

British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA)

Animal Welfare Policies Candidates Questionnaire

<https://spca.bc.ca/ways-to-help/take-action/bc-sPCA-platform-and-party-commitments/>

In preparation for the October 19 provincial election, the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) asked B.C.'s political parties to include six animal welfare policies in their election platforms.

We've been sharing our policy recommendations with our 488,000 supporters and all B.C. voters and encouraging them to engage with their local candidates to determine if candidates share their commitment to animal welfare. Did you know that more than half of B.C. residents currently have pets in their home, and that many more care deeply about the welfare of farmed and wild animals in our province? Animal welfare matters to British Columbians, and your commitment to it will be a deciding factor for many voters.

To date, tens of thousands of British Columbians have signed up for more information about our recommendations and tools to help them connect with their election candidates. To help our supporters and all British Columbians understand your position on animal welfare, we would appreciate your response to the following questions by October 6, 2024. We will share your responses on our website.

If elected, will you take action as an MLA and urge government to:

Engage with housing stakeholders to find collaborative solutions to increase the availability and affordability of pet-friendly housing for all British Columbians?

- In my 25+ years as a community leader, I have witnessed the importance of pets in the lives of seniors and vulnerable community members, and how having a pet can dramatically improve individuals' quality of life.
- As an Independent MLA I would support policies that address increasing the availability of pet-friendly housing, and would push to review the Residential Tenancy Act to provide a clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the landlord and tenant when it comes to pet ownership.

Require the provision of pet food and supplies in food banks and food security programs supported by the provincial government?

- In my community we are fortunate that pet food is available in our food banks, provided by the Langley Animal Protection Society (LAPS) – though funding for LAPS is always at risk and needs to be better supported.

CENTRE-RIGHT, FREE-ENTERPRISE, FISCALLY CONSERVATIVE

- I have been involved in food security initiatives for years, and helped develop a program that ensures any leftover or unused produce farmed in my riding is offered to local farmers for their animals.
- As an Independent MLA, I will work to ensure that pet food is recognized as a key part of the Province's food security programs and look for ways to increase access for people needing support to feed their pets.

Expand provincial Emergency Support Services (ESS) and post-emergency financial assistance to all animals included in the Emergency and Disaster Management Act?

- Recent climate crises in Langley-Abbotsford (heat domes, atmospheric rivers and Sumas Prairie flooding) have demonstrated that our province does not have comprehensive planning or policies in place for ensuring the safety of pets and farm animals during large-scale emergencies.
- As an Independent MLA I would support changes to the Emergency and Disaster Management Act that better address the safety and well-being of our pets and farm animals during and after emergency crisis events.

Create a new function within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to inspect and enforce minimum animal welfare standards for farmed animals?

- I have been a strong supporter and dedicated volunteer / leader of several farming organizations in Langley, such as the Aldergrove Agricultural Fair & Festival Association and the BC Farm Museum, and the Langley Farmers Institute.
- I am not familiar with all of the details of the Farmed Animal Welfare Advisory Committee's recommendations, but I have been a very vocal advocate for local food security for decades.
- As an Independent MLA I would continue to support policies that strengthen our farming community, and improve food security and public confidence in local agriculture.

Require registered microchips for all cats and dogs in B.C., like many other countries in the world?

- As an Independent MLA I would consult widely with local animal advocacy organizations and others in our community on this issue, and would support microchipping if constituents feel this is a needed requirement to protect and keep our pets safe.

Evaluate issues, policies and decisions through a One Health/One Welfare lens to find interdisciplinary solutions that recognize the interconnections between human, animal and environmental health and well-being?

- As a society we are increasingly understanding that mental and emotional health is as important as physical health.
- As an Independent MLA I would support initiatives and policies that take a broader view of the interactions between health, welfare and environmental issues.