

Promote Co-ops as a Business Model

The government should promote co-operatives as a viable and vibrant business model that addresses the economic and social needs of citizens and furthers our shared values of democracy and social responsibility. Worker co-operatives facilitate job creation through self-employment without the high risk and significant capital investment often required for starting a traditional business. In the corporate world, it's not uncommon to eliminate jobs in order to generate higher profits for shareholders, who may not even be members of the community.



In contrast, workers co-ops are guided by what is best for the workers and their community. To support the co-operative enterprise model, and in particular worker co-ops, the government can:

- Educate the public, institutions and agencies to foster understanding of co-ops;
- Provide access to technical assistance for the development of co-ops;
- Integrate the co-op model into economic development planning;
- Facilitate access to investment finance through a revolving loan fund in partnership with credit unions and municipalities;
- Partner with co-ops where appropriate.

– **Paola Qualizza**, Operations Coordinator, Groundswell

Expand BC Hydro's PowerSmart Program

Conservation is key to meeting our energy needs. Improving our buildings' energy efficiency can reduce gas and electricity bills—a significant concern for low-income households—and at the same time reduce greenhouse gases. It is also among the best ways to create new jobs. Energy utility expert Phillippe Dunsky has estimated that two to ten times more jobs can be created per dollar invested in efficiency improvements than are created through construction of new power plants.



Currently, BC's PowerSmart program is much more limited in scope than what is offered in Manitoba and other Canadian provinces. For example, replacement of low efficiency furnaces is not covered in BC and the insulation program is quite limited, yet these two items are among the biggest energy cost drivers for many households. Low income-families often live in the oldest (and least energy-efficient) housing stock and face the highest rates of energy poverty.

BC should adopt the Manitoba Hydro system of on-meter financing to ensure that all families are able to improve energy efficiencies and lower their Hydro bills, not just those who can afford the upfront costs of these improvements.

Broadening BC's PowerSmart program would create jobs, help families save energy and money, reduce energy poverty, and lower provincial GHG emissions.

– **Josh Brandon**, Researcher, Housing and Community Development, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – MB Office

Buy Local

Creating good jobs in BC is easy. By supporting BC-based enterprises, individual consumers, businesses, governments and institutions can create good jobs that circulate wealth and strengthen our communities. If we shifted only one percent of our spending locally it would create 3,100 jobs and \$94 million dollars in wages to BC workers. LOCO BC's 2013 study found that local business provide more than double the economic value of their multinational competitors for every dollar spent. Much of this value created is in fostering good local jobs—the higher-paid management, sales and marketing positions that a local company creates right in its community.

– **Amy Robinson**, Founder and Co-Executive Director, LOCO BC



Set Up New Crown Corporations

One reason progressives get tied up in knots when it comes to job creation is that we too often accept a basic (yet incorrect) premise: that the profit-seeking sector holds a monopoly on the creation of value and wealth, and hence on job creation.



In fact, jobs and value can be generated any time human ingenuity and labour are combined with resources and investment capital. The profit-seeking sector is good at that (even if the resulting output is often socially useless and environmentally harmful), but there is nothing preventing co-ops, communities, NGOs, credit unions, First Nations, and yes, even governments from doing so too.

Once upon a time, we used to understand that sometimes governments need to establish crown enterprises to meet important needs, particularly when the business model might not work for the private sector.

What might some such needs look like in the future?

- A new crown corp to manage waste (moving society to zero waste and treating waste as a future resource).
- A new crown corp in natural gas and/or steel (mandated to maximize public returns as we manage fossil fuel industries for wind-down).
- A new crown corp in forestry, mandated to move us up the value chain.
- A new public investment bank to capitalize coops and green / climate initiatives.

You get the idea. If something needs doing, and the private sector isn't stepping up to the plate, or we are tired of having our economic strategies rest upon the investment whims of others, then maybe we should just do it ourselves.

– **Seth Klein**, Director, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – BC Office

Invest in Training

British Columbia is attracting some of the most talented newcomers in the world and educating the next generation at levels never seen before.

But is it enough to merely act as a receptacle for some of the brightest minds of our times?

There is plenty of evidence that shows the best places in the world to live do something other jurisdictions don't: they place a premium on training workers to adapt to change and to make the most of what they have to offer.

The recent debate about Canada's skills gap is a classic example of how employers may be too complacent when it comes to training.

