

# Media Release

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For immediate release  
February 29, 2008

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## Now it's time for Albertans to decide who they trust

*"Now it's time for Albertans to **decide who they trust** to manage Alberta's growth, and make the most of this unique moment in our history."  
– Ed Stelmach, Edmonton Journal, Feb. 5, 2008*

*"After the election is over we want to make sure that every area has an equal opportunity to cast their ballots."  
– Ed Stelmach, Edmonton Journal, Feb. 29, 2008*

Edmonton – Ed Stelmach says this election is about trust. Okay, then. Let's talk about trust.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to show up and meet his own constituents.** The PC Leader wouldn't attend a public forum in his Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville constituents.

"The leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta, Premier Stelmach, will debate only other party leaders in provincial forums." (Stelmach's local campaign manager George Sebest, Sturgeon Creek Post, February 20, 2008)

Even Ralph Klein attended local constituency forums in three of his four elections as PC leader.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to tell the truth about climate change.** Stelmach accused the Alberta Liberals of being determined to kill 335,000 jobs in the Alberta energy sector with their climate change action plan.

Then he was asked to back up the charge. He couldn't do it, and had to admit in the last week of the campaign that he made it all up and he didn't know what he was talking about.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to run an impartial election.** When confronted early in the campaign with evidence that partisan PC activists were appointed as constituency returning officers.

First, he said Elections Alberta appointed the rogue returning officers and the PCs had nothing to do with it. Then his spokesman had to admit that Elections Alberta hired the returning officers based on instructions and lists from the PCs.

Then he said he wouldn't do anything about it because there was already an election on.

Then he said this: "After the election is over we want to make sure that every area has an equal opportunity to cast their ballots." (Edmonton Journal, Feb. 29, 2008)

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**It's time.**  
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**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to let First Nations and Metis citizens vote.** Polling stations are not being established in the Piikani and Blood Reserves in southern Alberta, effectively disenfranchising 3,500 eligible voters.

In Grand Cache, about 200 eligible Metis voters living near Grand Cache co-op were initially told they can't vote because their drivers' licences indicate a post office box address, not a traditional street address.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to let Drumheller seniors vote.** In the Drumheller-Stettler constituency, six mobile polling stations are available in Stettler, but only three in the much larger city of Drumheller. In the 2007 byelection, the Alberta Liberals beat the PCs in the city of Drumheller.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to proclaim the legislation enabling the long-awaited Lobbyist Registry.** The enabling legislation has passed the legislature, but has not been proclaimed by the Lieutenant-Governor. Since this is one of Stelmach's cornerstone promises from his first Throne Speech, you'd think he'd want to get that taken care of.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to make his retiring and soon-to-be-defeated PC cronies and PC aides observe tougher, long-awaited conflict of interest rules.**

Hours before calling the election, the PC cabinet passed an order-in-council to have tougher conflict of interest rules take effect on April 1, 2008. That would exempt all the insiders who leave government before that date.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to release the names of his leadership campaign contributors.** More than a year after he won the PC leadership, he still has not told Albertans who paid more than \$160,000 of his bills.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to tell the truth about Enron.** Stelmach accused the Alberta Liberals of Enron-style accounting in their election platform costing. The PCs cozied up to the disgraced energy trading firm after they contributed thousands of dollars to the party over several years up to 2001, when they went bankrupt after committing accounting fraud on a massive scale. Enron was also close to the PC government prior to the implementation of Alberta's disastrous electricity deregulation.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to be transparent about Marie Lake and missing federal child-care funds.** Data requested under Freedom of Information rules were due to be released during the election campaign dealing with PC government mismanagement that would have allowed seismic blasting under an ecologically sensitive lake, and with over \$25-million in federal funds designated for early-childhood education that mysteriously went missing. Both requests were delayed.

**You can't trust Ed Stelmach to release a thorough and comprehensive costing of his massive spending platform.** The PCs applied dollar figures to only 28 of their 70 election promises. They ignored costing out any of their clean-energy, carbon-capture, water-monitoring or a promise Emissions Management Fund.

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**You can’t even trust Ed Stelmach to stand up and explain his platform costing.**

The PCs released it two hours before the televised leaders’ debate, guaranteeing it would get no media coverage, leaving him to pretend he has a responsible plan despite increased spending, no plans for reallocation and no plan for regular saving.

**You can’t trust Ed Stelmach to listen to the people about climate change.**

According to recent polls, 57 per cent of Albertans think the government isn’t doing enough to reduce CO2 emissions. But the PCs aren’t going to rein in emissions for another 12 years.

**You can’t trust Ed Stelmach to stand up for Albertans’ rights, or against**

**insurance companies making record profits.** The PCs automatically appealed a court decision striking down the government’s illegal soft-tissue injury compensation cap after the industry threatened to hike auto insurance premiums.

**You can’t trust Ed Stelmach to stand up for transparency and the public**

**interest.** In the final days of the fall session, the PC government used closure to ram through Bill 46, the Alberta Utilities Commission Act, enabling the newly created commission to make decisions without any public input.

**You can’t trust the Stelmach PCs not to use their positions of government-appointed influence to abuse their power.**

Herb Der, Red Deer College’s Chairman of the Board of Governors, used his position to raise funds for Red Deer South PC Cal Dallas, violating the public service’s code of conduct and ethics.

Chinook Health Board member Donna Bier took out a newspaper ad using her position to endorse Lethbridge East PC Jason Herasemluk.

University of Lethbridge political scientist Peter McCormick said “It proves what the Liberals are saying, that after 37 years in office they’ve lost track of the boundary between what’s the Conservative party and what’s the Government of Alberta.”

It’s time for a leader you can trust. It’s time for a change. Alberta needs a new government.

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