

Growing from the grassroots up

Growth and opportunity in
every part of New Zealand



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New Zealand should be a place where you can find good work, start or grow a business and build a future for your family.

Labour will grow the economy from the grassroots up.

We'll get Kiwis back into work and back Kiwi businesses and ideas, so more people can build their future here.

That means getting work started in our communities, helping local businesses grow and investing in the skills and innovation that will create the jobs of the future.

And we'll bring everyday costs under control so people can get ahead.

Better starts now.

On 7 November, Party Vote Labour.

Our Promise to New Zealanders

Labour will create growth and opportunity in every part of New Zealand. We'll act on the cost of living now while investing in the jobs and businesses that can lift incomes for the future.

Three years on from National's promise to get things moving, growth is half what Treasury forecast before the last election, unemployment is higher, and prices are rising twice as fast as expected.

There are 171,000 New Zealanders out of work, 48,000 more than when National took office. Nearly 6,000 companies went into liquidation in the last two years, the highest number in 15 years. **And 2,000 people have been leaving the country every week.**

National has one answer - to cut. But you can't cut your way to growth. When work stops and jobs go, local businesses lose customers too. Putting off investment in equipment, skills and infrastructure also limits what New Zealand can produce and earn in the future.

A Labour Government will:

1. Get Kiwis back into work
2. Back small businesses to survive and grow
3. Back innovative Kiwi businesses with new investment
4. Help businesses prepare for the future
5. Build a future people can afford

Local work supports jobs and businesses now. Investment and innovation help create opportunities and mean we earn more in the future. Lower bills help people feel the benefit in their own lives. That's how we create growth and opportunity in every part of New Zealand.

A future made in New Zealand

My parents brought me up to believe that if you work hard and do your bit, you should be able to get ahead. I've carried that with me all my life. It's one of the reasons I got into politics.

Everywhere I go, I meet people working hard, watching every dollar and making sacrifices for their kids. And they're still struggling to get ahead.

I want young New Zealanders to find good jobs here. I want people with good ideas to build successful businesses. And I want families to see a future at home.

Getting the cost of living under control will be Labour's number one priority. We'll give everyone three free GP visits a year and free prescriptions, cap public transport fares at \$20 a week in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and \$10 everywhere else, freeze fuel tax for three years and crack down on companies ripping people off.

We'll also get work started fixing schools and hospitals and building homes. That means work for local builders, tradies and apprentices. We'll guarantee eligible graduate nurses a job, putting their training to use caring for our loved ones here, instead of Australia.

That's what growing from the grassroots up means - backing the people and businesses doing the hard work.

For small business owners, we'll make it easier to keep going, get paid on time and take on more work.

We'll also help Kiwi businesses get investment to develop new products and reach customers, and help people learn new skills. I want New Zealand to be a place where a good idea can become a successful business, with the jobs and wealth it creates staying here.

We'll be responsible with your money and ambitious for New Zealand's future. Managing the books carefully must go hand in hand with investing in the work, businesses and skills that help our country grow.

People shouldn't have to leave New Zealand to get ahead. This plan is about creating the work and opportunity that give them a reason to stay, and bringing costs under control so they can afford to build a future here.



Chris Hipkins

Leader of the Labour Party

1.

Get Kiwis back into work

Better means good jobs, reliable incomes and the chance to build a future here.

Good jobs and reliable incomes give people the chance to get ahead. They also keep local businesses going.



Labour will:

- ✓ Guarantee every eligible New Zealand-trained graduate nurse a job.
- ✓ Start maintenance and repairs at more than 2,000 schools and get overdue hospital repairs moving.
- ✓ Restart Kāinga Ora building and deliver at least 6,000 additional community housing places over four years.
- ✓ Expand Apprenticeship Boost to support 30,000 apprentices, with a \$1,000 tools grant.
- ✓ Make it easier for smaller Kiwi businesses to win government-funded work.

Fix schools and hospitals and build homes

We'll get work underway on the buildings our communities rely on. School repairs mean work for builders, plumbers and electricians. Hospital repairs and new homes create work while making sure New Zealand has the services and housing it needs for the future.

Back apprentices and local businesses

Expanding Apprenticeship Boost and a new \$1,000 grant to cover the cost of tools and equipment will help 30,000 young people start a trade and give businesses the skills they need.

We'll also give smaller businesses a fairer chance to win public contracts, so more of this work supports local jobs.