Great communities offer excellent training opportunities for new and even seasoned workers. Government programs to incentivize long-term training programs are key to competing in a global knowledge economy. They are also key to making the most of the workers we have in your own backyard.

Training: it's the key to good jobs because it's how workers learn to transition through changing economic realities.

– **Trish Hennessy**, Director, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – ON Office



Develop an Industrial Strategy for the Creative Sector

In many ways, British Columbia has historically been a land of accidental wealth: blessed with an abundance of natural resources, we haven't had to think long and hard about a sustainable industrial strategy.

Buoyed by a relatively cheap dollar, the BC creative economy has been another example of accidental wealth. Unlike other global tech centres, we have done little to foster and even less to cultivate the creative sector.

As a result, our innovation industry has devolved into a new form of branch-plant economy, one where global players chase small differentials in tax incentives or immigration policies. While this can create good local jobs, these are not going to be deeply rooted and can quickly leave the province at the click of a mouse.

We can counter this by re-imagining the role of government in the digital economy.

Government can foster co-investments in local companies that are capable of generating unique and compelling intellectual property. A new crown corporation— operating along the lines of Creative BC— would be a great vehicle to seed and support start-up companies in clean tech, games or digital media.

In terms of jobs-for-the-buck, these sectors provide a much greater potential return than the resource industries. And these are jobs that are cleaner, greener, better paid and more sustainable— exactly the sorts of jobs we want for our children and grandchildren.

– **Matt Toner**, President, Zeros 2 Heroes



Pay a Living Wage

A living wage is good for local prosperity and builds robust communities. When workers are paid a living wage, they reinvest in the local community in a number of ways. They don't offshore money or buy investment properties: they spend each dollar locally, which in turn, creates local jobs. They also have the time to invest back into building community through volunteer work, and the time to engage with local issues and participate in civic life. When workers earn a living wage with one full-time job, they don't need to hold down multiple survival jobs. They are better off financially and they are not disenfranchised from community and civic life. The voluntary payment of the living wage by local government and private sector employers is a positive response to the failure of public policy at senior levels of government.



– **Catherine Ludgate**, Manager, Community Investment, Vancity

Implement the \$10/Day Child Care Plan

Implementing the \$10/day Child Care Plan would provide affordable, quality child care services in every BC community for families who want or need them. It would also create thousands of sustainable, community-building jobs for Early Childhood Educators who will finally earn a living wage. It would make it possible for parents, especially mothers, to enter and stay in the labour force or to pursue further education, helping address looming labour shortages. In sum, the \$10/day Plan has the potential to contribute greatly to BC's social and economic development: it would generate significant revenues for the provincial government, reduce family poverty and help businesses retain valuable employees.



– **Sharon Gregson** and **Rita Chudnovsky**, Child care advocates, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

Use the Carbon Tax for Green Public Infrastructure Investments

Want to create good jobs? Broaden BC's carbon tax to cover all emissions in the province, then scale up the rate with annual increases. The tax already raises \$1.2 billion per year. These carbon tax revenues should be used to invest in the public infrastructure we need to live "greener": community energy systems (district energy), new public transit and inter-city rail lines, deep building retrofits; conservation and forest stewardship and renewable power supply.



Some carbon tax revenues must flow back to lower- and modest- income households or the carbon tax impact will be regressive, and some of the revenues need to be invested in education and training (or just transition programs) for workers whose livelihoods are affected by climate change.

On balance, this would stimulate a major structural shift away from fossil fuels and towards a healthier and more sustainable economy. And it could create a lot of good green jobs in the process.

– **Marc Lee**, Senior Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – BC Office

Create a Public Bank with a Local Development Mandate

Investment and finance are key to any successful jobs strategy. Yet, though credit unions play a vital role in economic development in BC, we are otherwise overly reliant on the big private banks for investment finance. Meanwhile in Germany, a widespread network of publicly owned banks has been crucial to the phenomenal growth of that country since World War II. Known as the 'Sparkassen' and 'Landesbanks', these



banks are owned by municipalities, states and the federal government. And in similarly economically successful North Dakota and Alberta, publicly owned banks with a mandate to support local businesses (the Bank of North Dakota and the Alberta Treasury Branch) have supported local job creation since the 1930s. Building on those precedents, BC should establish a public Bank of British Columbia with a local development mandate and empower municipalities to establish their own publicly owned banks.

