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Lukaszuk announces social policy; would ensure adequate daycare spaces

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EXCERPTS:

Progressive Conservative leadership candidate Thomas Lukaszuk said Tuesday he would increase support for daycare centres in the province by ensuring enough spaces exist as the province's population growth continues to outpace the rest of the country.

Access to child care remains a primary concern for young families, Lukaszuk said in a statement outlining his social services platform.

He said he will work to provide licensed daycare providers with the necessary support to better meet a growing need across the province.

"There's simply an inadequate number of ... licensed child spaces and that creates a bit of a dilemma," Lukaszuk said in an interview. "On the one hand we're telling Albertans to go to work and bringing in temporary foreign workers, but on the other hand we do have Albertans who simply can't go to work because they don't have adequate child care."

He said government has a role to play in offsetting child care costs for parents who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford it.

Lukaszuk is one of three men vying to become the next PC party leader and premier of Alberta. Former federal cabinet minister Jim Prentice and Calgary-Hays MLA Ric McIver are also in the running.

McIver said that while he will be releasing his social policy platform in the coming weeks, when it comes to child care he would give families a choice.

"I want to give parents the choice how they deliver child care ... whether they stay home or have a family member do it or put them in a daycare," he said.

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