

Phil GOFF

Labour Leader

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MEDIA STATEMENT

Labour's Roadmap for the Economy

Labour has today announced a comprehensive and bold plan to kick-start our economy by helping businesses grow, lifting wages, creating jobs and providing financial relief to struggling Kiwis so we have a future we can look forward to.

"The time for just muddling through and lurching from one financial disaster to another is over. National is all about short-term fixes with an eye on the election. Labour has the courage to make the tough decisions needed for the long-term.

"Labour's plan involves making some radical changes and we make no apology for that. We will make the difficult decisions today so that future generations are not left drowning in debt tomorrow because we didn't have the guts to do what is right.

Labour's roadmap for the economy will:

- Pay off the mountain of debt built up under National while keeping the assets that return dividends worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Kiwis every year;
- Create a pool of money through compulsory KiwiSaver that can be used to invest in our businesses and give all Kiwis a nest egg for their retirement;
- Restructure the tax system so everyone pays their fair share and shift the focus from property speculation to investment in our productive sectors;
- Get Kiwis off the unemployment scrapheap by paying employers the equivalent of the dole if they take a beneficiary on as an apprentice;
- Prepare for the future financial shock of our aging population by gradually increasing the retirement age so we can cope when the number of over-65s doubles to 1.3 million by 2050;
- Give those who are struggling a hand and stimulate the economy by making the first \$5000 earned tax-free, taking all the GST off fresh fruit and vegetables and lifting the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

"The global financial crisis is casting a shadow over our future. There's no doubt about that. Labour saw it coming when it was in office and prepared for it by making sure we had zero net debt.

"We will show that same financial discipline and restraint in government again. Our plan is affordable and credible and has been given the tick of approval by the Reserve Bank.

"The future prosperity of our country depends on the development of a high-tech, high-wage economy. We shouldn't try to be the cheapest. We should be the best at what we do.

"Labour's plan will give all New Zealanders the chance to secure a prosperous future for themselves and their families."

Contact: Fran Mold 021 461 674