Give graduate nurses a job

We've invested in training nurses. Employing eligible graduates puts that training to use caring for patients and gives them a reason to build their careers here.

This will help local businesses, give young people a start, and keep skills in New Zealand. Labour will support growth now while building what our communities need for the future.



2.

Back small Kiwi businesses to survive and grow here

Better means helping small Kiwi businesses keep going, grow and create local jobs.

Most New Zealand businesses are one or two people doing everything themselves - serving customers during the day, then catching up on paperwork at night. It's hard work. Labour will back small businesses and make it easier to keep going and invest.

Labour will:

- ✓ Raise the GST registration threshold from \$60,000 to \$80,000.
- ✓ Increase the immediate asset write-off from \$1,000 to \$10,000.
- ✓ Require large businesses to pay small suppliers within 15 days.
- ✓ Make it easier for smaller Kiwi businesses to win government contracts.
- ✓ Help businesses install solar through SolarSaver to lower power costs.

Make life easier for small businesses

Many owners serve customers during the day, then catch up on paperwork at night. Raising the GST threshold will give small businesses more room to grow before they must register. Requiring large businesses to pay within 15 days will help small suppliers cover wages and bills.

Make it easier to invest in equipment

A business may need new tools or machinery to take on more work. Raising the immediate asset write-off to \$10,000 means the cost of eligible equipment can be deducted from taxable income sooner. That helps businesses invest in what they need to grow.

Give local businesses a fair shot

We'll make government contracts easier for smaller Kiwi businesses to win. Government investment should help build the skills and capacity of businesses here, giving them a chance to take on bigger jobs in the future.

We'll also take action on advantages big companies use to shut smaller businesses out. Separating supermarket wholesale and retail arms will give independent grocers access to stock at fairer prices.

A right to repair will give local mechanics the software, information and tools they need to get more work. Opening up banking and payment systems will give new Kiwi providers a chance to compete.

Our changes will mean more opportunity for local businesses to grow and a better deal for their customers.

Lower power costs

High electricity bills leave less money for equipment, staff and expansion. SolarSaver will help businesses install solar and reduce their bills. That also creates work for local electricians, installers and suppliers.

3.

Back innovative Kiwi businesses with new investment

Better means backing Kiwi talent and ingenuity

New Zealand has talented people and good ideas. But a promising company may need years of investment to develop a product, prove it works and reach customers. Without that backing here, it can be forced to move or sell overseas before New Zealand sees the full benefit.

Labour will help more Kiwi businesses get the investment they need to grow here.

Labour will:

- ✓ Establish a New Zealand Future Fund to invest in innovative Kiwi businesses and infrastructure.
- ✓ Redirect up to \$50 million a year of the Government's contribution to the NZ Super Fund into Elevate.
- ✓ Introduce a simple, targeted capital gains tax on profits from selling residential investment and commercial property, with every dollar raised invested in healthcare.

New Zealand Future Fund

The fund will invest in Kiwi businesses and infrastructure, including opportunities such as clean energy and high-tech start-ups. It will help turn Kiwi talent and ingenuity into businesses and projects that create jobs and build New Zealand's future.

Back more innovative Kiwi companies

Elevate invests in innovative new businesses. Redirecting up to \$50 million a year into the fund will help more Kiwi companies get the backing to develop their ideas and grow here. We want the businesses of the future, and the opportunities they create, to stay in New Zealand.



Encourage investment in productive businesses

For too long, our tax system has favoured investment in property over investment in businesses. Buying an existing property at a higher price does not, by itself, help New Zealand produce more.

A targeted capital gains tax will reduce that tax advantage and encourage investment in businesses that create jobs and wealth. It will apply only to gains made after 1 July 2027. The family home, farms, businesses and KiwiSaver will be excluded. Nine out of ten New Zealanders will not pay a single dollar.

Every dollar raised will go into healthcare, including three free GP visits a year through Medicard. The tax will support business investment and help people see a doctor when they need one.

4.

Innovation and skills for the future

Better means shaping the future in a way that works for New Zealand

New technology can help businesses produce more, develop new products and reach customers. New Zealand needs to build the skills and businesses that will create good jobs as the economy changes.

Labour will take an active role in shaping how AI develops here. We'll help Kiwi businesses use it safely, back practical training and protect people's rights.

