

NDP, Green, and Liberal candidates in 2025 Election respond to Sounder Q&A

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Sounder News

As Candidates went into the final week of the 2025 Federal Election, the Sounder provided all five candidates with the following questions to answer in this edition. Questions were provided on April 11. Candidates Tamara Kronis (Conservative Party of Canada) and Stephen Welton (People's Party of Canada) had not provided answers by press time.

1. What would your party do to safeguard Canadian businesses and families from the economic impact of US tariffs?

Barron: Trump's tariff war and annexation threats increase the challenges Canadians are already facing like the cost of living, affordable housing, jobs and pension security, and real climate action.

My plan as a New Democrat is to take care of people and to promote a buy and build Canadian approach. Ensure federal procurement contracts require increased Canadian content for materials and prioritize Canadian companies who pay Canadian workers good wages. Develop and incentivize value-added processing of resources like lumber and critical minerals here at home. And work with provinces and territories to eliminate restrictive interprovincial trade barriers.

The NDP agrees with the proposed counter tariffs and have pledged to use those dollars to protect everyday Canadians during these uncertain times. This includes bringing in restructured taxation and employment insurance that protects workers while Canada diversifies its trading partnerships.

Corfield: Washington tariffs can't decide our future. We must protect workers, diversify markets, and assert economic sovereignty—especially for communities built on natural resources.

A Carney Liberal government will take a Team Canada approach: resisting export quotas, expanding alternative markets, and boosting domestic manufacturing with Canadian materials.

We need a clear strategy on softwood lumber, critical drugs, and fair trade. I'll fight for policies that put Canadian workers first, including retraining and wage subsidies for those hit by tariffs or mill slow-downs.

With Trump back in office, Canada needs serious, experienced leadership—not posturing.

Manly: U.S. tariffs are already putting Canadian jobs at risk and threatening our economic security. The Green Party's approach is clear: defend Canadian interests without punishing Canadian families.

Rather than blanket retaliation, we would apply smart, targeted export tariffs on resources the U.S. relies on—like aluminum, potash, critical minerals, and electricity—to give Canada leverage without raising costs for everyday people. At the same time, we would build up strategic reserves of key resources to strengthen Canada's position.

It's time to end the practice of exporting raw materials like raw logs to the U.S. and buying back finished lumber at inflated prices. That drains wealth from our communities. By processing those logs here, we create good-paying jobs and support our local industry.

We would also work with democratic allies in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, and beyond to establish an "economic NATO"—a cooperative alliance to resist economic bullying and stand up for fair trade.

2. How does Canada best address the cost-of-living crisis?

Barron: Many of the same measures we need in place to meet the US tariffs threat will also have a positive impact on employment and the cost of living: things like expanding domestic manufacturing and value-added processing of Canada's own resources. There are also things we can and must do to everyday Canadians right away. I support an NDP plan to remove the GST on basics like home heating and internet, and to stop price fixing and gouging on rent, groceries, and other essentials. And to improve tax fairness so that big corporations and the ultra-wealthy pay their fair share, that can then be reinvested into social programs, healthcare, and infrastructure.

Housing affordability is the biggest challenge for many. We should end preferential tax treatment of corporate landlords and strengthen federal controls to stop renovations and unfair rent hikes that artificially inflate costs. Remove the GST on new homes under \$1.5M for first-time buyers, and unlock the CMHC to offer low-interest, public-backed mortgages. And we should provide incentives for Canadian businesses who produce modular housing that can be quickly added to the housing stock.

Corfield: Practical steps addressing the real pressures people are facing—like housing, access to dental care and essential medications, and inflated grocery prices through better regulation. We need targeted tax relief for the middle class, which is why Mark Carney ended the consumer carbon tax while committing to add green incentives that lower energy bills and reward clean choices. I will fight for investment in job training, childcare, and infrastructure.

Making life more affordable isn't about slogans — it's about focusing on what actually helps people manage day-to-day. Stable housing, accessible health care, and a fair shot at financial security.

