




Winnipeg South Centre's

Guide to Budget 2024



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A Message From Your MP

Dear Constituents,

One of the most important aspects of my job is to ensure that the work undertaken on your behalf is communicated to you in an open and accessible way. My team and I have been working hard to establish my website as a one stop shop for you to explore and learn about how my time is spent in both Ottawa and Winnipeg. On the website, you will find statements and speeches I have given in the House of Commons, questions I have asked at Committee meetings, opinion editorials I have written, social media posts, and copies of every piece of correspondence that has gone out to community members.

I hope that you will take some time to visit this website to stay engaged and learn more about how I am spending my time as your MP. This newsletter contains all the details you need to reach my office, social media pages, and the website. I understand that many of you access your news from various platforms, and that as a result, sometimes the things I say are missed. The website serves as a place where you can find everything, all at once.

You will notice from the photographs in this newsletter, and on my social media, that I am frequently working alongside politicians from all sides and levels of government.



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On that note, I am proud to share that I have been elected unanimously by NDP, Conservative, Liberal and Bloc MPs to serve as the new Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. This role allows me to continue in my quest to help facilitate and guide meaningful dialogue in Parliament with an eye to finding common ground.

This month's newsletter is meant to provide you with further insight into how investments made in Budget 2024 are addressing your priorities here in Winnipeg South Centre. Although this is not an exhaustive list of government initiatives, I have done my best to reflect the areas I hear raised most frequently by constituents. I hope you will find this useful and informative.

It remains an honour to serve as your member of Parliament for Winnipeg South Centre. I look forward to our ongoing dialogue and appreciate the contributions that everyone makes to the fabric of this highly intelligent, diverse, and vibrant community.

Sincerely,



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA





Environment

Climate change is real. It requires our urgent attention. Our plan to combat this threat to our future as it pertains specifically to Manitoba includes:

- ◆ **The Government's plan to reach net zero by 2050.** We have seen emissions reduced by 44 megatonnes, lower than Canada's pre-pandemic 2019 levels.
- ◆ **The clean electricity tax credit** which will help hydro-rich provinces like Manitoba build interties and the infrastructure necessary to sell its clean power to neighbouring markets.
- ◆ **\$500 million to support clean energy production such as biofuels** using Canola grown in Manitoba.
- ◆ The establishment of the first ever **Canada Water Agency, located right here in Winnipeg.** This agency will improve freshwater management in Canada.

Ben, Premier Kinew and Federal Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Hon. Wilkinson, announcing millions in clean fuel production in Manitoba.



I will continue to advocate for environmental policies that protect our future, and will ensure that polluting is not free. We have invested millions in:

- ◆ Lake Winnipeg
- ◆ Lake of the Woods
- ◆ Seal River Watershed
- ◆ Supporting Scientific Research





Supporting First Nations Partners, Firefighters, Search + Rescue Teams

Already this season we have experienced days when the skies were smoke-filled from wildfires. The impacts of climate change are being felt acutely in our own backyards.

Budget 2024:

- ◆ **Commits \$166.2 million** over five years to support First Nations communities as they are at higher risk for natural disasters caused by climate change
- ◆ **Doubles the Volunteer Firefighters/Search and Rescue Volunteers' Tax Credit to \$6,000**
- ◆ Provides **\$38.4 million** in funding for wildfire protection which will:
 - Train firefighters
 - Upgrade and purchase more equipment
 - Invest in weather monitoring technology

Ben, Federal Health Minister Mark Holland and Provincial Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Bernadette Smith, attend the \$630 million bilateral health agreement announcement at Red River Polytech.



Healthcare

The integrity of our healthcare system is paramount. The Federal Government has responded to the needs of Manitobans by signing a bilateral agreement with the provincial government that sees **\$630 million invested directly into Manitoba's healthcare system** to tackle:

- ◆ Physician shortages
- ◆ Mental health and addiction
- ◆ Hospital beds
- ◆ Reductions in wait times

The redevelopment of Portage Place into a state of the art healthcare facility, along with many other projects in Manitoba, do not happen without these federal investments.

Pharmacare

The Federal Government's National Pharmacare Plan will remove barriers to access most **prescription contraceptives and diabetes medication**. Improving access to contraceptives such as birth control pills, IUDs, and emergency contraception gives people reproductive freedom.

Mental Health and Addiction

I will continue to use my voice in Ottawa to build bridges that help us make much needed progress on supporting the most vulnerable in our society.

We have recently established **9-8-8, Canada's first suicide crisis hotline, open 24/7.**

We are investing **\$500 million to launch a Youth Mental Health Fund** so that youth can get the mental health services they need in their communities.

These investments will help organizations like Sunshine House provide better access to mental health care for youth.



Ben, Federal Minister of Addictions and Mental Health, Ya'ara Saks, and the leaders of Sunshine House outside of Manitoba's only mobile overdose prevention site.



Ben, MP Terry Duguid, and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland, attend a childcare funding announcement.

More Affordable Childcare Spaces

Affordable and accessible childcare is critical to the well-being of families. A national childcare system is not only sound and equitable social policy, it is smart economic policy, too.

Our investments have resulted in the highest participation rate of women in the workforce ever, and is saving families thousands of dollars every year.

We need more childcare spaces as families are still facing significant waits. We need to invest in our Early Childhood Educators too, so that they can earn a fair wage.

Recently, I joined Minister Dan Vandal to announce **\$30.9 million** that will support early learning and childcare in Manitoba.

We are delivering **\$1 billion** in loans and grants to build more **\$10/day** childcare spaces across Canada, and create more spots at post-secondary to train Early Childhood Educators who are in short supply.

A National School Food Program

Access to healthy food plays an important role in the life of a child.