– **Blair Redlin**, CCPA Research Associate

Transform the “Poor Jobs”

All "poor jobs" such as store clerks, care providers etc. could become good jobs if they offered sufficient pay, decent benefits and good/safe working conditions. To make this happen, we must:



- Set the minimum wage so that a single person working full time (35 hours of paid work), full year (50 weeks of paid work) earns enough to meet the before-tax Low Income Cut Off (LICO) for Metro Vancouver. Once set, we should increase this new minimum annually by the rate of inflation to protect the purchasing power of the minimum wage. By this standard, the BC minimum wage would need to be \$13.93 for 2014.*
- Increase the minimum call out to work to four hours.
- Make the living wage calculated at \$20.10 per hour more doable by introducing \$10/day child care, eliminating medical service premiums and extending public health care to cover dental, pharmaceutical and vision costs. This would reduce the living wage to \$15.35.**

Note: With some additional tweaking in other benefits to families with children, it may be possible to have a minimum and living family wage that are similar.

– **Michael Goldberg**, CCPA Research Associate

*LICO for 2011 was 23,298. Bank of Canada inflation calculator raised this to \$24,383.80 for 2014 (inflation of 4.49%). Formula $24,383.80/50/35$. Used 35 hours of paid work per week to account for unpaid meal breaks and 50 weeks to account for unpaid sick or other leave days.

**Reduced the living wage by \$3.57 for child care as reported and used the benefits calculator for reduction of MSP to 0 and extended health value to 0 (\$2.18).

Facilitate Knowledge Exchange between Universities, Business, Communities and Government

The foundation of any thriving economy is the creativity, energy, ideas and wellbeing of its people. While abundant natural resources have contributed and continue to contribute to British Columbia's wealth, such resources cannot be the basis for the long-term development of a sustainable economy. Rather, BC's future prosperity and employment depends upon the development of a culture of social, economic and political innovation and entrepreneurialism.



To maximize the capacity for British Columbians to participate and thrive in such an economy, a renewed focus on education is required: from early childhood through to post-secondary studies, skilled trades and crafts training, support and re-training of those displaced by new technologies, and the encouragement of life-long learning.

Of particular importance is to empower young people and equip them with the skills that bolster the optimism and confidence that are crucial for marshaling creative and innovative minds.

A first step is to facilitate greater flows of knowledge between universities, business, communities and government. Revenues gained from the resource sector can be leveraged to support technology hubs, hackathons, culture jams and other loci of innovation and creativity. British Columbia already has established cultural and innovative industries. All that is needed is the vision and leadership to bring the necessary conditions together so we can channel this energy toward building a more sustainable future.

– **Catherine Douglas**, Lecturer, Vancouver School of Economics (UBC)

Focus on Green Jobs for Youth

Focus on the income, welfare and opportunities for young job seekers (18-30) and combine this with an industrial policy targeting "green job" sectors. This would involve:

- A massively expanded apprenticeship program in the skills these jobs require, alongside
- A substantial fund to be accessed by "green" firms to support the hiring and training of younger workers, and to support youth-driven initiatives.

The program would need to be big enough to actually sway the direction of the provincial economy, requiring a significant new investment. But the payoffs would far outweigh the costs when we take into account the boost this initiative would give to the non- or low-carbon sector and the education sector, and the overall political and economic benefits of having engaged youth (who will now be able to transition from school to work with much less stress and will have more opportunities to reach their potential).

– **Geoff Mann**, Director, Centre for Global Political Economy and Professor, Department of Geography SFU



Harness the Promise of Social Enterprise with Enabling Legislation

The BC government has already recognized the value of social enterprises through Bill 23, which created the Community Contribution Company, a hybrid business structure specifically for social enterprise. But the real power of social enterprises will not be realized without comprehensive enabling legislation and programs that bolster social enterprises' potential.



As a Crown Corporation, BC Hydro provides the perfect vehicle for the government to unleash the capacity of social enterprises to reduce greenhouse gases while creating good green jobs for workers who face significant barriers to employment (such as lack of English proficiency, low education levels, precarious housing, Aboriginal identity, addictions, mental health concerns and physical disabilities). Enabling legislation could mandate the creation of a fund supported by Hydro revenue that would be used to hire social enterprises who train and employ marginalized workers to do energy efficiency retrofits in low-income neighbourhoods and public-housing units.

