

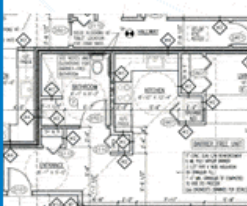


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Northern Policy Institute gives all parties 'C' grade report cards NORTHWEST



By Jon Thompson, tbnnews.com

Northern Policy Institute CEO Charles Cirtwell gives disappointing grades to every political party running in the federal election, based on his institute's priorities.

By Jon Thompson, tbnnews.com

THUNDER BAY -- The Northern Policy Institute has issued a damning report card that spares no political party when it comes to making Northern Ontario a priority.

Based on a series of recommendations the institute released in a May report with the Mowatt Centre regarding the federal role in Ontario's growth, every party got a 'C' at best, with the Conservatives and Greens receiving grades of 'C-.'

"No one stood above the crowd. What stood out for me is out of the 32 recommendations, the Liberals covered 16 of them. The Tories missed almost 23," said Northern Policy Institute CEO Charles Cirtwell.

"I think the message is while Ontario is vote-rich, it tends to get still very much ignored on the policy side by all four parties."

All parties failed to meet the institute's approval on plans to address challenges in inter-provincial tariffs and trade. No party intends to introduce a strategy for mid-sized cities. No platform intends to make more local labour market data available. No leader intends to restore funding for immigrants to settle in Ontario.

The incumbent Conservative Party was recognized for its training and employment principles and its commitment to international trade but performed particularly poorly in areas of information sharing and policy clarity.

The New Democratic, Liberal and Green Parties all received top marks for



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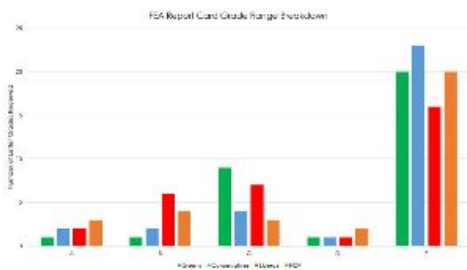
promising to reinstate the long-form census and all performed adequately on plans regarding First Nations education and labour.

Cirtwell praised the NDP for proposing a northern platform, including the party's bid to make FedNor a stand-alone ministry. The party received 'D' grades, however, in trade and innovation policy.

The Liberals and Greens both scored well on their intentions for infrastructure but both parties failed in every category related to developing regional business strategies.

Cirtwell said Canada's traditional assumption that Ontario drives the national agenda. The danger in that myth is that polices which he believes develop this province are being ignored for political reasons.

"Ontario has always been the largest economy and the largest population base wubt when you look at the way we run campaigns, it's always been about pitching to niche markets in Quebec, finding that special something you can offer to folks in the West, finding a way to convince Atlantic Canadians that maybe the government can slip an extra 25 bucks into their monthly checks."



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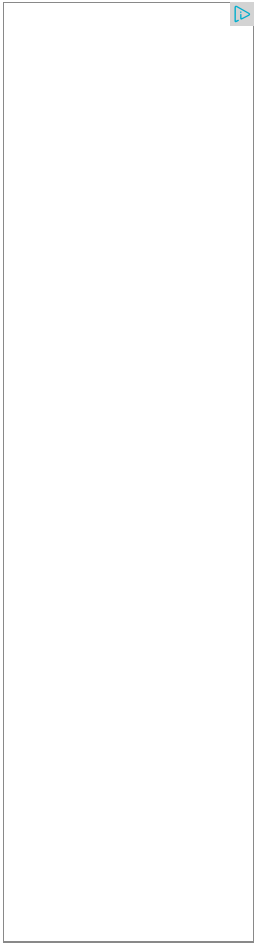


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