

Check against delivery / Sous réserve de modifications

Embargo: 9:45 PM 1/26/2012 21h45

State of the Province 2012 / Discours sur l'état de la province 2012

.....

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

Au nom du gouvernement du Nouveau-Brunswick, je veux vous souhaiter la bienvenue:

- à vous tous ici au Palais des congrès de Fredericton;
- et tous ceux et celles qui nous regardent à la télévision.

Tonight I want to speak to you about some of the things we've achieved as a province over the last year.

I also want to talk about our government's top priorities for this year:

1. Jobs and the economy;
2. Energy and responsible resource development;
3. Government Renewal and deficit reduction;
4. Healthy families and an enhanced quality of life.

Mais d'abord, je veux remercier tout le monde ici d'être présents à notre deuxième discours sur l'état de la province.

By being here or by tuning in, you are showing how passionate you are about our province and our common future.

It's an enthusiasm I see across our province, in every city, town, and rural road.

There really is an abiding commitment to our province in the hearts of everybody who has ever called it home.

It is essential to rebuilding a stronger, healthier, and more innovative province.

It's no secret New Brunswick is experiencing a period of profound change.

Let's think about this: two years ago the IPAD didn't exist. Today, a Carleton County farmer like me can't do without one.

Today we see more photos on a daily basis than we ever thought possible, thanks to Facebook and Twitter.

And at the same time, we learned last week that Kodak, the photo industry icon, has filed for bankruptcy protection.

Medicine is advancing by light years each day, and yet chronic disease and our aging population are challenging the very delivery of healthcare.

These are some big examples, but there are countless ways New Brunswickers are living through change every day....real change with real impacts.

Families and communities are hurting as market conditions shift and industries adjust. And yet we are also discovering new opportunities and innovation.

What fills my days with hope as Premier is that we have the power to choose how we want to rebuild our province through change. And I believe we are stronger making those decisions together.

We owe our great quality of life to our ancestors' perseverance and resourcefulness when times were tough.

And let's not kid ourselves, times have been tough.

- The First Nations
- Acadians,
- Loyalists,
- Irish,
- Scots,
- and many others who built our province didn't build it because they thought it would be easy.

They wanted better lives, and they came together to broker a better future.

Together they built a province where hard work was rewarded, new perspectives could thrive, and innovation led the way.

Over time a common set of values became clear:

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Bilingualism
- Personal freedoms and responsibility.
- Justice
- Free enterprise.
- Equality
- And faith in the will of the people.

Aujourd'hui, ces valeurs sont encore très vivantes peu importe où que vous soyez au Nouveau-Brunswick;

- de Edmundston à St. Stephen;
- du comté d'Albert jusqu'à la Péninsule acadienne.

And no matter where you look today, you will find New Brunswickers focused on that better future.

At kitchen tables, in chambers of commerce, on worksites, and in hi-tech startups, New Brunswickers are finding new ways to grow their communities and care for their families.

When you love your province as New Brunswickers do, it can be tempting to put off change and try to stay the same.

But our quality of life can only endure if we can embrace change and determine our destiny together.

If we truly believe that future generations should be born with the same opportunities as we have:

- to learn,
- to live healthy lives,
- to earn a living
- and raise a family in New Brunswick
- ...then we cannot put off change for another day.

In New Brunswick we are fortunate to have many examples of leaders who created and shaped change rather than waiting for it.

Individuals who made a difference in their communities, and who had the vision to redefine New Brunswick's role in the world.

We were saddened by the loss of Wallace McCain this past year, and New Brunswickers came together to celebrate his life.

Wallace brought New Brunswick to dinner tables all over the world. Together with his brothers, he helped to change the nature of doing business in New Brunswick.

His legacy is all around us. And that legacy is very vibrant tonight thanks to the many business leaders who have benefited from the Wallace McCain Institute.

And we lost another visionary when Ian Fowler left us far too early. Ian was in the business of selling Moncton and New Brunswick to the world.

The legacy he left is bigger than life, and even bigger than a Rolling Stones or U2 concert.

Grâce à Ian Fowler, le Nouveau-Brunswick a parcouru le monde entier.

Ian had a bold vision for Metro Moncton as the Entertainment Hub of Atlantic Canada.

His neighbours responded to that vision, and events like last week's Canadian Figure Skating championships are his lasting legacy.

New Brunswickers believe in the potential that exists in their communities.

I see it in every region of our great province.

Presque tout le monde que je rencontre se dit prêt à participer à la reconstruction du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Recently, countless New Brunswickers and other Canadians helped promote the Bay of Fundy in the 7 Wonders of Nature competition.

