

10. In various polls conducted over a year ago, a majority of Canadians suggested Marijuana should be legalized. Are you in favour of legalization, and should it be sold in a controlled retail environment (similar to cigarettes, beer and liquor) to broaden the tax base and hopefully reduce underground drug crime?

(Armstrong): As a former school principal, I have seen the devastating toll illegal drugs take on young people and their families. I do not support any policy that makes it easier for drugs like marijuana to get into the hands of our young people.

(Blanch): Our party has long advocated for legalizing marijuana and selling it in a controlled environment. Tax revenue (estimated at \$5 billion a year) and reduction in gang activity are just a start. Legalization would make the drug more difficult to access for children and youth who we know it has serious adverse effects on.

(Casey): The current approach of prohibition has failed: Canada already has the highest rates of teenage marijuana use among developed countries. The Liberal Party is committed to finding better means to regulate and control the substance including legalization

(Jackson): I believe 100% that citizens should set the policy on marijuana legalization. I currently have a citizen consultation live at www.kennethjackson.ca on the issue. For example, tax rates, age limits, who can grow, who can retail, where is consumption permitted, plus other topics.

(Robinson): The NDP policy is to decriminalize marijuana use. Then we could look at legalization a little bit into the future.

11. What actions will you, personally, take to ensure there is a strong initiative to raise household income thus contributing to a reduction in homelessness and poverty throughout the constituency?

(Armstrong): The best way to raise household income is to grow the economy. The best way to grow the economy is to lower taxes, and make it easier for small business to succeed. Since first elected we have lowered taxes more than 180 times, creating the lowest federal tax burden in 50 years. Combined with support for community projects, I believe we are on the right track for future growth.

(Blanch): Implement the Guaranteed Livable Income, insuring every person is given enough money to remain above the poverty line, and raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

(Casey): I will work closely with communities to identify their strengths and build on those natural advantages in a way that promotes increased employment and prosperity.

(Jackson): My plan is to attract technology-based companies that are involved in the digital democracy sector to our region. There is hundreds of millions of dollars being invested in this area and companies like Google and Facebook are involved. If I were to win, I would be the first candidate in the world elected using citizen engagement as a platform, and thus would attract a great deal of attention too our region.

(Robinson): I will make sure our policies are implemented as soon as possible. Our housing strategy and helping create good-paying green jobs in our communities.

12. What type of jobs and at what rate of pay can be created in Cumberland-Colchester in the next two years? How many jobs should be set as a goal?

(Armstrong): The major employment opportunities that lie ahead for Cumberland - Colchester are through green energy, agriculture, tourism and trades. By investing hundreds of millions into skills development programs, the refurbishing of local community facilities and tourist attractions, the Government is creating jobs for trades people like carpenters, electricians, and plumbers. In addition, investments in tidal power in the Bay of Fundy, hydro-electric power at Muskrat Falls, and agricultural research at the Dal Agriculture campus in Bible Hill will create long-term employment associated with new and emerging technologies. These investments will create good paying jobs that will allow local families to stay here at home.

(Blanch): In the next 2 years the jobs that we can add are mainly in the construction and renovation trades, as we sponsor a program assisting people to do environmental renovations to their homes replacing windows, insulating and making their homes more energy efficient. This program would have the goal of 300 new jobs in doing home assessments, renovations and administration within Cumberland and Colchester Counties. The other jobs that can be added in the short term are the Community and Environment Service Corps, jobs for 18 to 25 year olds that will give them job experience, skills training and keep our youth in our communities. (700 jobs a year for 4 years in our riding).

(Casey): Some of our strengths are alternative energies, small manufacturing and tourism, and I will use every available tool to encourage and support development of these sectors.

(Jackson): I forecast an influx of many lucrative and professional positions. There would be a range of salaries from high six figure positions to an increase in the number of minimum wage positions as we attract the correlating retail growth. The entertainment industry would grow as will the service sector i.e. hotels, restaurants, maintenance. Professional services would increase i.e. insurance, legal, consulting. Though I cannot forecast exact numbers, I am extremely confident of success and will set a number within six months of being elected.

(Robinson): Green jobs should be created wherever possible, and good jobs to improve our infrastructures at the municipal level.

13. An Atlantic Institute of Market Studies (AIMS) report released a year ago stated excluding federal employees Nova Scotia had the highest ratio of public sector employees per 1000 population (99 per 1000). It further stated, if provincial and municipal governments in the Atlantic Region reduced the number of employees to the national average (84/1000) of other provinces, the savings of \$1.9-billion would be \$800-Million larger than the combined \$1.1-Billion deficit of the four

Atlantic Provinces. How would your expertise assist to achieve those efficiencies and savings, even though it's the provincial and municipal governments who need that adjustment?

(Armstrong): I do not support eliminating jobs in our region. This would be bad for our economy. The way to put a Government in a good financial position is through balancing budgets and reducing debt. Our Conservative government did this by eliminating wasteful spending and programs like the Long Gun Registry which cost taxpayers billions. Stable spending and low debt allow us to provide tax cuts and support for families and seniors.

(Blanch): I am motivated to work with governments at all levels to bring about the best outcome for Nova Scotians. In this case, I would likely go with the recommendations of the Ivany report and focus on growing the population to build our economy and simultaneously change the ratio of public sector employees to population. That way, we do not lose anymore jobs in Nova Scotia, and actually develop more, due to the demands for services of the additional population.

