

NZ Labour election policy overview

September 2017

This Occasional Paper will outline New Zealand Labour's (NZ Labour) election policy commitments of particular interest to business and industry, made by leader Jacinda Ardern ahead of the Saturday 23 September 2017 general election.

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The economy and tax

- Introducing a flexible voluntary withholding corporate tax system whereby businesses could meet their tax obligations at a rate of their choosing.
- Resourcing the Inland Revenue Department with an additional \$30 million per annum to prioritise monitoring whether multinational companies are abiding by their tax responsibilities.
- Introducing a 12.5 per cent R&D tax credit.
- Reforming the procurement system to commit government agencies to consider the number of jobs a tenderer will create and sustain in New Zealand, and the wider benefit to the economy as a whole when making (procurement) decisions.
- Developing a Code of Practice in the supermarket industry to increase transparency.
- Introducing a \$25 per visit tourism levy on international visitors, with a large percentage of revenue from the tax to be reinvested in funding tourism infrastructure projects.
- Establishing a tax working group with a focus on improving fairness in the taxation system – in particular, capital gains tax.
- Implementing a targeted royalty on commercial water use – including water bottlers, irrigators, and other industrial users, following consultation with the agriculture sector. Revenue raised would be reinvested in programs which support the cleaning up of NZ rivers.
- Introducing innovative infrastructure bonds and removing the Auckland urban growth boundary to free up density controls.



- Minimizing tax concessions associated with housing speculation.
- Re-commencing government contributions to New Zealand Superannuation to support maintaining the superannuation age at 65.

Housing

- Under a KiwiBuild programme an Ardern Labour Government would build 100,000 affordable dwellings over ten years to be sold to first homebuyers at fixed rates. Half of these affordable dwellings would be built in Auckland. KiwiBuild would be overseen by an Affordable Housing Authority and be supported by an initial capital injection of \$2 billion, which would be recycled and returned to the program once dwellings are built and sold.
- The Affordable Housing Authority would be tasked to work with the private sector to fast track large housing developments and coordinate the development of greenfields and revitalisation projects.
- Partnering with hapu, iwi and Māori organisations to develop a procurement process that would progress affordable and social housing.
- All surplus urban Crown land would be placed under the control of the Affordable Housing Authority for use in the development projects it would oversee.

Transport

- Building Auckland light rail from the CBD to the airport over the next decade.
- Building a new Bus Rapid Transit line from Howick to the airport, including a bus service connecting Puhinui and Manukau train stations to the airport in one year.
- Investing in electric trains, particularly to Pukekohe. This would include instructing Kiwirail to retain the electrified network between Hamilton and Palmerston North and examining the feasibility of electrifying other parts of the network.
- Building cross-town bus priority routes including between New Lynn-Flat Bush, Point Chevalier-Botany, Silverdale-Whangaparoa, and Howick-Glenfield.
- Building a passenger rail service linking Auckland, Hamilton, and Tauranga.
- Investing \$100 million in capital investment in capital investment to Greater Christchurch multi-modal public transport system, including working with local authorities and other stakeholders on a 21st century strategic multi-modal transport plan (for Greater Christchurch).
- Developing a national freight strategy, with a focus on the upper north island.
- Funding a feasibility study for rapid transport to the Wellington airport, which will consider the option of a light rail system.

Infrastructure

- Building a new stadium in Christchurch, in partnership with Christchurch City Council.



- Repairing and redeveloping the Whanganui port in partnership with the local council.

Industrial Relations

- Replacing the current 'fire at will' industrial relations system with a system which would provide fair trial which protect against unjustified dismissal and establishes an impartial referee service.
- Raising the minimum wage to \$16.50 per hour.
- Introducing industry based Fair Pay Agreements that set basic industry wide employment conditions.
- Extending Paid Parental Leave from 18 weeks to 26 weeks.

Environment

- Committing a net zero emissions target by 2050, to be achieved in part through the implementation of binding interim emissions reduction targets.
- Restoring rivers and lakes to a swimmable state within a generation through a suite of targeted policies, including the Ready for Work program where young people on welfare would to work on fencing waterways, riparian planting, and other water quality improvement programs.

Education

- Committing to 100 per cent qualified and registered teachers at every early childhood education centre.
- Scrapping Public Private Partnerships for the build of new schools and redevelopment of existing schools, as well as repealing legislation which enables Charter Schools.
- Fast tracking the three years' free tertiary education policy, to commence from 1 January 2017.
- Implementing the requirement of a School Leavers' Toolkit for secondary education school leavers, where students would be taught and equipped with some set criteria of "life skills".

Health

- Rebuilding Dunedin Hospital.
- Providing access to secondary and intermediate Christchurch schools with access to mental health professionals.
- Extending access to on-site health professionals to all public secondary schools.



- Lowering the Very Low Cost Access scheme fee cap by \$10 to \$8 for adults and \$2 for teenagers.

Further information

For more information, please contact your Hawker Britton consultant [Simon Banks](#) on +61 419 638 587.

The Hawker Britton Occasional Paper on Jacinda Ardern's election as NZ Labour Leader is available [here](#).

Further information on NZ Labour's election policies is available [here](#).