In Manitoba, such enabling legislation (under the 2012 Energy Saving Act) is supporting a wide variety of social enterprises, including First Nations who create good jobs installing insulation, geo-thermal heating/cooling, energy-efficient faucets and toilets and bio-mass technology on and off reserves. Forging a similar partnership between BC Hydro and social enterprises would support a healthy energy retrofit industry, reduce energy poverty, and create skilled training opportunities and good jobs for some of the most marginalized workers in the province.

– **Lynne Fernandez**, Errol Black Chair in Labour Issues, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – MB Office

Use Public School Infrastructure to Provide Quality Childcare

The resources of our public school system can be better utilized to provide high quality childcare. Currently, childcare programs are inadequately funded and regulated, making quality childcare simply unavailable to too many families in this province. At the same time, we have the physical infrastructure of public schools (buildings and green space)— in some places under-utilized because of changing demographics—that needs to remain in the public domain and be used for the collective good. We have skilled teachers and early childhood educators, many of whom are unable to find permanent secure jobs in their communities. And we have shamefully high rates of child poverty for such a wealthy province, exacerbated by uneven and costly early childcare programs and patchy wrap-around care for school-age children.



Many countries utilize existing public education infrastructures to provide early childhood education and good quality before- and after-school care that is regulated and inspected to the same standards as the K–12 system. Providing every child over two years old with the option of a daycare place, and ensuring that all school districts have adequate wrap-around (before- and after-school programs) is much more efficient and equitable than assuming that families can source such care in a highly fragmented market that pays some of the lowest wages and provides highly variable standards of care. The opportunities for socialization and learning in well-staffed, well-resourced childcare settings benefit all children, but are especially important in an increasingly polarized society where family resources vary enormously.

The current BC government has made great claims about investing in infrastructure; it is time to look beyond just investing in our physical infrastructures, and start investing in our social infrastructures too.

– **Kendra Strauss**, Assistant Professor of Labour Studies, Simon Fraser University

Institute Precarity Pay

Precarious work is a growing concern internationally. It's also a problem in British Columbia. In fact, 40% of all the jobs created in BC since the recession have been temporary in nature.



Whether or not precarious work is here to stay is still up for debate. But for the many workers who are experiencing the stress of precarity today, it is worth exploring the options at our disposal to mitigate its negative consequences.

One policy that would go a long way to mitigate the negative effects of temporary and precarious work is instituting precarity pay. This is something that has been used successfully in other jurisdictions, including Australia and France.

Termed casual loading in Australia, precarity pay requires employers insisting on temporary or casual employment relationships to compensate affected employees by paying a 15-25% premium on their hourly wage compared to the hourly wage of a full-time worker.

A 19-year-old working at a fast food restaurant, for example, will earn \$18.52 AUS per hour as a casual employee—a \$3.70 AUS premium over their full-time counterparts.

The pay differential is meant to compensate casual employees for the fact that they do not have guaranteed hours every week and are not entitled to benefits like paid annual leave or sick leave.

Institute precarity pay. It would put some extra money in the hands of precarious workers struggling with economic insecurity and, by making precarious work arrangements more expensive to employers, it would incentivize an economy-wide move towards better jobs.

– **Kaylie Tiessen**, Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – ON Office

Redesign the Economy to Respect the Ecosystem

Economies are part of cultures, which are part of ecosystems. If we protect ecosystem integrity, there will always be healthy cultures and their economies.

Fundamentally, an economy is just people relating to people providing goods and services that we need (as opposed to want). The only economies that have ever been sustainable in the long-term are community-based economies.



If we want to create good jobs that protect and restore ecosystems, and improve wellbeing in our society, we have some restructuring to do. A good place to start is with ecosystem-based conservation plans that ensure the economic activities taking place in any given landscape do not degrade local ecosystems and the human cultures that depend upon them.

Climate change and the urgent need for transform how we do things to mitigate its impacts must be considered in any discussion of "good jobs."

For example, ecological restoration, which can provide usable, saleable wood products, has great potential to create good jobs respecting the ecosystem, and should be more actively pursued. Ecosystem-based forestry is another fruitful direction to explore, which can create a number of good, locally-based jobs across the province.

– **Herb Hammond**, Forest Ecologist and Ecosystem Planner

Develop a Youth Jobs Initiative

The province can create a youth jobs initiative to employ BC youth (ages 18 – 30) in part-time and full-time positions with the dual mandate of providing job experience and improving our social and natural environments. Suitable projects would range from providing services to single parents, the disabled and the elderly to delivering environmental education programs, running recycling operations and reforestation (to name just a few).

