

Mission critical: A just and equitable recovery ^[1]



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AVAILABILITY

Access EN and FR brief [PDF] ^[2]

Access full AFB - EN [PDF] (child care pg. 38) ^[3]

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Excerpted from brief



The AFB in brief As a budgetary research resource, the Alternative Federal Budget (AFB) includes workable policy solutions to the country's most pressing challenges, and provides detailed costing as well as a strong fiscal plan to pay for them. This year's AFB charts a "mission critical" path forward for an inclusive COVID-19 recovery, ensuring the pandemic's legacy is one of a publicly led recovery that leaves no one behind.

The AFB is published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Canada's leading non-partisan, independent progressive public policy research institute, and was created in collaboration with one hundred of the country's most prominent civil society experts, economists and organizations.

This AFB also introduces, through one of its planks, a different approach to health care in Canada— one that strengthens and expands the existing health care system, but goes beyond that to address social and ecological determinants of health, including through the priorities listed below, with the goal of health equity for all. Among its solutions, the AFB will:

Strengthen income security and create a predictable income floor, by:

- Creating two new pillars of income support — the Canada Livable Income benefit for Canadians aged 18 to 62 who do not have children; and a new Canada Disability Benefit.
- Lowering the eligibility age for seniors' benefits.
- Implementing a permanent \$500-a-week floor on Employment Insurance.
- Providing Canada Emergency Response Benefit repayment amnesty for those in poverty.

Invest in high-quality social infrastructure and a vibrant care economy, by:

- Establishing a National Care Economy Commission.
- Introducing a national seniors' care strategy, including national standards.
- Establishing a care economy labour force strategy to ensure workers' rights are protected and that care work is appropriately valued.
- Getting to the finish line on \$10-a-day child care, while taking the profit motive out of both child care and long-term care (LTC).
- Moving LTC and community care funding towards 2 per cent of GDP and committing \$6 billion over 3 years for national LTC standards.
- Permanently eliminating interest on federal student loan debt, while developing a fully publicly funded post-secondary education system, among other post-secondary reforms.
- Creating a non-profit and charitable sector stabilization fund of \$3 billion.

Ensure health equity and well-being for all, by:

- Connecting the dots between the social and ecological determinants of health—things like income, working conditions, a clean environment—and their impact on health outcomes.
- Creating an independent commission to lead a national inquiry into COVID-19 and health equity.
- Increasing federal contributions to the Canada Health Transfer to 35 per cent of total health care spending over three years, as requested by the provinces.
- Helping health systems recover from COVID-19 pressures and deal with backlogs, as well as ensuring adequate PPE supplies and protections for health care workers.
- Developing a legal and financial framework for public health.
- Expanding the public health care system to include pharmacare, a national mental health program, a national dental care plan, and 10 paid sick days.
- Developing national standards for virtual care.
- Investing in hiring 1,000 social prescribing navigators to link people to a range of local, non- clinical supports to improve health and well-being.
- Tackling the opioid health crisis.
- Decolonizing Indigenous health care.

Build inclusion and well-being and ensuring that, as a self-proclaimed champion of human rights and economic opportunity abroad, Canada lives up to its words at home, by:

- Increasing funding for the Canadian Human Rights Commission by 50 per cent to address racism.
- Creating an independent review of systemic racism in the RCMP.
- Eliminating all citizenship fees and providing access to settlement and integration services to all, regardless of immigration status.
- Relaxing family reunion criteria for newcomers.
- Mandating the collection of data disaggregated by race and other sociodemographic identities across all government programs.

Move forward on reconciliation and making investments in First Nations' well-being, by:

- Investing \$6.9 billion over three years in green infrastructure in Indigenous communities.
- Committing \$3.5 billion to support improved financial, administrative and political governance for First Nations.
- Supporting Indigenous food sovereignty by reforming Nutrition North Canada, doubling funding for the Local Food Infrastructure Program, and creating a new Indigenous Food Ways Fund, among other solutions.
- Ensuring First Nations have access to reliable broadband infrastructure.

Support job creation and decent work, by:

- Creating or maintaining around 650,000 jobs by 2025, outside of the ongoing pandemic economic recovery, through AFB policy changes alone.
- Establishing an independent low-wage commission tasked with researching minimum wage policy in Canada and its impacts.
- Strengthening the federal Employment Equity Act.
- Ensuring diversity and community benefits through federal procurement.
- Creating a permanent Task Force for Women and the Economy.
- Establishing a new Workers' Development and Opportunities Fund to cover training costs, income replacement, apprenticeships, and other supports to guarantee an effective right to lifelong learning for all workers.
- Implementing a youth job guarantee.

Invest in infrastructure for people, biodiversity and the planet, by:

- Placing an immediate moratorium on new fossil fuel extraction projects and phasing out coal, oil and natural gas production for fuel by 2040.
- Creating a new Just Transition benefit to support workers transitioning into a new green economy, as well as establishing a permanent Just Transition Commission.
- Reforming the Canadian Infrastructure Bank to pursue publicly owned and operated infrastructure.
- Establishing a \$1.5 billion permanent annual funding stream for nature conservation.
- Committing an additional \$1.6 billion annually to Canada's international climate finance commitments.
- Creating more livable communities, including by expanding creation of affordable and sustainable non-market housing and investing \$1 billion annually in permanent supportive housing.
- Increasing infrastructure capacity for local, regional and domestic agricultural production.

Ensure Canada lives up to its rhetoric on the international stage, by:

- Fully endorsing plans at the World Trade Organization to waive patents and other intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines and treatments.
- Increasing Canada's international assistance in line with the country's fair share, as well as allocating \$7.7 billion over three years to the global COVID-19 recovery.
- Withdrawing from international investment treaties that undermine human rights and environmental practices.
- Applying a disability lens to the development of international trade policy.
- Complying fully with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as committing \$60 million over five years to enhance First Nations' capacity to participate in international trade delegations and negotiations.

Improve fiscal capacity and tax system fairness, while funding new investments, by:

- Implementing an annual wealth tax, which would generate close to \$20 billion annually.
- Moving ahead with a pandemic super profits tax and a minimum tax on multinationals.
- Tackling tax dodging and investing in Canada Revenue Agency enforcement.
- Reining in tax exemptions for Real Estate Investment Trusts.
- Maintaining the debt service-to-GDP ratio at or below historic lows, while investing \$90 billion by 2024-25 in critically needed public services and programs.

Region: Canada ^[5]

Tags: federal budget ^[6]

economic recovery ^[7]

public infrastructure ^[8]

universal child care system ^[9]

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