Even Rick Mercer got on board — literally.

To drum up support for the bay, we went out on the water in a jet boat. Roll the video.

It was an incredible experience.

But seriously, I was incredibly impressed by everybody's efforts to promote the bay.

Time and time again, I'm blown away by how many New Brunswickers reach out to government.

Les citoyens ont répondu à l'appel du gouvernement en très grand nombre.

It shows the determination we as New Brunswickers have to take charge of our common future.

The potential that exists in everyone who lives here is nothing short of remarkable.

Just look at the inspiring achievements of New Brunswickers like:

1. world-famous recording artists Measha Brueggergosman and Matt Andersen.
2. l'auteur Antonine Maillet, qui a célébré cette année le quarantième anniversaire de La Sagouine.
3. Et Shawn Couturier de Bathurst.

Shawn will skate in this weekend's NHL rookie all-star game in Ottawa.

These four individuals demonstrate New Brunswick really is a province of high achievers.

We are truly a force to be reckoned with.

That's why I believe we can build our future together.

I said those very words in this same room a year ago.

And I'm proud to say that's exactly what we as a province have been doing since then.

Notre gouvernement travaille pour - mais aussi avec les Néo-Brunswickois - pour obtenir des résultats importants.

Et nous faisons des progrès.

It's a very productive partnership.

For example, we delivered our first budget last year after consulting many New Brunswickers province-wide.

In fact we received more than 10,000 suggestions!

Ces suggestions reflètent les priorités des gens, comme l'éducation et les soins de santé.

And we also slashed the projected deficit in half!

Before we took action, the deficit had been expected to hit a billion dollars this year.

But countless New Brunswickers stepped forward to offer solutions.

And thanks to their input, the deficit has been reduced to under 500 million dollars.

But that's still far too large!

Bien sûr, nous avons encore beaucoup de travail à faire.

I want to thank all the public servants who are working to ensure we meet the budget.

But, the reality is New Brunswick's structural deficit remains a serious challenge.

Earlier this month, New Brunswick's Auditor General said "significant" steps must be taken to deal with it.

Otherwise, there will come a time when the Province will not be able to provide programs and services as they exist today.

Et notre vérificatrice générale avait raison.

Des mesures importantes sont nécessaires.

We know there is lots of work to do, but we can get there together.

The work to further reduce our deficit will continue in the upcoming budget.

And there is only one way tolls or an HST increase will happen.

New Brunswickers would have to vote for them in a referendum or general election.

Right now, our focus is on reducing waste, finding efficiencies, and delivering services in a more innovative way.

As part of our Government Renewal initiative, we've launched a review to ensure pension plans in the public and private sectors are protected and sustainable.

Pendant ce temps, nous continuons notre travail pour repenser la gouvernance locale.

We've already conducted extensive consultations to produce *An Action Plan for a New Local Governance System in New Brunswick*.

We signed an agreement with New Brunswick's First Nations and Ottawa to guide discussions leading to a pact on Aboriginal and treaty rights.

As well, we've come forward with measures to facilitate elections of board members to our regional health authorities.

And we're taking steps to enhance the role and composition of district education councils.

Bilingualism is a part of who we are as New Brunswickers. C'est partie intégrante de la vie ici.

This spring our government will begin reaching out to New Brunswickers as we review the *Official Languages Act*.

Cette consultation publique importante va aider à orienter nos efforts pour assurer que la législation soit adaptée aux besoins des Néo-Brunswickois.

Ce processus permettra d'améliorer le bilinguisme / pour en faire un plus grand / avantage concurrentiel.

Next week, we'll launch the Premier's Panel on Seniors' ...Living Healthy, Aging Well.

It'll be an important first step in addressing the challenges posed by the huge increase coming in our senior population over the next decade.

This dramatic demographic shift means that meeting the needs and expectations of seniors will be increasingly challenging.

Alors il va falloir une bonne planification bien élaborée.

For this purpose, the panel will provide a blueprint to guide government investments in community development and services that allow seniors to live active and healthy lives.

As this work is being done, our government is also working to foster healthy families and an enhanced quality of life in New Brunswick.

L'année dernière, nous avons lancé à travers la province des discussions sur les façons d'améliorer l'éducation au Nouveau-Brunswick.

Public dialogue sessions began this week to discuss the value of lifelong learning and to make New Brunswick “The Learning Province” of Canada.

We also began re-investing in New Brunswick’s school infrastructure.

These investments are essential so our students and staff will excel in safe, healthy learning environments.

As well, we’ve taken steps to assist reservists who live in New Brunswick.

In recognition of the crucial work they do, we introduced legislation to expand the existing leave provisions.