Labour will:

- ✓ Back small businesses and start-ups to safely take advantage of AI.
- ✓ Support training and work with businesses, educators and unions so people share in the gains.
- ✓ Protect privacy, creative work and New Zealand's control over its data.
- ✓ Use AI to improve public services, making sure there is always human oversight.
- ✓ Make large data centres pay their way.
- ✓ Establish an Office of AI using existing resources to coordinate this work.

Help businesses use AI

We'll back the AI small business fund, extend the AI Advisory Pilot and increase the Founder and Startup Support Programme. Reliable advice will help smaller firms use AI safely and effectively.

Build skills and share the benefits

We'll support accessible training, including micro-credentials, so people can adapt as jobs change. We'll work with businesses, educators and unions to make sure productivity gains benefit people and communities.

Protect rights and data

We'll strengthen privacy and online safety protections, including banning non-consensual deepfake pornography. We'll develop rules so creators can control and be paid for AI's use of their work, and work with iwi and hapū on Māori data.

Improve public services

AI can reduce hospital paperwork, giving doctors and nurses more time for patients. We'll support schools to use it safely, assess the full lifetime costs and keep people responsible for decisions affecting people's lives.

Make data centres pay their way

Large data centres will need to secure their own renewable energy, pay connection costs, reduce demand when the electricity system is under pressure and use water efficiently. Households and other businesses should not carry those costs.

Provide clear leadership

An Office of AI within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will coordinate this work using existing resources. It will develop standards that manage risks without putting unnecessary barriers in the way of innovation.

5.

Build a future people can afford

Better means getting the cost of living under control.

Creating jobs and backing innovation should help people get ahead and build their future here. But people also need to be able to afford to get by.

Three years ago, Christopher Luxon promised to fix the cost of living. Three years later, everything costs more. A typical family with two children can now be paying almost \$6,000 extra a year compared with 2023.

Labour will take immediate action on the cost of living while investing in the jobs and businesses that can lift incomes.

Lower bills and better opportunities give people more reason to build their lives in New Zealand.

Labour will:

- ✓ Give every New Zealander three free GP visits a year through Medicard and scrap the \$5 prescription charge.
- ✓ Cap public transport fares at \$20 a week in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, and \$10 everywhere else.
- ✓ Freeze fuel excise tax for three years.
- ✓ Help households install solar panels and batteries through SolarSaver.
- ✓ Ban price gouging, open supermarket wholesale supply to smaller competitors and crack down on hidden fees.

Make healthcare and transport cheaper

Affordable healthcare helps people stay well and stay in work. Cheaper transport makes it easier to get to a job or study. Three free GP visits, free prescriptions, fare caps and a fuel tax freeze will help with costs people face week after week.

Lower household power bills

SolarSaver will offer government-backed low-interest loans for solar panels and batteries, with extra help for low- and middle-income households and options for renters. Lower bills leave people with more money to spend, save or invest. Installing solar panels and batteries will also create work for local electricians, tradies, installers and suppliers.

Fairer prices and more choice

Labour will make excessive prices on essentials illegal and give regulators power to require companies to repay overcharges.

Our jobs and business policies help people earn more. Our cost of living policies help that money go further.

Fully costed and paid for

Government is about choices. Labour will manage the books carefully while investing in the work and businesses that help New Zealand grow.

Leaving people out of work has a cost. Families lose income and businesses lose customers. Delaying repairs can make them more expensive. When skilled people leave, New Zealand loses their contribution to the economy. Responsible government must consider those costs too.

Labour has published an independently verified Fiscal Plan. Every election commitment is costed and funded.

Labour will:

- ✓ Fund operating commitments within existing allowances for future Budgets.
- ✓ Fit announced capital commitments within the \$12 billion capital allowance, leaving almost \$8 billion unallocated for future priorities.
- ✓ Return the Government books to surplus in 2028/29.
- ✓ Bring net debt down below 20% of GDP over time.
- ✓ Invest every dollar from the targeted capital gains tax in healthcare.

Invest where it makes a difference

We'll back work that communities need done and businesses that can create lasting wealth. That means using public money carefully, making sure it delivers and having room to respond to future pressures.

An economy that works for everyone

Labour will grow the economy from the grassroots up. We'll create jobs now by getting needed work started and backing local businesses.

We'll invest in innovation and skills so more of the jobs and wealth of the future are created here. And we'll bring everyday costs under control, so people can afford to build their lives in New Zealand.

Better starts now.

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