Manly: To make housing affordable again, we must restore the federal government's role of directly funding and building non-market housing like co-ops and affordable rentals. To stop corporate landlords from driving up rents, it's time to bring back national rent and vacancy controls.

NDP



Lisa Marie Barron
New Democrat Party

Liberal



Michelle Corfield
Liberal Party of Canada



Conservative



Tamara Kronis
Conservative Party of Canada



GREEN PARTY
OF CANADA



Paul Manly
Green Party of Canada



PEOPLE'S PARTY
of CANADA



Stephen Welton
People's Party of Canada

people healthy, not boosting corporate profits.

The previous Liberal government made progress on dental care and pharmacare but these were half measures. We need a fully universal system similar to many other countries with public health care.

4. Does your party have plans for improving the inter-provincial transportation corridors?

Barron: Increasing interprovincial trade is one of the tools we have to counteract some of the economic and supply chain impacts of the US tariff war as well as to increase domestic productivity. While it's important to ensure we have the necessary transportation and logistics infrastructure in place, like adequate domestic rail, marine, intermodal, and warehousing capabilities, there are other barriers to interprovincial trade that need to be addressed in the shorter term. Many of these perceived barriers have been imposed by provinces to protect local industries, uphold regulatory standards, and generate local revenue.

Like with other areas over which provinces and territories have significant jurisdictional authority, the federal government can best lead by first consulting with those most affected to determine priorities in common. This includes local chambers of commerce and business leaders, labour, and First Nations.

Corfield: Mark Carney's plan to build the strongest economy in the G7 includes removing interprovincial trade barriers and investing in transportation corridors. That means targeted federal support for ports, highways, and rail—and catalyzing private investment to maximize impact. Strengthening coastal and inland logistics is essential to reduce bottlenecks, connect rural economies, and secure national supply chains. The \$45.2M federal investment in the Duke Point Port expansion in Nanaimo is a clear example of this vision in action—boosting trade capacity, supporting jobs, and building resilient infrastructure that serves both local communities and the national economy.

Manly: The Green Party supports improving interprovincial transportation and electricity corridors, not just for trade. Better infrastructure strengthens our economy and connects communities.

We would prioritize investments in electrified rail, intercity bus service, and resilient supply chains that reduce pollution and move goods and people more efficiently.

We support restoring and expanding passenger rail service across Canada, including crucial interprovincial routes. This helps small and rural communities access markets, health care, and jobs, while reducing reliance on fossil fuel powered transportation.

We also believe trade policy must support local industries, not just raw exports. That means improving east-west transportation networks to help Canadian businesses reach each other, not just foreign markets.

Done right, interprovincial infrastructure can build a more connected, self-reliant Canadian economy.

5. If elected, will your government be committed to taking all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including by respecting Indigenous self-determination and decision-making authority?

Barron: Yes. New Democrats recognize the critical importance of being guided by UNDRIP in creating all federal legislation, policy, and programs. We commit to work nation-to-nation, to respect the free, prior, and informed consent of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and to help deliver what communities need. We will also continue to push the federal government to implement all the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit Persons Calls for Justice.

We will make sure that all communities trying to find truth and justice for the genocide that took place in residential schools have the supports they need. We will continue to push for improved delivery of services for Indigenous children and youth through Jordan's Principle funding. And we will work with communities to lift all long-term boil water advisories.

Corfield: Yes. The Liberal government passed legislation to implement the UN Declaration and has made progress—but there's more to do. I am Nuu-chah-nulth, from a chieftain family, and I've built a career on bringing people together. I will push for full recognition of Indigenous decision-making, land rights, and governance. That includes practical steps like continuing the Canada Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program so that nations can fully participate in the economy, and resolving outstanding specific and land claims to address historic injustices. Reconciliation must be real, ongoing, and led by Indigenous voices at every table.

Manly: The Green Party is fully committed to ensuring Canadian laws align with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This includes respecting Indigenous self-determination, governance, and decision-making authority—especially regarding land, resources, and community development.

