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BACKGROUND: BUILDING A BETTER BUDGET

A solid provincial budget requires a balanced approach – not just in terms of revenues and expenses, but of values. Most Albertans value the essential services government provides. Therefore, an Alberta Liberal administration would protect essential programs while trimming the budget's fat. Here are the services and institutions we would preserve:

Health and Wellness

Transition back to local health care delivery and reinstate the Alberta Cancer Board, Alberta Mental Health Board, and the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
Provide adequate funding for mental health, seniors' health and long term care
Build specialized public surgical centres to reduce administrative costs and deliver superior treatment

Seniors and Community Supports

Index Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) payments to cost of living, just as MLA salaries are
Maintain last year's increase to the Alberta Seniors Benefit and Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD)

Children and Youth Services

Maintain last year's increase to Family Support for Children with Disabilities
Reverse last year's cuts to Child Intervention Services
Increase the budget of Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)

Education

Fund the negotiated teacher salary increases due in September so that school boards don't have to cut staff or increase class sizes
End the freeze on supports for special needs students
Maintain programs that help students at risk, including children in care, to earn their high school diploma

Advanced Education

Stop slashing scholarships and bursaries

Employment and Immigration

Restore training programs to put Albertans back to work
Stabilize income supports for the unemployed

Here's a partial list of the budget fat an Alberta Liberal administration would trim:

Cut carbon capture and storage investment from \$2 billion to \$1 billion
Reduce size of cabinet from 24 to 17 ministries
Extend capital plan spending from three years to five (i.e., spending planned for the next two years would be spread over four)
Eliminate departmental funding for MLA policy committees
End lottery grants to private golf courses
Stop subsidizing horse racing
Eliminate the Public Affairs Bureau, which produces frivolous PR such as Your Alberta Online
Eliminate underperforming overseas trade offices
Reduce government travel and communications expenses