And on that note, I’d like to welcome the new commander of Base Gagetown here tonight — Colonel Paul Rutherford!

En outre, notre gouvernement a lancé le tout premier Plan d'action pour la santé mentale au Nouveau-Brunswick.

Likewise, we’ve brought forward a new, comprehensive diabetes strategy.

It includes a program to help families with diabetic children cover the costs of insulin pumps and supplies.

On top of all that, we've committed to change primary health care as a way to increase access.

The Primary Health Care Steering Committee held a successful summit last fall.

Grâce à ces initiatives et bien d'autres, les soins de santé du Nouveau-Brunswick verront de grandes améliorations dans l'avenir.

This goal is in keeping with our values as New Brunswickers.

In our province, we take care of each other.

So as Premier, I've made poverty reduction a priority.

Je continue à croire profondément dans le besoin d'améliorer la qualité de vie pour les plus démunis de notre province.

I believe it's everyone's responsibility to reduce poverty, and I intend to lead our government's efforts personally.

To that end, we will continue to implement the Economic and Social Inclusion Plan.

And we'll do so by working with all stakeholders, including:

- people living in poverty;
- and the non-profit and business sectors.

It is clear to me that the road to greater prosperity and social progress can only be built through innovation.

Finding smart solutions to tough problems is an essential New Brunswick quality.

We have been doing it for generations, and the time is now to bring even more New Brunswick solutions and products to the world.

Countries like Israel and Finland have used their universities, highly educated workforces, and an aggressive innovation agenda to energize their economies.

They are exporting smart ideas to the world and reaping the benefits at home.

New Brunswick has the very same advantages, and the very same potential.

Homegrown companies like Radian-6 and Q1 Labs are proving that we are a hotbed of innovation.

Now imagine how successful we could be if we received even a fraction of the public and private research and development funding that is available in Central and Western Canada. We want our fair share!

I would say the sky is the limit, but Woodstock's Xplornet Communications proved the sky isn't even a barrier anymore. Last fall it launched a satellite into orbit on a rocket from Kazakhstan for its new rural 4G service.

Le diplômé en génie de l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick, Desh Deshpande, est d'accord.

In the United States, this UNB graduate has founded and taken public three multi-billion-dollar companies, including Sycamore Networks.

He's also co-chair of President Obama's National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

He sees universities as factories of ideas.

So he recently partnered with our very own technology business mentor Gerry Pond.

Together, they've launched the Pond-Deshpande Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at UNB.

Son objectif est d'exploiter les idées développées à l'université pour lancer des entreprises prospères.

So, I want to thank Desh and Gerry for their commitment to our province.

I also want to congratulate Gerry on being named Angel Investor of the Year at the first annual Canadian Start-up Awards announced by KPMG last Friday.

I'm looking forward to seeing great things resulting from the new centre at UNB.

In the meantime, New Brunswick is already home to many phenomenal companies that are thriving through innovation.

A great example is Soricimed Biopharma based in Sackville.

It was spawned in the labs of Mount Allison University by the work of Professor Jack Stewart.

Cette entreprise est reconnue en tant que leader et innovateur dans la recherche.

Another growing segment of our knowledge economy is the information and communications technology sector.

We are blessed with a wealth of talent in this high-paying field.

C'est un secteur qui est prêt à connaître une croissance dans notre province.

As a government, we want to help fuel its growth.

That's why I teamed up with members of New Brunswick's ICT community last year to form a Premier's Advisory Council on Technology.

Our government is also investing in a training-for-employment program to provide opportunities for Aboriginal people in New Brunswick's ICT sector.

Des villes du Nouveau-Brunswick continuent de recevoir une reconnaissance internationale pour leur capacité d'innovation.

In 2009, both Fredericton and Moncton were recognized by the Intelligent Community Forum.

And this year, Saint John has been named a Top 7 city as well! Congratulations!

Comme gouvernement nous allons encourager ces progrès.

That's why we've partnered with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador to create a regional venture capital fund.

It supports innovative firms poised to grow.

We've also created a working group on innovation.

It includes academic and private sector leaders, such as Jon Manship, founder of Spielo.

In the coming weeks, they will make recommendations on improving New Brunswick's efforts in innovation, research and development.

As a government, we believe the framework of an innovation strategy for New Brunswick must provide solutions to:

- accelerate intellectual property development
- encourage entrepreneurship
- and create a province-wide network;

Ultimately, innovation is going to be rocket fuel for our economy.

En innovant nous allons créer un avenir plein de nouvelles possibilités pour des collectivités plus fortes.

This brings me to the topic that's foremost on the minds of many New Brunswickers.