Our Canada Child Benefit has lifted 650,000 kids out of poverty. Still, 1 in 4 children do not get the nutritious food they need to succeed in school. This disproportionately impacts Indigenous and newcomer students.

Budget 2024 establishes a National School Food Program that will help kids who need it most thrive in their classroom. This policy is a game changer, and will make a real difference for kids in need.



Ben with Federal colleagues, including the Prime Minister, and Seven Oaks School Division Staff, announcing the National School Food Program. Ben is a former principal in Seven Oaks, and was proud to help lead the announcement.

Housing and Affordability

One of the biggest challenges for people regarding home ownership is cost. Even finding affordable rentals has become a major challenge.

We are offering accessible loans and grants to developers, with conditions that require large percentages of new builds to be affordable and purpose built. This will allow many not-for-profits and Indigenous communities to build homes for those most in need.

With Canada's Housing Plan we will get nearly 4 million homes built.

We have signed a housing accelerator deal with the City of Winnipeg worth over **\$120 million** that will lead to the rapid construction of new units in our city at a time when it is desperately needed.



Ben at a mixed-use construction site in Osborne Village where federal dollars were used to ensure there were affordable residential units.



Protecting Renters' Rights and Putting Home Ownership Back Within Reach

Budget 2024 helps to give Canadians a fair shot at homeownership. We are lowering mortgage payments for first time homebuyers **by allowing them 30-year mortgage amortizations on a newly-built home**, effective August 1, 2024. Additionally, **the Home Buyer's Plan limit will increase from \$35,000 to \$60,000**, to help Canadians saving for a down payment on their first home—with an extended repayment grace period, too.

The Canadian Renters' Bill of Rights and Tenant Protection Fund protects renters from steep rent hikes, renovations, and bad landlords.

When renters decide to transition to homeownership, they deserve credit for the money they have put towards rent over the years, and now they'll get it. We are working with banks, lenders, and landlords to help Canadians looking to qualify for a mortgage **have on-time rent payments contribute to their credit score.**

Supporting Families

Modern technology and social media platforms pose many risks to the health and safety of our children. Social media is becoming increasingly filled with hate and risks of harm.

Budget 2024 provides **\$2.5 million** to Public Safety Canada to support the work of the **Canadian Centre for Child Protection**—located right here in our riding—in preventing and responding to online child exploitation.

Defending the Right to Choose

Reproductive rights are being challenged in many parts of the world, including in Canada. Recently, Conservative MPs have introduced petitions and bills in Parliament that seek to roll back the clock on the right to choose.

Right now, it is more important than ever that we stand up for Canadians and their freedoms. I will never remain silent on defending abortion rights in this country.



Ben with other leaders at an announcement for the redevelopment of the Hudson's Bay Company building on Portage Avenue. With the support of the Federal Government, this project, that will revitalize our downtown, is 100% First Nations developed.

Reconciliation

I was proud to have fought at the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Committee for the inclusion of a directive that the Federal Government convene a national meeting with the provinces and Indigenous Governments to improve education outcomes for Indigenous kids. This was successfully adopted in the committee's report and I look forward to continuing my advocacy on this important file.

Budget 2024 invests:

\$649.4 million for elementary and secondary education programming on reserve

- ◆ **\$545.1 million** for K-12 education physical infrastructure on reserve

We have allocated \$1.3 million to fund the Red Dress Alert System. This Manitoba Pilot Program will inform the public when an Indigenous woman, girl or Two-Spirit person goes missing. This program will be designed and led by Indigenous Peoples.

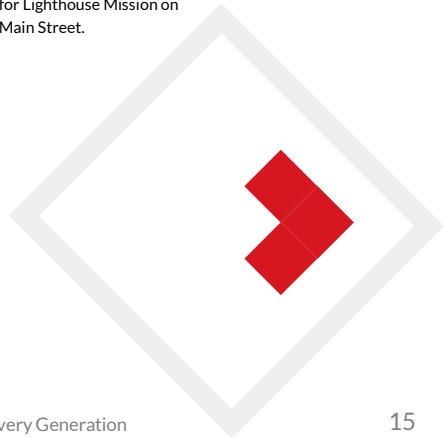
Helping the Most Vulnerable

Homelessness and encampments impact every community in Canada. Budget 2024 will provide an additional **\$1.3 billion to Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy**. This will address the urgent issue of unsheltered homelessness. This funding will help scale-up efforts to train support workers, respond to the unique experiences of those affected by homelessness, and renovate and build more shelters and transitional housing for those who need it.

I am proud to have fought successfully for further investments on behalf of Sunshine House, Manitoba's only safe consumption site, and Lighthouse Mission that provides detox spaces to those battling addiction.



Ben announcing \$2.3 million for Lighthouse Mission on Main Street.



Bringing People Together

I want to address a growing concern that I share alongside many of you, and that is the degradation of civility in our public discourse. As I hope you have noticed in previous materials, and in this one, my focus is never on being overtly partisan, nor obstructionist. Most of you do not wish for me to contribute more noise into an already toxic political environment. I do not believe you want me to allow partisanship to interfere with needed collaboration across levels of government or political lines.

My focus has been to convey facts, meaningful information, and to demonstrate a willingness to work collaboratively with others.

I am frequently reminded of a lesson my father taught me when I was young and that was exemplified through the multi-partisan relationships that he had with colleagues. “Those who see the world differently than us are not our enemies,” he would say. “They are simply our opposition, and we must constantly search for commonalities and a meeting of the minds in our efforts to improve community.” I try to lead by these words.

Recently, I have written several opinion editorials which can be found on my website that highlight this work. Included in this mailer is a piece entitled “Creating Space for Jews and Muslims to Engage,” which focuses on my belief in the necessity of positive and meaningful efforts to better understand each other. Building community is about addition, not subtraction.



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