



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES

Many municipalities are arguing that the P3 model is the only way for communities to get new arenas, libraries, and hospitals; ignoring the huge increase in costs and the loss of the municipal control over its own services.

Ask your municipal candidates and school board trustees:

- 1. Do you support public control and accountability of public schools, including public ownership and operation?**

Canada's most famous disaster with P3 schools took place in Nova Scotia from 1997 to 1999. A Liberal government decreed that all new schools would be P3 schools. By 1999 the province had elected a Progressive Conservative government that cancelled the scheme as totally unaffordable. The provincial auditor found that the thirty-eight P3 schools already built had cost \$32 million more than the traditional public investment approach. Moreover, the schools were plagued with problems from leaky roofs, unfinished playgrounds, high costs for after school use, and even a demand for a share of chocolate bar sales.

- 2. Do you support publicly-administered not-for-profit health care, including public ownership, operation and accountability of new hospital facilities?**

Here's what happens when publicly-delivered public services are handed over to private profit-seeking corporations:

William Osler Health Centre in Brampton is a P3 deal that McGuinty promised to cancel, but the deal went ahead anyway. The hospital construction was over a year late, the hospital size is smaller than planned with fewer beds and it ran over budget by \$174 million. Ontario's crumbling infrastructure could certainly use another \$174 million instead of taxpayers' money increasing the profit margins for a corporation.

It has been proven time and time again that privatizing public services won't make them more efficient or cheaper. Costs will go up and quality will go down. User fees will increase.

3. Do you support keeping vital water services as not-for-profit municipally-run and owned services?

Water is essential to life – no one should be able to control it or expropriate it for profit. Public financing and public service delivery provides the means of ensuring that our water systems are financially sustainable, that water is affordable and available to future generations.

Here's an example:

Some municipalities are beginning to learn from their mistakes. Hamilton City Council voted to return its water system to public hands in 2004 after the city and its residents suffered through a decade of high costs, risk avoidance by private operators, environmental damage and secrecy.

The provincial Liberal government has continued to download costs and responsibilities for Ontario's water infrastructure on to municipalities.

What is needed from the Ontario government is a strong public commitment to having publicly owned and operated water resources. The delivery of water services should remain (and where necessary, be reinstated) as the highest public service priority.

Privatizing public services – like water – is not the answer.

4. Are you willing to pressure the provincial government to provide stability in the home care sector by eliminating competitive bidding and reducing the share of profit-driven delivery of home care services?

Take, for example, what has happened to home care, a service that is vital to seniors and persons with disabilities. For-profit companies have taken over a majority of home care services, replacing trusted not-for-profits, such as the Red Cross and the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON). The result is a dramatic escalation in cost, forcing government to make deep cuts to housekeeping and personal support – measures that have long kept patients in their homes and out of more expensive institutional beds. As taxpayers, we are denied access to any information on how much these companies are paid for these services.