



Abortion Rights
Coalition of Canada

Coalition pour le droit à
l'avortement au Canada

Your Voice for Choice

Canada's only national political pro-choice advocacy group

POB 2663, Station Main, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3W3 • info@arcc-cdac.ca • www.arcc-cdac.ca

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Scheer must promise to improve abortion access, not just refuse to “re-open this debate”

NATIONAL – Andrew Scheer needs to stop repeating that he won't “re-open the abortion debate”, and instead start explaining how he's going to support abortion rights and improve access, says the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC), a national advocacy group.

“We have a strong legal right to abortion in Canada. But abortion is still politicized and stigmatized, and plenty of work still needs to be done to ensure access for every Canadian who needs it,” said Joyce Arthur, Executive Director of ARCC. “The list of needs is long.”

ARCC is asking Scheer to pledge the following, if he is elected:

- Enforce the *Canada Health Act* and ensure that provinces provide accessible abortion services in every region. There are gaping holes in access outside major cities in Canada. Improved access should include expanding the reach of the abortion pill Mifegymiso pill, and increasing the number of non-hospital based facilities that provide sexual and reproductive healthcare, including abortion.
- Require New Brunswick and Ontario to fully fund surgical abortion in clinics. One clinic in NB has been denied funding for 30 years and must now close its doors. Several Ontario clinics receive only partial funding, in contravention of the *Canada Health Act*.
- Implement a universal Pharmacare program, including full funding for contraception. It would reduce the rates of unintended pregnancy and abortion, and be cost-effective.
- Promise to *not* cut domestic funding for sexual health centres and human rights groups, and to *not* change the mandate of Status of Women (both of which Stephen Harper did when he was Prime Minister).
- Maintain the ban on Canada Summer Jobs grants for anti-choice groups and organizations that discriminate.
- Condemn the damaging Global Gag Rule and keep his promise to continue foreign aid funding for safe abortion and family planning.

“So far in this campaign, Andrew Scheer and his candidates have maintained an almost virtual silence on the above issues,” said Kathy Dawson of the Alberta Pro-choice Coalition and Board member of ARCC.

“Every time Scheer and his candidates parrot this same worn-out line about not re-opening the debate, it should remind voters that the Conservative Party plans to do *nothing* to improve access to abortion,” said Dawson. “And it’s still an open question whether we can trust them to not reduce access or take away our rights.”

“Progressive voters can help protect the right to abortion and expand access by volunteering for pro-choice candidates or donating to their campaigns – and showing up to vote for them,” said Dawson.

Resources from ARCC’s Election Toolkit:

- [Solidarity Statement of Support for Abortion Rights](#)
- [Sign petitions to federal government](#) – to fund Clinic 554 in New Brunswick, and revoke charity status of anti-choice groups
- [Questions for Candidates](#)
- [Sample Letter to Candidates](#)
- [Selected 2019 Candidates with Stance on Abortion and Voting History](#) – spreadsheet with details on all Conservative candidates, and those from other parties who may not be pro-choice

Media Contacts:

Joyce Arthur	Executive Director / Directrice générale, ARCC-CDAC, Vancouver	joyce@arcc-cdac.ca	604-351-0867
Kathy Dawson	Alberta Pro-Choice Coalition, Edmonton	kathy@arcc-cdac.ca	780-914-4695
Carolyn Egan	Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics, Toronto	c.egan@sympatico.ca	416-806-7985
Robyn Schwarz	London Pro-choice, London ON	schwarzrobyne@gmail.com	226-236-9095
Julie Lalonde (parle français)	ARCC-CDAC, Ottawa	julie.s.lalonde@gmail.com	613-301-2697
Mariane Labrecque (parle français)	Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances (FQPN), Montréal	mlabrecque@fqpn.qc.ca	514-543-1477
Christopher Kaposy, PhD	Ethicist, Memorial University / Éthicien, Université Memorial, St. Johns NL / T.-N.	christopher.kaposy@med.mun.ca	709-864-3375 (w / bur.)