That's our province's employment and economic situation.

As a manufacturing and export-oriented province, our economy is tied closely to the rest of the world and especially the United States.

Right now, the U.S. economy is still on shaky ground and there's uncertainty across much of the globe.

As a result, there have been significant jobs losses across Canada and in New Brunswick.

It's no secret 2011 was a tough year for people and businesses in our province.

Et en tant que province, nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre de simplement relancer notre économie avec des dépenses du gouvernement.

When I travel the province meeting with New Brunswickers, they want to know if better days are ahead for our province and everyone who lives here.

Having had the opportunity to see the drive and resolve that exists in communities across our province, I can confidently say yes.

Malgré nos défis, je suis confiant que le Nouveau-Brunswick prend la voie d'un avenir meilleur.

The opportunities are real, and our government is here to help.

But help does not mean we aspire to fill the role of entrepreneurs and business leaders.

Governments are not the job creation experts and we aren't a bank.

But we can help by fostering the right business climate, by educating our youth and training our workers.

We are here to listen to the men and women who are creating jobs in our communities.

If we can help, we'll get the job done. The rest of the time we pledge to get out of the way, so you can do yours!

By listening to job creators, we are finding constructive ways to support our businesses and protect jobs as market conditions change.

That's why we've come forward with a Large Industrial Renewable Energy plan that will save thousands of jobs in industries like forestry.

This plan will bring energy rates for these customers down to the Canadian average and on an equal playing field with their competitors.

It also gives them the predictability for the future so they can make important investments in their facilities.

You may also be aware of the discussion regarding natural gas distribution. This has been a tough issue but we felt the only responsible way forward was to correct a very flawed system.

New Brunswickers are paying the highest distribution rates in North America. At a time when natural gas prices are falling, distribution rates are skyrocketing. The changes we are making will pass the benefit back to the customer.

This will help protect thousands of New Brunswick jobs and support the men and women who drive our economy.

There will always be critics, but a responsible government must stand up for New Brunswick jobs, New Brunswick businesses, and New Brunswick consumers.

There is hope and optimism on the horizon. New Brunswickers can look forward to economic spinoffs and jobs from the 25-billion-dollar contract recently won by Irving Shipbuilding.

On prévoit que le projet va créer beaucoup d'emplois dans notre province au cours des vingt-cinq prochaines années.

Jim- tonight I want to publicly congratulate you and your whole team!

New Brunswick wants to be a driving force in helping you build the best supply chain in the industry.

I also want to congratulate the Province of Nova Scotia on what is really a regional win for the Maritimes.

Together, we are making regional collaboration a reality and we look forward to achieving more benefits for the residents of each province.

Tonight I also want to thank a group of dedicated New Brunswick business and community leaders who joined forces over the past year.

I mean the members of the Future NB Board of Directors under the leadership of Andrea Feunekes, the co-CEO of Remsoft who is here with us tonight.

This initiative arose from the highly successful summit of the same name chaired by David Ganong and Camille Theriault.

The Board is focusing on removing obstacles to business in order to help grow private sector jobs and the economy.

And I look forward to their work paying dividends for years to come. I can assure you our economic development strategy will work well together because it will be co-ordinated, collaborative and constructive.

I can tell you I'm also looking forward to great opportunities ahead for New Brunswick in six highly productive economic sectors:

1. aerospace and defence;
2. biosciences;
3. la fabrication industrielle;
4. ICT;
5. value-added food;
6. et des produits forestiers à valeur ajoutée.

Our government's new and focused economic development strategy will ensure New Brunswick capitalizes on all opportunities in these sectors.

Avec cette stratégie, ce n'est pas la politique qui mène les décisions, mais un processus plus ciblé.

At the same time, our strategy is being designed to put people in need of help back to work alongside employers in need of help.

Et cette stratégie va mettre en évidence des investissements stratégiques dans des possibilités de création d'emploi.

All of these initiatives make one thing very clear.

The time for business as usual has ended in New Brunswick.

To build our province's future together, we can no longer use the methods of the past.

We are extending decision-making powers to the communities and regions where jobs are created.

As a government, we will:

- decentralize economic development to the regions;
- empower local communities to make local decisions for local businesses;
- and integrate economic development efforts across all levels of government.

And in the next few weeks, we will honour these commitments once the federal budget has been delivered.

Pour tous ces objectifs, nous avons déjà créé des fonds de développement économique et d'innovation pour:

1. la région de Miramichi;
2. et le nord du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Together, these funds represent a job-creation investment of 250 million dollars over four years.

It's an investment that is already helping to create jobs and grow the economy in northern New Brunswick.