Some of the project ideas should be solicited from youth and from the general public, which would generate many innovative, community-driven proposals.

Funding for these jobs could come from a more progressive tax system, including increases on the taxes paid by the wealthy and large corporations, and an increase in carbon taxes. Providing tax credits to businesses and civic organizations that hire young workers to perform these tasks would allow costs to be shared with socially minded businesses and not-for-profit agencies.

If some of these jobs qualify for college credit or tuition subsidies, they would have the added benefit of reducing the student debt burden.

– **Peter Prontzos**, Political Science Instructor, Langara College



Turn all Farm Jobs into Good Jobs

Plans to create good jobs must include migrant farmworkers whose jobs are some of the furthest from the good jobs ideal. Migrant farmworkers are effectively indentured labourers. They are tied to a single employer, denied basic rights, are often victims of wage theft, are ineligible for permanent immigration and are always subject to the threat of employer-initiated deportation.

Migrants and their organizations have been clear about their demands: in short, integrated labour and immigration reform that would dismantle the de facto indentured status of migrant workers.

Provincially, the British Columbian government should be pressured to:

- Proactively inspect farms and sanction employers who violate the rules (similar to what is done in Manitoba),
- Eliminate piece rates in agriculture thereby reducing the incidence of work that pays below minimum wages,
- Allow migrant farm workers to unionize and institute card check to reduce employer harassment,
- Fund migrant-run worker centres and
- Ban recruitment fees.

At the same time, pressure needs to be brought on the federal government to give all migrant workers open work permits that do not tie them to single employers, as well as immigration status on landing for them and their families. Such immigration reform guarantees that labour protections will be meaningful and enforceable. The lack of anything even resembling decent—never mind good—jobs for migrant agricultural workers puts into question the commitment to good jobs for all.

– **Michal Rozworski**, Independent Researcher



Guarantee a Basic Income

How come some of the most important jobs in our economy don't get a pay cheque? The unpaid work we do raising children, volunteering and caring for elders sustains our families and communities.

Demanding a Basic Income Guarantee for everyone in British Columbia would ensure this unpaid work gets the value it deserves. Residents would receive a bare-essentials income no matter what kind of work they do. Other work would be paid in addition to this income. A Basic Income Guarantee could be funded through restructuring existing programs and through higher but fairer taxes, especially from the rich.

A Basic Income Guarantee would also help us improve the quality of paid jobs in the BC economy. When leaving a bad job no longer carries the threat of financial ruin, employers would have to provide better working conditions to retain staff. For unions, the Basic Income Guarantee would serve as a baseline strike fund so workers can fight for a fair deal.

Having basic financial security would free people up to build an economy that works for them, rather than being stuck in an economy that disproportionately benefits the rich. People would have greater freedom to create their own jobs in co-ops, social enterprises and voluntary associations, shifting to a more democratic economy in the process.

– **Spencer R.**

Create a New Urban-Rural Economic Development Initiative

An effective good jobs strategy must seek to bridge BC's urban-rural divide. It must leverage long-term, sustainable assets in our communities—our cultural and environmental capital—and maximize the value we receive from our non-renewable resources via value-added processing and manufacturing. Here are three ideas to get us started.

- Establish a provincial value-add innovation fund to provide needed start-up capital for regional manufacturing co-operatives proposing to add value to natural resources. The co-operative model such a fund would incentivize is one that is well positioned to leverage skills available locally and provide viable opportunities for economic development in rural communities struggling with the loss of forestry jobs. BC sorely needs a value-add strategy for our natural resources sectors: it's the 21st century yet we ship our resources raw like it's still the 19th century.
- Invest in mass-transit infrastructure across the province, including improved rail infrastructure between our major population centres and improved linkages to Washington, Alaska and Alberta. Investing in transit build-out can create between three and eight times the numbers of jobs created by building more highways.
- Create a new urban-rural economic development initiative or Ministry to better connect existing and emerging jobs in the knowledge economy, and the skills and finance of our urban centres, to our smaller population centres. The opportunities to share ideas and cross-pollinate would spur innovation in rural regions and communities (and vice versa) in partnership with the various Community Futures offices and municipalities.



