

Megan Leslie, Halifax New Democratic Party



NDP Leader Jack Layton recently announced the party's platform focused on helping middle-class and working families make ends meet. The plan promises improved public health care, a national child care and learning program, and a comprehensive plan to address growing economic inequality in Canada.

Halifax NDP candidate Megan Leslie says the party's plan will bring relief to more than 65,000 Nova Scotians living in poverty.

"I've worked with so many low-income individuals in Halifax – seniors, single parents, immigrants, persons with disabilities, the un-

employed and the under-employed - who feel they've been forgotten by the government," said Leslie, a graduate of Dalhousie Law School and community legal worker.

She says that voters must demand that government take action to ensure social and economic rights for all its citizens.

Through her work at Dalhousie Legal Aid, and with other community groups, Leslie has proven herself as a fighter on issues like affordable power rates, energy efficiency, tenant rights, dignity for seniors and persons with disabilities, environmental sustainability, and affordable housing.

Leslie says she's proud to be a New Democrat because the NDP "puts social and economic rights on the public agenda."

The NDP will introduce a Poverty Elimination Act, setting firm targets to significantly reduce the overall poverty rate, and making government accountable

to meet these targets. As part of the plan, the NDP will get back into the housing business, allocating 1% of federal spending for truly affordable housing, †including building new homes and upgrading existing ones, and providing funding for supportive housing, homelessness services and transitional housing. † "Many of us know, having services like Metro Turning Point or Adsum House available to people doesn't address the larger issue of a need for affordable housing," says Leslie. "Minimum wage workers know that there isn't a right to fair wage. † And people lining up at Hope Cottage or Parker Street Food Bank know there isn't a right to social security."

Leslie says she's committed to taking these issues to Parliament if she's elected on October 14th.

"I am ready to continue the strong NDP voice for Halifax, ensuring poverty and affordability issues are priorities in Parliament."

We sent, by email, the following request to all the candidates for MP in the Halifax Regional Municipality:
Please send us a brief description of what your party's platforms is with regards to:

- Reduction / Elimination of extreme poverty

- Possible establishment of a government housing program and/or how would your government deal with homelessness/lack of affordable housing.

The following are the answers we received back.

Rakesh Khosla, Conservative Party Halifax West



My name is Rakesh Khosla and I am the Conservative candidate for Halifax West. My wife, Veena and I have lived in the same house that we moved to when we came to Canada thirty years ago where we have raised our two sons. As a Conservative candidate for Halifax West I will work towards introducing changes that make a real difference in the lives of Canadian families.

Just recently, the Conservative government announced three new initiatives to help parents and their children. These are:

* Establishing a new Children's Arts Tax Credit, worth an estimated \$150 million annually, to encourage greater participation by children in arts activities.

* Extending the benefit of the existing Children's Fitness Tax Credit and the new Children's Art Tax

Credit to lower-income families that pay little or no income tax, by making both credits fully refundable.

* Expanding the Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) to allow charities and not-for-profit organizations to establish RESPs for children from low-income families in partnership with parents.

These new policies will give breaks to families and will make arts and fitness programs accessible to all families, including families where financial costs impose real barriers.

In addition, our Prime Minister Stephen Harper also announced another step in the Conservative party's economic plan to deliver practical help to hard-working families. If re-elected, a new Conservative Government will give first-time homebuyers a tax credit for up to \$5,000 of the closing costs on the purchase of a new home.

This will make home ownership more affordable for families and at the same time help create jobs. † Many first-time homebuyers are surprised by the long list of closing costs, including

land transfer taxes, inspection fees, appraisal fees, and legal fees. † These can amount to between 1.5 per cent and 4 per cent of the purchase price. † The tax credit will help first-time homebuyers to avoid stretching too far beyond their budget to meet these unexpected costs.

The Conservative government has already taken measures to support Canadian families, including the cuts to the GST from 7 to 6 to 5 %, the \$100-per-month child-care benefit, the \$2,000 tax credit for children under 18, and the newly-established Tax-Free Savings Account.

It is a time of global economic uncertainty and our government is doing what it can to protect our standard of living for families, for first-time homebuyers, and for all Canadians.

If elected I will commit to expand opportunities for families in Halifax West.

A re-elected Conservative Government will implement more changes that are practical and affordable and will deliver real results for Canadian families.

Michael Munday, Green Party of Canada Halifax West




system that puts everyone on a living wage. The level of payment will be regionally set at a level above the poverty line - but at a bare subsistence level to encourage participants in the GAI program to work toward bringing in additional income.

To address the severe shortage of affordable housing in this country, the Green Party will create a National Affordable Housing Program (NAHP). The NAHP will provide the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) with sufficient funds to build 20,000 new and 10,000 rehabilitated

affordable units per year for the next ten years. In addition, rent supplements or shelter assistance will be made available to a further 40,000 low-income households per year.

I could go on but you asked me to keep it short and simple. There is much more detail available in "Vision Green", the Green Party's policy framework.

You can view the entire document online at <http://www.greenparty.ca/files/VisionGreen.pdf>. If you have any other questions about the Green Party, or me as the candidate in Halifax West, I'd be pleased to answer them for you.



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**On October 14
Vote Megan Leslie**

Continue a Strong Voice
for Halifax

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