



FIRST NATIONS VOTES MATTER SUPPORT \$5.1 BILLION AND POLITICAL ACCORDS VOTE STRATEGICALLY

The **Federal Election** is on **January 23, 2005**, and the First Nations Leadership Council strongly encourages all eligible First Nations to **register and vote**. The outcome of the election will directly affect our communities, our people, our families, our children and our future. Over the past two years, tremendous progress has been made on the relationship between the federal government and First Nations, including a commitment to joint policy development, and \$5.1 billion dollars to improve the quality of life for First Nations people. BC First Nations also have an agreement to work directly with the federal government on delivering these commitments to meet BC-specific needs. The upcoming federal election places this progress in jeopardy – First Nations need to support candidates that will honour recent commitments.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

- If First Nations get out and vote, we can have tremendous influence and impact on the election outcome, particularly in the ridings of: Skeena-Bulkley Valley; Cariboo-Prince George; Chilliwack-Fraser Canyon; Prince George-Peace River; Nanaimo-Cowichan; Vancouver Island North; Kamloops-Thompson; Nanaimo-Alberni; Vancouver East; Okanagan-Coquihalla; and Kootenay-Columbia.
- First Nations need a federal government that will uphold recent political accords and commit to working with First Nations to implement self-government and undertake joint policy development.
- We must ensure that the financial and policy commitments made at the First Ministers Meeting, including the BC-specific *Transformative Change Accord*, are recognized and implemented by the next federal government.

MAJOR FEDERAL PARTIES' POSITIONS ON FIRST NATIONS ISSUES

Liberal Party (www.liberal.ca/platform_e.aspx) – From his first day in office, Prime Minister Paul Martin identified Aboriginal issues as a priority his Government followed through on that commitment by:

- Signing the *First Nations-Federal Crown Political Accord* and the *Transformative Change Accord*, committing them to work with First Nations on reviewing federal policies, including treaty negotiation mandates and specific and comprehensive claims policies
- Committing \$5.1 billion dollars for Aboriginal education, relationships, health, housing and infrastructure, economic opportunities
- Developing a residential schools compensation package

New Democratic Party (www.ndp.ca/page/2963)

- The NDP will honour the \$5.1 billion commitment made at the First Ministers' Meeting
- The NDP will honour the *First Nations-Federal Crown Political Accord* and the *Transformative Change Accord*
- The NDP will implement the residential schools agreement, including a public apology by the Prime Minister

Conservative Party (www.conservative.ca/EN/1091/38751) – The Conservative Party of Canada has not made any spending commitments for Aboriginal issues but has made the following political promises:

- They support the targets set at the First Ministers Meeting, but not the \$5.1 billion commitment made in Kelowna
- A Conservative government will replace the *Indian Act* with a different legislative framework
- The Conservatives will create a First Nations Land Ownership Act to transfer reserve title from the Crown to First Nations.

For more information on registering to vote, call the Elections Canada toll-free number (1-800-463-6868) or visit their website (www.elections.ca).