



National Headquarters
Union of Canadian Correctional Officers / Syndicat des Agents Correctionnels du Canada
Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux
1601, avenue De Lorimier
Montréal, QC, H2K 4M5

June 19th, 2015

Dear Mr. Grabowksy,

Please find attached responses to the questions posed by your survey dated February 10th, 2015. We appreciate your request and hope our responses prove informative for your members.

If you have any further queries related to Green Party of Canada policies, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth May, O.C., M.P.
Saanich-Gulf Islands
Leader of the Green Party of Canada

Responses to your Survey entitled 'Questions to the Green Party of Canada'

1. Blood Samples Act

Will your party adopt legislation that was introduced in the last Parliament that grants the right to correctional officers to request a blood sample when the officer is attacked with or exposed to an inmate's bodily fluids?

No.

Correctional officers are on the front-line of Canada's overburdened incarceration system. The resources provided to officers, particularly given their unique and often dangerous working environments, are wholly inadequate, yet correctional officers perform their duties with professionalism and efficacy. However, with respect to a proposed Blood Samples Act, the Green Party of Canada believes that the potential for Charter violation is too steep to justify an actively intrusive government policy. The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association warns that such legislation violates privacy rights, bodily integrity and is likely not within the scope of federal authority.

2. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

What specific steps will your government take to address the issue of post-traumatic stress disorder among correctional officers?

The Green Party of Canada recognizes the need for improved support for mental health in this country. We see a clear responsibility for the federal government in taking a leadership role in collaborating with provincial, municipal governments and First Nations to establish community-focused strategies to combat persistent mental health issues. This will require direct investment into mental health programs both within the health care system and directly in the workplace.

However, to bring true improvement to the working conditions of correctional officers we must do more than treat the symptoms of post-traumatic stress - we must address the root conditions that lead to the high incidences of post-traumatic stress. Correctional institutions will always be stressful and dangerous environments, however, there are existing and tangible policy reforms that could reduce tension between officers and prisoners, see improved outcomes for prisoner rehabilitation while also improving the workplace for correctional officers.

As violent crime declines in this country, we should be focused on integrating restorative justice and harm reduction practices that will cease the overcrowding of existing institutions and lead to lower rates of recidivism. Practices like double-bunking and solitary confinement are not only misguided criminal justice policy, they create toxic and violent relationships between prisoners



and correctional officers. We should be focused on education and meaningful work for offenders while they are incarcerated, so that they can become better prepared for reintegration into society upon their release. The Green Party also believes that where possible, we should restore the prison farm system. Improving the workplace environment for correctional officers and evidence-based corrections policy go hand-in-hand.

3. Occupational Health and Safety

Will your party repeal the changes made to the definition of danger in the Canada Labour Code contained in the Economic Action Plan 2013 Act, No.2, to ensure correctional officers have a vehicle, mechanism or process to resolve health and safety issues in their workplace.

Yes

4. Sick Leave

Correctional Officers have specific sick leave provisions recognized by Treasury Board since 1999 that take into consideration the often dangerous and unique conditions we work in. Will your party ensure sick leave provisions are respected in recognizing that the nature of our work is different from other public servants?

Yes