– **Wes Regan**, Executive Director, Hastings Crossing BIA and 2014 Rosenbluth Intern

Green the Resource Industries

A lot of emphasis is put on fostering the growth of new economy/knowledge economy industries, but the resulting jobs can rarely be filled by tradespeople in rural environments. Even if we physically moved the jobs into these smaller communities, they would usually only attract external labor and not necessarily develop broad opportunities for local residents.

However, as has been the case in Alberta, resource industries are able to utilize and build on local capacities and provide realistic job opportunities for laborers and other tradespeople. The challenge is in finding a way to develop those industries in British Columbia without causing environmental degradation and speeding up climate change the way Alberta has. If we have any material hope for creating good jobs in rural BC, it would be to invest in a “deep greening” of resource extraction industries and become leaders in this area. Transforming our resource sector this way would ensure that it aligns with our values as a province and also aligns with the skills of our residents.



– **Jeremy Stone**. Executive Director, Recovery and Relief Services and 2014 Rosenbluth Intern

Start Co-ops

We need to build jobs that are truly local, that can scale up in creative ways and that employ people in our communities and invest their earnings into our neighbours and our neighbourhoods. That way, we can really feel the impacts that we can make by building good jobs. One way that I know this can be done is through co-ops: we can build truly community-owned organizations that create good, meaningful and rewarding jobs that support communities. They are more stable, invest in communities, pay good wages and are responsible. Co-ops build a better world—and good jobs.



– **Kevin Harding**, Director of Co-op Development, BC Co-operative Association

Adopt Green Procurement Policies in Hospitals and Long-Term Care Homes

Increasingly, in hospitals and long-term care homes, food is pre-packaged, shipped long distances and served with disposable plates and cutlery. Establishing green procurement policies alongside local, healthy food policies (including in-house meal preparation using fresh ingredients) would have several important advantages over the current system. First, patients and care home residents would experience improved nutrition and health outcomes. Second, there would be immediate environmental benefits of such a program, including reduced packaging, reduced reliance on disposables (thus reduced waste) and a lower ecological footprint from not having to transport pre-processed food over long distances. In the process, agricultural development and food security would be increased. Finally, such an initiative will create more well-paid, skilled jobs for food service staff in health care facilities, thus doubling as a good jobs program.



– **Lou Black**, Research Analyst, Hospital Employees' Union

Establish Province-Wide Elderly Care Standards

Caring for our frail elderly is a calling, but it can also be a route to better jobs for British Columbians. As the population ages, an increasing number of our elders require compassionate and professional care in hospitals and long-term care homes. Care aides not only help patients and residents with a wide range of daily care needs, but they are also a big part of their social fabric. In BC, however, there are no legislated standards for how much care our seniors deserve to receive, nor is there guaranteed funding to ensure a high level of quality care, despite a wealth of research evidence on the benefits of community-based care (both for seniors themselves and for reducing pressure on more expensive parts of the healthcare system). As a result of this lack of standards, seniors care facilities around the province have widely varying staffing levels and quality of care even though seniors pay the same rates for residential care across BC. Establishing care standards and providing sufficient funding to meet them will create thousands of new care aide positions: all well-paying, fulfilling careers. It will also promote equity among BC seniors, ensuring they can all age with dignity regardless of where in the province they live.



– **Stephen Elliott-Buckley**, Research Analyst, Hospital Employees' Union

Support Co-operatively Run Businesses

Good jobs are jobs that give workers a say in how the business is run; they empower people to participate in the decisions that will affect their daily lives. Here's how governments can foster co-operatively run business models and create better jobs:



- Use public institutions like hospitals and schools as anchors to support the local economy by buying from local co-operatively run businesses (the Cleveland Model).
- Allow workers to collect EI up front if they join with other workers to start a co-operative.
- Open sector-level service centres that promote co-operation and innovation among local businesses (like those in Italy).
- Stay out of trade or foreign investment deals that make it more difficult to promote locally-based economies.

– **Reilly Yeo**, Facilitator, Groundswell

Fund and Build Affordable Housing

We need first to be clear about what affordable housing is. There are some who claim it's affordable if someone, anyone, can afford it. That's absurd. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has a widely used definition that has been around for decades: a home is affordable if it costs no more than 30% of family income. Families at every income level need to be able to access housing that is affordable for them. Unfortunately, too many British Columbians are forced to spend much more than 30% of their income on housing, live in poor quality or unsafe housing or face homelessness.



There is also the mistaken assertion that if new market rental is built it is somehow automatically affordable. That too is nonsense.