We support implementing UNDRIP in full, not just in principle. That means recognizing the right to free and informed consent on all decisions affecting Indigenous lands and lives. It also means ending colonial structures like the Indian Act through Indigenous-led processes and upholding the sovereignty of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

True reconciliation requires structural change and economic reconciliation. The Green Party will take real action to make it happen.

6. If elected, will your government commit to ensuring Canada's coasts and ocean are protected through a national network of well-funded marine protected areas?

Barron: As former NDP Critic for Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, protecting our coasts and oceans has been a focus of much of my work in parliament. I would make sure that this work carries on and that New Democrats continue to advocate for measures that keep our oceans healthy and help ensure the survival of our critical coastal biodiversity.

This work includes three private member's bills I tabled in

the House of Commons. Bill C-344 sets the framework for a national strategy to address the issue of abandoned and derelict vessels on our coastlines. Bill C-402 suggests a national approach to prevent, respond to, and clean up container ship spills like the recent Zim Kingston spill, that would also hold polluters accountable. And of significant importance to our region, Bill C-258 to protect wild Pacific salmon by getting open-net pen fish farms out of our waters and ensuring a comprehensive jobs plan to transition affected workers to employment in the sustainable economy.

Corfield: Liberals launched Canada's Oceans Protection Plan and will continue to fund marine conservation, coastal resilience, and Indigenous-led stewardship. In 2014 I founded a marine roundtable that helped shape Canada's Oceans Protection Plan, and as MP for Nanaimo-Ladysmith I will advocate for stronger coastal protections, clean ports, and sustainable marine infrastructure throughout the Salish Sea and beyond.

Manly: The Green Party is committed to protecting Canada's coasts and oceans through strong environmental regulation, Indigenous leadership, and science-based conservation.

We would expand Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as part of Canada's commitment to the UN Convention on Biodiversity. We would strengthen enforcement of pollution controls, and end harmful practices like open-net pen fish farms that threaten wild salmon populations. We support transitioning to responsible fishing practices and investing in coastal restoration to protect wildlife and support local economies.

Our approach centres Indigenous knowledge and stewardship, especially in coastal communities that depend on healthy oceans. Canada's coasts are vital to our climate, our economy, and our identity. They must be safeguarded for generations to come.

7. Where does your party stand on the future of anchorages in the Southern Gulf Islands?

Barron: Freight anchorages disrupt local communities like Gabriola. They cause noise and light disturbance for residents and irreparable harm to the seabed and our diverse and sensitive marine habitats. They also violate the sovereignty of local First Nations who do not, and have never, consented to the use of their territorial waters for this purpose.

Last year, New Democrats were successful in amending legislation to restrict industrial vessel anchorage to a maximum of 14 days. While this is progress, much more is needed. Greenhouse gases, fuel, pathogens, and invasive species are only some of the environmental contaminants being emitted, while noise disturbance and sediment increase mortality rates for endangered species like the Southern Resident Killer Whale.

The NDP will press to establish a national marine conservation area and improved management of the supply chain at the Port of Vancouver. And ultimately, we want these freight anchorages removed from our waters for good. These sensitive marine ecosystems must no longer be used as industrial parking lots.

Corfield: Our coastal waters must be protected—not treated as parking lots. Reducing reliance on Southern Gulf Islands anchorages aligns with the Liberal commitment to protect Canada's nature, biodiversity and water. I led the Duke Point

Port Expansion—funded with \$45.2 million in federal support—to give ships a place to unload and move on, reducing congestion and environmental pressure.

Liberals will invest in marine conservation and create new marine protected areas. I am committed to a balanced approach—protecting the Salish Sea while supporting efficient, low-impact shipping that benefits our Island communities and preserves biodiversity for future generations.

