



# Public Interest Alberta

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## Majority Wants Government to “*Invest in Albertans*”

“As the recession continues Albertans will need to put pressure on the government to make wise choices that will address the priorities of the majority of our province’s people,” says Bill Moore-Kilgannon, Executive Director of Public Interest Alberta. “Our new Environics public opinion poll clearly shows that two-thirds of Albertans want the government to play an active role in dealing with the economic situation and not just sit back and support the old “leave-it-to-the-market” approach to the economy.”

“The government needs to understand that investing in healthcare, education and other public services is more important to the majority of Albertans than tax cuts, or providing more subsidies to the energy industry,” said Elisabeth Ballermann, President of the Health Sciences Association of Alberta. “Investing in healthcare and other public services will create more jobs than providing tax cuts and will ultimately help us build a stronger economy and healthier society.”

“Alberta’s future success requires a greater investment in education and other vital services like early childhood education and support for children in poverty,” said Frank Bruseker, President of the Alberta Teachers’ Association. “The poll shows that the majority of Albertans (72%) are willing to run a deficit, but we must make sure that one of the top priorities is investment in the future of our children.”

“Investing in post-secondary education is an example of one of the wise choices we are calling upon the government to make with this *Invest in Albertans* campaign,” said Beverly Eastman, Chairperson of the Council of Alberta University Students and VP External at the U of A Students’ Union. “As the recession continues we will need even more access to high quality, more affordable post secondary education and 82% of Albertans agree that is one of the best ways to diversify the economy and plan for Alberta’s future.”

Floyd Sweet, the President of the Alberta Council on Aging and Past President of the Alberta Council of Disability Services said, “Services for the most vulnerable of our citizens are often the ones that are cut in an economic downturn. Seniors are already being asked to pay more under the new pharmacare and continuing care strategies and community agencies who are helping families are already struggling to provide enough quality services. Albertans clearly disagree (91%) with any plan to cut services to seniors, people with disabilities and supports for low-income people.”

“Investing in Albertans also means investing in a more sustainable, diversified and green economy, not just pouring public money into propping up the fossil fuel industry,” said Lindsay Telfer, the Director for the Sierra Club Prairie. “Albertans are going to be paying over \$600 per person for carbon capture and sequestration; this money would be better invested in retro-fitting homes, public transit and developing new green jobs. The majority of Albertans want increased investment in our urban infrastructure and services (77%) and to use our wealth to transition to a greener economy (94%).”

Public Interest Alberta is calling upon Albertans to get involved in the *Invest in Albertans* advocacy campaign by sending a message to the Premier and their MLAs; learning more about the campaign’s “10 steps to better a Alberta” and by participating in public events that will be coordinated around Alberta, including the conference, *Beyond Band Aids and Bailouts: Public Solutions In Critical Times*, taking place April 3- 5, 2009 in Edmonton. To see the full poll results and to get involved in the campaign, go to [www.investinalbertans.org](http://www.investinalbertans.org)

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