

Media Release

www.AlbertaLiberal.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 20, 2008

10247 124 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5N 1P8

P: 780.414.1124

F: 780.414.1125

T: 1.800.661.9201

E: office@albertaliberal.com

“As I mentioned before, even though the health budgets were reduced, health service delivery was maintained or improved.” (Ed Stelmach—Hansard, February 14, 1996)

“[As] the Premier of the province of Alberta and as the leader of this government I am accountable to Albertans, and I’ll stand up for every decision that this government has made in the past.” (Ed Stelmach—Legislative Assembly of Alberta, November 13, 2007)

Alberta Liberals will build Calgary’s new cancer centre

Calgary – The Alberta Liberals will build the long-awaited new facility for the Tom Baker Cancer Centre in Calgary. Kevin Taft made the announcement today as part of the Alberta Liberal Action Plan for Health Care.

Because of a pressing shortage of trained professionals, Taft noted, new facilities will only work if we make a new level of commitment to training.

“The 600 new acute care beds planned for the Capital Region won’t open unless we have the staff to run them.”

“Despite the Tory government’s billion-dollar promise in 2005 for new cancer centres, the Tom Baker Cancer Centre has been left on the back burner by Ed Stelmach,” said Taft. “Tory promises don’t help Albertans who need specialized care, and Tory promises don’t move cancer research forward. It’s time to get this built.”

The Tories promised a new hospital in south-east Calgary in 1998, Taft noted, and left Calgarians in the waiting room for a decade.

The Alberta Liberals also committed to a new hospital in Grande Prairie, and to re-development of the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital earlier in the campaign.

“The Tories laid off a whole generation of nurses in the 1990s,” says Taft. “And they let the number of graduating nurses in Alberta fall by *half*. They created the current crisis in staffing not by neglect, but by slashing and burning an excellent public health system.” He noted that 1 in 4 Calgarians cannot find a family doctor—a widespread problem throughout Alberta.

“Albertans are literally dying for lack of timely care because we’re short of professionals, and this government still spends twice as much each year on subsidizing horse racing as it does on its Health Workforce Action Plan,” Taft says. The Alberta Liberals will invest \$60 million a year to expand the health care workforce—\$30 million more than the Tory government is currently spending.

-cont’d-

It's time.
AlbertaLiberal

Media Release

www.AlbertaLiberal.com

-cont'd-

“A government spends on its priorities; it’s that simple. The Alberta Liberal priority is excellent, sustainable, public health care for Albertans,” Taft said. “The Tories tell us public health care is unsustainable while channeling over \$50 million a year to the ponies and signing a half billion dollar, 10 year deal. While health regions are forced to plan year to year, horseracing gets 10 years of stability. The Tories have lost their way.”

The Alberta Liberals will work in close partnership with post-secondary institutions to determine how many additional training spaces for nurses and other health care professionals are needed, and to provide them with a framework of stable funding to expand programs. “We’ll set clear targets supported by dedicated resources.”

“It’s time to stop a boom-and-bust approach to Albertans’ health,” said Taft. “It’s time to recommit to excellent, sustainable, accessible public health care for Albertans, and to a healthier future.”

-30-

Attached: Backgrounder on the Alberta Liberal Action Plan for health.

For more information contact:

Michael Spears
780-919-2617

Larry Johnsrude
780-914-7689

It's time.
AlbertaLiberal