



Newfoundland and Labrador
New Democratic Party

P.O. Box 5275, Stn. C
St. John's, NL
A1C 5W1

John Leonard, President
Building Trades of NL (Trades NL)
80 Mews Place
St. John's, NL A1B 4M3

May 7, 2019

Dear Mr. Leonard

Thank you for your questionnaire outlining the concerns of your organization. Please see below for our responses.

What is your policy or approach to resource development projects?

Our policy on resource development is that all such work must be done for the primary benefit of the people of the province. They must be the principal beneficiaries.

Initiatives related to major project work must also include significant worker engagement, an affirmative action component, and provisions that address inequality.

How this maximum benefit is achieved is less important than making sure it is achieved. This is especially true in the development of our non-renewable resources. It is essential that the people of the province get maximum benefit from these limited resources.

Are you committed to ensuring that the majority of construction on any future resource development project takes place in Newfoundland and Labrador, maximizing the number of jobs for our residents? If so, please elaborate on how your party would ensure our province receives maximum benefits.

The NDP is fully committed to ensuring that construction on resource development projects is done in the province. If we are to be world leaders in resource development, we need the trained labour force that can work on our own projects and be ready to work in other jurisdictions as well.

This squares with our resource development policy that all such work must be done for the principal benefit of the people of the province.

With the changing oil and gas industry, outline your plans for investment and development at Bull Arm, ensuring Newfoundland and Labrador continues to be positioned to avail of maximum work opportunities on current and new projects.

The Bull Arm Fabrication Site is a world class construction site for offshore fabrication, with a proven track record of skilled workers who can construct whatever the client needs.

The NDP is committed to promoting this site and our workforce to the world.

Will you commit to ensuring that the Bull Arm site remains a world-class facility, as part of our provincial infrastructure, available for major and minor project work in support of our oil and gas industry?

Bull Arm has a first class global reputation for providing a highly skilled workforce in a stable labour environment, building durable platforms able to function in a hostile marine environment — possibly the most hostile on the planet.

It is a facility the people of this province have invested heavily in. It is essential that the facility be properly maintained in top condition, in readiness for the next international contract.

Will you commit to engaging Trades NL in future projects on the Bull Arm Site, through a Special Project Order (SPO)?

The NDP is thoroughly committed to Trades NL being a key partner in all future projects.

Will you commit to ensuring any future SPOs contemplated for resource development projects include all member unions of Trades NL (thereby avoiding the possibility of "wall to wall" agreements and considerable labour unrest).

The NDP commits to including all member unions of Trades NL in any future SPO agreement. The point of an SPO is a healthy labour relations climate.

Will you commit to developing and implementing a Community Benefits Agreement policy for Newfoundland and Labrador?

In line with our policy on resource development, the NDP will work to ensure that all future Community Benefits Agreements include hiring provisions that provide the maximum benefit for skilled workers, their families, the communities in which they live, and the people of the province as a whole.

If the project is not going to primarily benefit the people of the province, then it is not worth commencing. The NDP is confident in being able to negotiate Community Benefits agreements that will work for all stakeholders

If yes, outline your thoughts on how this may be achieved.

This can be achieved by making sure Community Benefits Agreements have fair hiring provisions for a skilled trades workforce, with hiring provisions for local qualified residents, including apprentices, women and indigenous workers. All agreements must be inclusive of the needs of all people.

Will you engage and include Trades NL in the development of such policy?

The NDP would want the input of Trades NL and other stakeholders in developing such a policy and the agreements following from it. Trades NL is one of many stakeholders that share the common goal of making sure people of the province are the principal beneficiaries of resource development projects.

Will you commit to implementing a Provincial Income tax deduction/benefit/credit for skilled trades workers, similar to a benefit available to other workers who incur expenses as part of their employment?

One of our province's greatest challenges is geography. Many people have to travel long distances every day to go to work or attend training. People in rural parts of the province are especially at a disadvantage.

The NDP is committed to working with Trades NL and other stakeholders to look into the benefits of providing a provincial income tax deduction/benefit/credit for skilled trades workers. It would level the playing field for workers in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, so that access to the workplace is not such a great expense.

It is important that the province maintain the highest standards of pre-employment training for skilled trades students. We are supportive of the current move towards harmonized training for the Atlantic Provinces, but it cannot reduce the hands-on time students will receive as part of their training.

Provincial plans of training and the harmonized curriculum should provide adequate time and resources for students to do the practical components of their trade. More theory and less practical is not the best approach. The emphasis must continue to be on the "doing" and not just the "how" of a trade.

To ensure our apprentices properly trained, they must be able to demonstrate the hands-on part of their trade. In other words, the time allocated to training must include sufficient time to verify the ability of students to do the practical components.

What is your party's position on this issue?

Will you commit to ensuring student training approved by the province will maintain, or enhance, current requirements for hands-on training as part of their pre-service course work?

The training of skilled trades workers must include an adequate apprenticeship training period to ensure the individual has the skills necessary to do the work to the highest standard.

If the NDP has any concern with the move towards harmonized training in the Atlantic Provinces, it would be that we do not want the lowest common denominator. As Atlantic Province harmonization is rolled out, we must not adopt from other provinces any lower standards for training than those we currently have.

Thank you for your interest in the policies and positions of the NL New Democratic Party.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Coffin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison Coffin, Leader
NL New Democratic Party