

**Answers of Marlene Rivier, New Democratic Party, Ottawa-West-Nepean  
to questions from the PSAC**



<b>PSAC questions</b>	<b>Marlene Rivier's answers</b>
<p><b>1- Quality public services</b> a) Are you in favour of quality public services, universally accessible and delivered by permanent Public service employees?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>b) What will you do to protect and enhance food safety?</p>	<p>Jack Layton and the New Democrats will take action to ensure the food we sell is safe to eat. We will work in consultation with consumers, workers and industry to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of food inspectors at CFIA, and increase administrative support so that inspectors spend time on the production floor and not on paperwork.</li> <li>• Reduce worker injuries, increase the quality of the food, and ensure greater product safety by introducing regulations on “line speed” in meat processing plants that match existing requirements in the European Union.</li> <li>• Improve the system for warning families of potential dangers with consistent policies for immediate public notification of food safety problems.</li> <li>• Require mandatory labelling of farmed fish and genetically engineered food, as is already done in Europe, Asia and Australia.</li> <li>• Require full accuracy and accountability for labels stating “Product of Canada”.</li> <li>• Require labels to inform consumers of the region of origin of food products and ingredients – so they know how far food has traveled to reach their table and are able to choose food produced by Canadian farmers.</li> </ul>
<p>c) Are you in favour of the sale of government owned buildings to the private sector?</p>	<p>No.</p>

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<p>d) If your party is elected will it pledge to reinstate the Court Challenges Program and the Law Commission of Canada?</p>	<p>Yes. A New Democrat government will restore the court challenges program, eliminated by the Harper government, which funded equality seeking groups to go to court to protect their rights and establish a fair jurisprudence.</p>
<p>e) Will your party reverse the cuts to Status of Women funding within and outside government and restore funding for women's groups who do research and advocacy work?</p>	<p>Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats will empower Status of Women Canada and other appropriate federal agencies to work to implement the recommendations of the report on Canada by the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. We will also properly fund Status of Women Canada, re-investing in women's programs and organizations that had their funding cut by the Harper government, as well as re-open regional Status of Women offices and strengthen their mandate to achieve equality for women.</p>
<p>f) The last time the support program for Persons With Disabilities (PWD) was overhauled was in 1995. The cost of living has continually gone up since then. Do you think it is time for an overhaul of the support programs for PWDs?</p>	<p>Yes. New Democrats will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a Canadian Disabilities Action Plan based on the vision of an inclusive and accessible Canada. Our goal is to ensure the full participation of all persons with disabilities in every aspect of life.</li> <li>• Develop and implement accessibility standards and laws for all areas under federal jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Use federal government funding to leverage improvements to employment, public transit and services. For example, we will use universal design principles in federally-funded infrastructure initiatives.</li> <li>• Make the federal disability tax credit fully refundable and accessible to all</li> </ul>

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	<p>CPP disability pensioners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Canadian Disability Employment Fund to assist employers under federal jurisdiction with the costs of providing reasonable accommodation.</li> <li>• Establish specific targets within labour market agreements negotiated with the provinces and territories to assist those with disabilities.</li> <li>• Create a Canadian Disability Accommodation Commissioner to advise Parliament and the responsible minister on issues affecting persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Support a pan-Canadian strategy to stop violence and abuse of disabled persons.</li> <li>• Establish nation-wide goals to ensure that every Canadian in need of non-acute care will receive an appropriate level of care, including home care.</li> <li>• Immediately implement the UN Covenant on the Rights of People with Disabilities, which Canada signed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2- Working conditions and negotiations in the public service</b> a) Would you support the government reducing its use of precarious workers, by ceasing temporary help agencies hiring, and by reducing the number of part-time and contract workers?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

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b) Employees of the federal public sector want their negotiations to accelerate and result in fair pay increases. What will you do to ensure they get satisfaction?	New Democrats respect the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. Collective bargaining must be carried out in a timely fashion without unnecessary delays which result in the loss to workers of non-retroactive benefits and improvements in working conditions. New Democrats recognize the critical value of strong public services and the right of public servants to fair wage increases. We will set a tone of respect and collaboration to assure timely bargaining.
c) Are you in favour of abolishing distinct pay zones that apply to blue collars?	Yes, Jack and his team of New Democrats believe that there should be one national rate of pay, coast to coast for trades people. We believe in equal pay for equal work.
d) Do you believe that pay equity should apply to all employees of the federal public sector?	Yes.
e) Do you agree to modify Part II of the Canadian Labour Code in order to offer pregnant or nursing workers the same access to leave with pay as under the Québec Labour Code?	Yes.

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f) Do you believe that Bill C-45 on health and security should apply to employees working on Parliament Hill?	Yes.
g) Are you in favour of modifying the rules concerning political rights of federal public service workers, in order to allow their full participation in the electoral process?	Yes.
<p><b>3- Greater justice in the taxation system</b> What do you intend to do so that the taxation system stop widening the gap between rich and poor Canadians?</p>	<p>First, we will not implement Mr. Harper's \$50 billion corporate tax cut. We will invest the funds instead on programs that benefit families and their children.</p> <p>The centerpiece of our platform is the New Democrats' new Child Benefit, an initiative that unifies, simplifies and enhances existing programs such as the Child Tax Benefit and the Universal Child Care Benefit.</p> <p>The Child Benefit will give every middle-class and working family in Canada a raise.</p> <p>The Child Benefit will come to all families in the form of a cheque, broadens eligibility to cover children up to the age of eighteen and will not be subject to federal tax. No family will receive less than they do currently and every family with net annual household income of \$188,000 or less will receive more.</p>

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<p><b>4- National Child Care Strategy</b> Will your government invest in a publicly delivered, national child care strategy to address the needs of families outside of Quebec?</p>	<p>Yes. In consultation with the provinces and territories, Jack Layton and the New Democrats will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enact the New Democrats' <i>Early Learning and Child Care Act</i> – which has already passed Second Reading in Parliament - to establish the program in law for the first time in Canada.</li> <li>• In the first phase of this program, create 150,000 new child care spaces in the first year, growing to 220,000 spaces by year four.</li> <li>• Ensure a healthy head start for kids. We will develop a Children's Nutrition Initiative to support and expand provincial and local programs that provide healthy meals to school children.</li> <li>• Establish and adequately fund a Canada-wide child care and early learning program. We will make high quality, accessible, affordable, non-profit and licensed child care available to Canadian families, including aboriginal Canadians.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5- Environment</b> If your party is elected to form a government, will you pledge to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the re-instatement of adequate funding of federal environmental programs;</li> <li>• support international initiatives calling for firm commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions;</li> </ul>	<p>Yes.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and ensure that Canada lives up to its international agreements, including meeting the legally binding targets agreed upon when Canada signed on to the Kyoto Accord?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6- Anti-scab legislation</b> Did you vote (or would you have voted) for or against the anti-scab bill tabled in 2007? What action would you take to have an anti-scab bill passed at the federal level?</p>	<p>New Democrats voted in support of anti-scab legislation and have worked hard with labour to develop and promote this legislation. Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats will continue to push to have anti-scab legislation passed in the new parliamentary session.</p>
<p><b>7- Working in French in the Public Service</b> What do you intend to do to promote the use of French in the Public service, particularly in the National Capital Region?</p>	<p>What do you intend to do to promote the use of French in the Public service, particularly in the National Capital Region?</p> <p>New Democrats support all efforts to promote the use of French in the Public service, particularly in the National Capital Region, and we will work with PSAC and other interest groups to develop the best strategies to ensure that French language rights are protected and promoted.</p>