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Active Saskatchewan Families Benefit **And Doubling the Caregiver Tax Credit**

The Saskatchewan Party's New Ideas to Secure the Future

To help families with the cost of children's sports, cultural and recreation activities and promote active families, a Saskatchewan Party government will provide parents with an annual \$150 per year, per child benefit for children age six to 14.

To assist families with the cost of caring for seniors and family members over the age of 18 with infirmities, a Saskatchewan Party government will double the Caregiver Amount Personal Tax Credit from \$4,019 to \$8,038 per year.

Active Saskatchewan Families Benefit

Eligibility

The parents of approximately 120,000 children in Saskatchewan are eligible for the benefit each year if their children engage in cultural, recreational or sports activities and incur up to \$150 in costs for fees or directly related charges for the activity.

Cost

Total cost of the program if every child participates is \$18-million per year, or \$72 million over four years.

Administration:

The Active Saskatchewan Families Benefit will be administered through the income tax system as a refundable tax credit. Parents will be asked to submit receipts for the cost of their children's activities and applicable documentation for each child's activity when they file their income tax. Parents incurring up to \$150 in expenses will receive a \$150 refundable tax credit.

Benefits:

- Participation in cultural, recreational and sports activities benefit the children, their families, communities and the entire province.
- The Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association and SaskCulture have identified just some of the benefits of encouraging active living:
 - A study of the Saskatchewan Healthcare System shows that every 1% increase in participation in recreation activities saves taxpayers \$1.37-million dollars in annual health care costs.
 - Physical activity is essential for preventing children from becoming obese. Physical Activity regulates obesity by increasing energy expenditure, suppressing appetite, increasing metabolic rate and increasing lean body mass.

- Participation in recreational activities can be linked to lower levels of television watching, more positive relationships with peers and friends, a greater likelihood of performing better in school, increased future educational expectations, better health and decreased participation in negative behaviours such as smoking and drinking.
- The National Crime Prevention Strategy lists a variety of recreation based initiatives used as community-based early intervention efforts that deal with the root causes of crime and victimization.
- Recreation contributes to the development of future capacity. Childhood recreation activity is associated with adult volunteering and community work.
- Research conducted by the Hamilton Community Foundation and the Children's Mental Health Division of Health Canada found that recreation/child care pays for itself by reductions in the use of Probation Officers -10%, Children's Aid Society -50%, 911 Services -50%, Social Workers -10% and Psychologists -50%
- Research shows that students who participate in band, orchestra, chorus or a school play, are significantly less likely than non-participants to drop out of school, be arrested, drink excessively or use drugs.

Details: Doubling the Caregiver Amount Personal Tax Credit.

The Personal Caregiver tax credit provides assistance to individuals who care for a dependent family member at home, including parents and grandparents over the age of 65 or a relative who is dependent because of an infirmity.

The Saskatchewan Party plan will double the tax credit from \$4,019 to \$8,038 – saving caregivers a total of \$884 per year.

Eligibility:

Individuals are eligible for the full tax credit if they are taking care of a dependant who lives with them, whose net income for the year will be \$13,726 or less, and who is either their or their spouse's or common-law partner's parent or grandparent (aged 65 or older), or relative (aged 18 or older) who is dependent on them because of an infirmity.

If the dependant's net income for the year will be between \$13,726 and \$17,745 individuals can claim a partial tax credit for the year.

Cost:

The cost of this tax measure is \$800,000 per year / \$3.2-million over four years