

**BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association**

**Political Party Policy Survey - Green Party Response**

**Question 1 – Potential of law reform**

If elected to form government, will you reform laws and improve:

- records management in public bodies? Yes.
- access to information from public bodies? Yes.
- the ability for people to control and protect their personal information collected, used and retained by public bodies and private organizations? Yes.

**Question 2 – Law reform in action**

How will you act on reforms in these areas?

- **Records Management:** A Green government will develop clear guidelines and best practices for public bodies to follow, ensuring that records are maintained accurately and are easily accessible.
- **Access to Information:** We will ensure that requests for information from the public are answered automatically without requiring them to go through the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (RTIPPA) process. We will also review and reform the RTIPPA to empower the Ombud to order the release of information to the public.
- **Personal Information Protection:** We will ensure the rights of individuals to control their personal information are protected and strengthened.

**Question 3 – Recordkeeping of information assets**

**Records need to be both created and managed effectively. Recordkeeping promotes effective public governance and establishes a common source of reference for public employees; it is a prerequisite to both evidence-based and data-driven decision-making.**

If elected to form Government, what steps will you take to:

- **Identify the government's needs related to recordkeeping and areas for potential improvement?**

We will initiate a comprehensive review of current recordkeeping practices across all public bodies.

- **Improve the requirement for public bodies to create and act on records?**

We will establish clear guidelines and standards for record creation and ensure that training is provided to public employees on effective recordkeeping practices.

- **Increase proactive release of information under the control of public bodies?**

We will establish policies that require public bodies to answer questions and requests for information from the public without requiring them to go through the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (RTIPPA) process.

- **Improve responses to requests for information under the control of public bodies?**

We will allocate dedicated resources and staff to handle information requests efficiently.

#### **Question 4 – Response to potential concerns**

In recent public discourse, a *Globe and Mail* headlines proclaims, “New Brunswick’s access regime among the most restrictive in Canada, *Globe* audit finds”. Scholarly articles indicate that “Despite the early promise of New Brunswick’s groundbreaking right to information legislation, successive governments have undermined its purpose and value.” FIPAs analysis of legislation across Canada indicates that there is only one area that New Brunswick is leading in (Individual Access & Correction).

- **Has the current government acted appropriately in the administration of the Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act?**

Successive Liberal and Conservative governments have not always acted appropriately in the administration of the RTIPPA, often restricting important information to New Brunswickers.

- **If elected, what will your government do to ensure better access to the information under the control of public bodies on request?**

If elected, a Green government will promote a culture of transparency by ensuring that public bodies regularly publish key information. We will also advocate for the simplification of information request processes, ensuring that New Brunswickers can access essential information without encountering bureaucratic hurdles. We will amend the Act to ensure the restriction on access to information are reversed, so that the business of government is truly the business of its citizens.