(Casey): Previously as a Member of Parliament, and in my time as a senior official of the Nova Scotia government, I encouraged the Atlantic provinces to find areas of their operations which might be combined to reduce the cost of delivering services, and I will continue to do that

(Jackson): My history as a business executive nationally and in South East Asia, where I consolidated operations across 17 nations (from Pakistan to Thailand), would be critical to achieving the stated metrics. I can expertly negotiate and know how to maximize performance through redefining job descriptions. Management of resources is identifying strengths and opportunities and then having the persistence and fortitude to align both. I am expert and stoic in both.

(Robinson): I think eliminating those jobs further increases the risk of our young people moving out west, leaving an even bigger burden on those left behind. As a municipal leader, I doubt whether these jobs can be eliminated without having a negative effect on services.

14. Much has been said recently about increasing the number of immigrants to Canada and specifically to Nova Scotia. How many (4 person) refugee families should be invited to move to Nova Scotia from war-torn counties of Syria and surrounding counties?

(Armstrong): I support the plan to bring 10,000 additional refugees to Canada. However, they cannot be brought here over night. While Canadians are a compassionate people, we need to ensure that our national security and economy are not harmed by bringing in too many people too quickly. That is why I believe the Conservative Party has the most reasonable approach to this issue.

(Blanch): I do not have an exact number, but I would argue as many as possible. The greatest threat to Nova Scotia, and particularly rural Nova Scotia, is population decline. Our schools and other services and local businesses are closing because we do not have the population to support them. Again, the Ivany report isolated international and interprovincial immigration as being one of the most important things we can do to save Nova Scotia from the current situation of decline.

(Casey): The Liberal government would empower our foreign affairs officials to, as they were able to do in the past, determine who qualifies as refugees instead of expecting other countries to identify who should be eligible to come to Canada. It would make the process much quicker.

(Jackson): This I would leave up to the citizens of our constituency as to the precise number of refugees. Personally, I would like to see our area grow first through migration from other parts of Canada before we commit too dramatically. When we become a more viable region, we can increase our involvement in humanitarian aid.

(Robinson): I would consult with the former employees of the

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CoRDA Immigration Department to determine the best number of families who could be integrated into our communities.

15. What leadership will you provide to assist community groups and municipalities to return Canada to a "Peacekeepers Role", thus reducing the number of bombing missions and increase our profile of helping other in dire-need by inviting refugee families to relocate in Nova Scotia?

(Armstrong): We need to remember that this refugee crisis in the Middle East is caused by murderous terrorist groups like ISIS. They need to be dealt with in order to meaningfully address the refugee crisis. I am proud of the role the Canadian Forces have played in combating the terrorist threat, both against ISIS and in Afghanistan before that. Canada has a responsibility to stand with our international partners to combat the threat of international terrorism. That is why we need to both aid refugees and assist in the fight against terror.

(Blanch): I will advocate tirelessly for a return to our peace keeping role in the world. The Canada I grew up in was a peace keeping nation and that was always a source of great pride for me. I vow to return Canada to this global position.

(Casey): Canada led the world in peacekeeping missions under Prime Minister Pearson. As an MP I served on the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs committee, and have long supported Canada's return to a stronger peacekeeping role. We also led the world in land-mine elimination and should lead the world in cluster bomb elimination.

(Jackson): I am a leader in many aspects of negotiated settlements. I am extremely knowledgeable on international events and United Nations and Human Rights activity. I have travelled extensively and have first-hand experience with many foreign nationals and have learned how to communicate with everyone.

(Robinson): I work to restore our role as peacekeepers in the world.

16. Forgetting party policies and planks in your party's election platform, why do you think you are the best person to be chosen as Cumberland-Colchester's Member of Parliament?

(Armstrong): I have worked hard and got results for the people of Cumberland - Colchester. My track record shows that in just 6 years I have brought hundreds of millions in Government investment to the riding. I have the dedication, energy, and experience required to build a stronger future for the people of this riding. I am committed to get the job done.

(Blanch): I am motivated to be MP because I believe in Canada and know that we can do better. I am honest, empathetic and hard working. I believe I was born to do this job. I would rather lose your vote than tell a lie or even avoid giving my full opinion. I will always try to convince you I am right, or agree to disagree, but never pretend I agree when I do not. It is who I am.

(Casey): I will always put our constituents first.

(Jackson): I offer the freedom to represent the citizens of Cumberland-Colchester. As an Independent, I am not behold to the party leaders and have a the capability, voice, passion and persistence to follow through. Further, I have the genuine desire to work with all of the MLA's to better our area. To me, the greatest failure for our region has been the fractured state of the parties willingness to develop our interests. Let's face it, we have PCs, Liberals and NDPs within our federal constituency. Without a collaborative effort, we will never move forward.

(Robinson): I have experiences and skills the other candidates have not: I have been a single parent and dealt with the family court system. I have lived below the poverty line. As a recent university graduate I am all too familiar with the difficulty in negotiating student loans and seeking suitable employment after graduation. As a constituency assistant for a former MLA I was immersed in the difficulties our constituents face on a daily basis. And as member of municipal government, I know how federal policies impact the municipal level of government.

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