Manly: The Green Party opposes the use of freight anchorages in the Southern Gulf Islands. These anchorages damage sensitive marine ecosystems, violate Indigenous rights, and harm local communities with noise, light, and anchor drag. We've long called for their removal and have criticized federal agencies for turning the Salish Sea into a "free parking lot" for industrial shipping without proper consultation with First Nations. We support legislation to ban anchorages in these waters, enforce stronger environmental protections, and ensure Indigenous leadership in managing marine territories. Protecting the Gulf Islands is a matter of ecological and social justice.

As the MP for Nanaimo-Ladysmith, I was outspoken about these freight anchorages and tabled Motion M-85 to mandate the implementation of a Vessel Arrival System for the Port of Vancouver to minimize the use and impact of anchorages, and facilitate effective and efficient trade.

8. Will your party commit to a procurement policy for the federal government that sources from those countries which do not place tariffs on Canadian goods?

Barron: Yes. An NDP plan includes a government procurement policy informed by a build and buy Canadian approach to make more of what Canada needs at home and reduce our dependence on unreliable trading partners. NDP changes to current procurement policy would include changes to favour Canadian companies in the bid selection process, increase Canadian content requirements for materials, and give preference to suppliers and contractors with a unionized workforce.

Corfield: We need a fair, strategic approach to federal procurement that strengthens Canada's economy, including stronger Buy Canadian rules across all federally funded projects—especially for critical sectors like forestry, shipbuilding, and clean tech. I support restricting access to government contracts for foreign suppliers who impose unfair tariffs or violate trade reciprocity. By sourcing from Canadian suppliers and like-minded trading partners, we can grow our manufacturing capacity, protect good jobs, diversify our markets, and build resilient, low-carbon supply chains here at home.

Manly: The Green Party supports procurement policy that prioritizes Canadian goods and services, especially in sectors critical to our economy, environment, and national security.

We believe federal procurement should support local jobs, strengthen domestic industries, and avoid rewarding countries that place harmful tariffs on Canadian exports. Where international sourcing is necessary, we would prioritize trade partners that engage in fair, reciprocal trade with Canada.

We also believe procurement should support ethical and sustainable production, including strong labour and environmental standards both at home and abroad.

9. What will your party do to ensure Canadians are well informed about local, provincial, and national news through media owned and operated in Canada?

Barron: Now as much as any time ever in our collective history, Canada needs to support more Canadian content that reflects who we are as a country and that shares our Canadian voices, stories, and identity. One way the NDP will do this is by protecting and strengthening the CBC and Radio-Canada. Canadian artists and journalists deserve more opportunities to showcase their talent and tell our stories. Now is also the time to invest in local voices, in local community print and digital news, and independent community radio broadcasters and other media, not turn to more American content. With Polievre and Conservatives promising to defund the CBC, and debasing Canadian journalists, that's exactly what will happen.

New Democrats would also stand up to the tech giants like Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg, who rather than pay their share to support Canadian content, are blocking that content making it harder to get local news, threatening Canadian jobs, and spreading misinformation.

Corfield: Canadian-owned and operated news media is vital to our democracy, identity, and the fight against disinformation. I support Mark Carney's plan to boost CBC/Radio-Canada funding by \$150 million, expand local news coverage, and modernize its mandate to better serve Canadians across all regions and in both official languages. Public broadcasting plays a critical role in holding governments accountable—it's a key check and balance in a healthy democracy. Making funding statutory will protect it from political interference. Reliable, accessible public news isn't a luxury—it's essential to informed citizenship and safety, especially during emergencies.

Manly: Local voices matter. As a former MP, I worked hard to ensure community media is officially recognized in Canadian broadcasting policy. Strong, independent media keeps people informed and holds power to account.

The Green Party supports increased funding for public broadcasters, nonprofit journalism, and community media. I support full funding for CBC so it can continue to reflect the voices of Canadians at the local, regional and national level. We need to make sure digital giants pay their fair share to the news producers they profit from, and push back against foreign ownership and corporate monopolies that silence local perspectives. A healthy democracy depends on informed citizens. That's why I'll keep fighting for a media landscape that reflects and serves our communities from coast to coast to coast.



GABRIOLA VOTES

Made possible by: Covering Canada: Election 2025 Funding