The development industry and their spokespeople in government claim that the solution to the affordable housing crisis is to be found in the market. But it's the market that is at the root of the crisis. The solution will come in a range of non-market policies and mechanisms. Examples of these include renewed investment in social housing programs at the federal and provincial levels, requiring developers to build at least 20% affordable units in new projects and keeping those units out of the speculative market in perpetuity, and supporting co-op and co-housing models. In the process of building affordable housing, we will create good jobs.

– **David Chudnovsky**, father and grandfather, former President of the BC Teachers' Federation and MLA for Vancouver-Kensington

Invest in Public Education

The provincial government could create hundreds of good jobs in BC by increasing the funding levels for public elementary and secondary education to the Canadian average. The recent collective agreement between the provincial government and the BCTF will provide some increases in the number of teaching positions in our schools. However, this will not come close to filling all the educational needs in the province. Getting serious about resolving longstanding issues of large class sizes and class composition that does not support optimal learning would have the added benefit of creating more than 1000 additional jobs for fully qualified teachers who are currently unemployed or under employed.



– **Larry Kuehn**, Director of Research and Technology, BC Teachers' Federation

Move Towards Greener, Carbon-Focused Forest Management

Healthy forests and a healthy, diversified forest industry are two things that most British Columbians agree are integral to the health and well-being of our provincial environment and economy alike. Managing for healthy forests and diversifying BC's forest product mix to include a greater number and array of higher value, solid wood products are also important tools that can be used to address the ongoing challenges of climate change.



There are tangible economic benefits that would flow from a more carbon-focused, “green” approach including:

- An additional 2,630 forest industry jobs processing logs that are currently exported from the province into solid wood, pulp and paper and bio-energy products here in BC;
- An additional 2,400 forest industry jobs processing “usable” wood waste left behind at logging operations into forest products;
- An additional 10,100 jobs (over time) with higher value forest product manufacturing; and
- An additional 5,200 seasonal jobs in tree-planting and associated tree nursery work to plant an additional 91 million seedlings per year.

Find specific recommendations at: policyalternatives.ca/greenforests

– **Ben Parfitt**, Resource Policy Analyst, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
– BC Office

Implement a Youth Guarantee

Youth unemployment is a major problem in Canada and in BC. Rates of youth unemployment today remain significantly higher than pre-recession levels and youth currently fare much worse in unemployment terms, than those above 25. The need to address youth unemployment is heightened by its high impacts; unemployment at the start of a career correlates with lower career earnings. Research shows that even without personally experiencing unemployment, individuals who graduate during periods of high youth unemployment have smaller starting salaries and lower lifetime earnings than those who graduate in better economic times.



A youth guarantee is a European policy solution that could help BC tackle this problem. It is an umbrella of programs designed around a very basic idea: within a short period of becoming unemployed—say four or six months—every unemployed young person should be offered (guaranteed) either a subsidized job placement, more education, an apprenticeship or a skills training placement. Several European countries have adopted this approach with good results and the EU has recently committed €6 billion in multi-year funding for a Europe-wide youth guarantee.

A made-in-Canada youth guarantee would open the doors to good jobs for more youth through providing valuable work experience or training.

– **Kayle Hatt**, CCPA Research Associate

Avoid Groupthink by Looking at the Data

There are no silver bullets for jump-starting a slow economy, but there are many practical job creation ideas that would work in BC.

To get to the good stuff, the really powerful, game-changing ideas, we must first shed the shackles of the dogma that has dominated the past forty years. Both conservative and progressive thinkers took the same economics and politics courses in college, scarring them for life. Theories forged from limited hard data—but much ideology—have been given the status of immutable principles not to be transgressed.

Good jobs will come from eschewing pre-conceived notions that get in the way of taking a hard, sober look at what has been working (and not working) on the ground all over the world. Conservatives in BC will have to learn what effective government really means. Progressives will have to respect what it takes to incentivize private capital to deploy resources.

My idea for good jobs? Double-down. Use the dogma-busting evidence, unavailable in 1974, but free to all of us in 2014. And do it without a set of ideological blinders.

And we do, in fact, need to take a closer look at what is happening around the world, and not just in our own minds and backyards. BC is a huge underachiever as a result of the smugness and insularity that an economy based primarily on resource-extraction has allowed. There is hard work to be done in looking up and looking outwards. Which is why I think the CCPA-BC effort this autumn is an important one.

– **Ken McFarlane**, Principal, Regeneration Group, LLP

