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From John Twigg, Conservative Party of B.C., North Island

1. Will you commit to changing the deadly and unacceptable health conditions faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities?

First, it is unlikely that I will be elected though I can still be hopeful, and even if I am elected it likely would be as a member of a third or fourth party. Nonetheless I will promise that if elected I will work to help better address the challenges faced by people with intellectual disabilities, but that is within the context of a great many other issues and problems and groups of people also needing improved performances from government. I have had some positive experiences with people with intellectual impairments and have seen that they can perform well in certain jobs and be happy doing so. I would be most interested in structuring work-experience and training for such people.

2. Will you engage individuals with intellectual disabilities and their supporters during the policy-making process on all issues that impact their health and wellbeing?

Having had some experience engaging with individuals with individuals with intellectual disabilities I can assure you that their issues would be ones I would embrace and engage individuals, however I also realize that there are limits to the practicality of that. Enabling people to find lifestyles they enjoy would be paramount.

3. When in government, will you commit to ensuring the Ministry of Health prioritizes improving health outcomes and quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities?

Having had lots of experience in public policy, I must caution that helping people with intellectual difficulties is only one

among many urgent challenges facing governments everywhere today and frankly social disorder, economic dysfunctions, deadly diseases and tax and finance pressures probably are more urgent problems. Nonetheless as an MLA I would feel obliged to make time for all concerns, people with various disabilities included.

4. Will you commit to creating a governmental task force to improve the health of people with intellectual disabilities?

A government task force is one model but a Special Legislative Assembly Committee from all parties might be better because it would generate all-party support. The process of doing so probably is more important than the structure of it.

5. Will you commit to supporting sufficient funding and resources to ensure people with intellectual disabilities will no longer face inequality in health and in life?

Perhaps your group could lend some support to growing the economy in ways that would provide more jobs for people with intellectual difficulties. As an MLA I would lobby and argue for a wide range of policy reforms to restructure and strengthen the B.C. economy including helping to expand industries wherein such people would feel senses of useful work, such as in agriculture, farming, environmental protection and cleanup, park maintenance and more. As an MLA I would push for a full-employment strategy and that would certainly include providing jobs people could do for every person who wants in - not just in a sheltered workshop but real productive jobs.

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