

SASKATCHEWAN: STRONG AND STEADY

Budget 2009-10 Delivers the Largest Property Tax Cut in Saskatchewan History

- **\$103 million in Education Property Tax savings** for Saskatchewan property owners in 2009, a **14% reduction**
- **\$53 million in further Education Property Tax savings** next year
- Province will **cut and cap education property tax rates (mill rates)** by setting province-wide tax rates for each of the three major property classes – residential, agricultural and commercial
- Government will **increase its share of funding to school divisions by \$241 million** this year, to a **record \$990.5 million**
- **Province will now fund about 63%** of the operating costs for Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 education, up from last year's provincial funding of 51%; **increasing to 66% next year**

Education Property Tax inquiries: 1-866-984-8577

Sound Financial Management

- **Balanced budget in a time of global uncertainty**
- **\$424.5 million surplus forecasted**
- **\$1.14 billion forecasted Growth and Financial Security Fund balance as a cash reserve**

Budget Highlights

A Better Life for Our Children

- \$200 million over two years for a **new Children's Hospital** in Saskatoon
- \$57.8 million for **early learning and child care (ELCC)**, an increase of \$12.6 million, for 1,000 new spaces, child care worker training, funding lifts for ELCC service providers and capital for new space development and maintenance
- \$3.6 million for **enhanced school Internet connectivity and distance education delivery** by school divisions
- \$24.9 million for the first installment of a multi-year strategy **to make improvements in the child welfare system**
- \$18 million for the **Active Families Benefit**

Stronger, Safer Communities

- \$167.4 million in **operating grants for municipalities**, an increase of \$32.3 million or 24% – step one of a two-year plan to base municipal operating grants on the value of one point of the Provincial Sales Tax; this is in addition to the \$100 million infrastructure "booster shot" for municipalities announced in February
- \$1.6 million to hire **30 additional police officers** – consistent with the election commitment for 120 new officers over four years
- **Community Based Organizations will see an increase of \$27.2 million** to provide a further 3% basic grant increase over and above the additional funding announced in both last year's budget and in September 2008; this funding is primarily intended to address recruitment and retention issues
- \$12.3 million in **library funding**, including \$10.1 million for **grants to public libraries** to enhance Internet connectivity and integrate library information systems

- \$35.9 million to **continue addressing waitlists** in the Community Living Division; the waiting list will be significantly reduced within four years

Investing in Education and Skills Training

- \$23.5 million to **enable universities to limit tuition increases** to an average of 3%
- \$23 million to **attract and retain nurses and other hard-to-recruit health professionals** in Saskatchewan
- \$7.9 million to **continue the training seat expansions** announced last year for nurses, physicians, and medical diagnostics
- \$3.9 million to maintain the mid-year increase of **1,100 apprenticeship training seats** and **additional Apprenticeship Training Allowance support**
- \$6.5 million for the **second year of the Graduate Retention Program**, for a total investment of \$18.5 million in 2009-10
- \$5.9 million for an **Aboriginal Workforce Development Fund to support new employment initiatives** aimed at increasing First Nations and Métis workforce participation
- \$2.2 million for **enhancements to the student loan program**, including increased loan limits and further grants for low and middle-income students

Keeping Our Economy Strong

- **\$1 billion capital program**, for schools, hospitals, roads and other infrastructure (**\$2.5 billion capital commitment over the last two years**)
- \$358.2 million for **road and highway work province-wide**, an increase of \$86.7 million from 2008-09
- \$6 million to **convert the current 15% non-refundable Saskatchewan Research and Development (R&D) Tax Credit** to be fully refundable for eligible R&D investments (\$18 million in total funding)
- \$108.1 million in **additional funding for farm income stabilization programs**, which includes an additional \$102.1 million for **AgriStability** and \$6.0 million for **AgriInvest**
- \$25.2 million in **additional funding for Crop Insurance**, including \$20.0 million in enhancements as a result of implementing the 2008 Program Review recommendations
- \$5.3 million for the **Enterprise Regions Program** and \$300,000 to implement **Northern Enterprise Regions – targeting regional economic development**
- \$5.1 million for the **Western Economic Partnership Agreements designed to encourage economic growth** in Saskatchewan

Keeping Life Affordable

- \$16.5 million for annualized **enhancements to the Seniors Income Plan** which increased support for low-income seniors by raising the maximum monthly benefit from \$90 to \$190 for single seniors and from \$72.50 to \$155 for each member of a two pensioner household
- \$12.5 million to **adjust shelter rates in the income assistance programs** in response to the Task Force on Housing Affordability and index shelter allowances and supplements to 70% of average market rate

