	Implement Kyoto by funding public transit, rail and renewable energy. Establish national energy-efficiency building retrofit program to reduce energy costs, cut pollution and create jobs. Provide municipalities with funding for water systems and set national guidelines for clean drinking water. Ban bulk water exports.	Implement Kyoto in a way that is fair to Quebec based on the principle of polluter pays. Promote investment in wind power.
Taxes	No new tax proposals. Martin gave tax breaks of \$100 billion in 2000, favouring the wealthy more than anyone else. Applied a full 44% of the surplus to debt reduction since 1997-98, with another 46% going to tax cuts. Just 10% of surplus has gone to improving federal programs.	Cut taxes, with highest income earners gaining most. The 7% of families with incomes of \$150,000 or more receive almost one-third of the total value of this tax cut. The 64% with family incomes of \$70,000 and less receive only 11.6%. The 32% of families with the lowest incomes (under \$30,000) receive less than 1%. Men would see their tax decline by \$559 on average, while women would gain on average only \$201.	Ensure full indexing of income tax and exempting those who earn less than \$15,000. Remove GST on family essentials. Increase child tax credit. Reverse corporate tax breaks. Close loopholes for most wealthy Canadians. Low income families and families with incomes between \$60,000 and \$90,000 would get the largest average tax cut – between \$794 and \$803.	Surtax on the profits of large oil companies. Tax credit for all families with children under 18. Ensure eligible senior citizens receive guaranteed income supplements, including \$3.2 billion in funds owing them.