In the Miramichi, we've helped Sunny Corner Enterprise increase its fabrication capabilities and create almost 200 jobs in the Miramichi region.

It's incredible to see so many workers coming home to work close to their families!

C'est fantastique de les voir travailler sur un tel projet et d'exporter des appareils de forage partout dans le monde avec Major Drilling de Moncton.

Furthermore, we created a new economic development agency called Invest New Brunswick, led by a private sector board.

Investir NB est opérationnel et a le mandat d'attirer de nouveaux investissements dans notre province.

The time has come for us as a province to be far more proactive in bringing job creators to New Brunswick.

Beginning tomorrow, Invest New Brunswick will have great news to announce about new jobs for New Brunswickers.

For now, I can tell you the news involves Canada's largest distributor of pharmaceutical and medical supplies, McKesson Canada.

The company's President Nick Lo-por-car-o is here with us tonight.

Welcome, Nick, to New Brunswick!

Meanwhile, our province is also positioned to benefit more from our natural resources in the ground.

Just last month, our government signed an agreement with Atlantic Potash Corp. of Saint John.

It means the company can explore and develop a confirmed potash deposit near Sussex.

If the deposit is economically viable, there will be a new mine that would create literally hundreds of jobs.

Looking ahead, energy and natural resources will continue to play a key role in New Brunswick's future progress.

Donc en tant que province, nous devons tirer le meilleur parti des possibilités qui se présentent à nous.

I want to recognize the exceptional work done by Energy Minister, Craig Leonard, the MLA for this riding.

Minister Leonard took over the energy file at a time when our energy future was uncertain.

In a very short period, the Minister and his department worked with to NB Power to build a leaner and more efficient company that will continue to serve New Brunswickers going forward.

I'm very pleased to say New Brunswickers now benefit from the lowest residential electricity rates in Atlantic Canada!

And rates will remain frozen until 2014.

Two years ago, who would have thought we would be standing here in New Brunswick applauding the value of NB Power?

Meanwhile, our energy future looks more certain than ever thanks to the vast research and consultation that went into to the *New Brunswick Energy Blueprint*, based on the work of energy commissioners Jeannot Volpé and Bill Thompson.

It outlines a 10-year vision and a three-year action plan for our province's energy sector.

The New Brunswick Energy Blueprint proves New Brunswickers can help ensure government gets it right when it comes to managing our province's assets and resources.

As President Obama said this week, I anticipate natural gas could be a driving force behind economic growth and job creation going forward.

Il y a certainement un très grand intérêt dans l'exploration.

Surtout pour le gaz de schiste.

It could become a major new industry in our province — one that could create thousands of new jobs.

Now tonight, I want to reaffirm something very important.

As a government, we insist on the responsible development of natural resources in New Brunswick.

We believe new jobs and growth can only be achieved without the sacrifice of our province's clean water, clean air and clean soil.

So our government is taking steps to protect these.

We've already brought forward stronger requirements for natural gas development to:

- better protect the environment;
- and enable New Brunswickers to be better informed.

Et nous travaillons maintenant à développer un plan de protection de l'environnement.

And we're taking steps to ensure New Brunswick has a strong regulatory regime in place for oil and gas exploration.

Il va inclure des mécanismes très forts de surveillance, de l'application et du respect des lois.

So there'll be no trade-off of people's safety or our environment for economic gain.

New Brunswickers can be assured an expanding natural gas industry could only produce jobs and economic growth if it can be done responsibly.

This week, in his state of the union address, President Obama outlined his vision of shale gas as a massive job creator and a long-term source of cleaner energy.

He said benefits of natural gas prove "that we don't have to choose between our environment and our economy."

Throughout our work to strengthen regulations and monitor exploration, New Brunswickers can count on being engaged by our government.

Nous serons toujours prêts à écouter les opinions des gens et à répondre à vos questions.

I'm very happy to take some questions from New Brunswickers right now.

.....

Je veux remercier ceux et celles qui ont soumis des questions.

J'espère que j'ai pu y répondre avec satisfaction.

Thank you for your questions!

In closing I want to take five minutes to touch on a process that is underway that is really vital for our province's future.

That's Government Renewal. It's a process through which each and every program and service delivered by government is being critically reviewed.

We've started this process to ensure the Province can provide appropriate, affordable and sustainable services to New Brunswickers.

It's not sexy, but it's vital for the good of New Brunswick.

For one thing, the last significant review of services and the way they're delivered took place more than 40 years ago.

Notre province et le monde qui nous entoure ont énormément changé depuis ce temps.

So, another review is clearly long overdue.

Furthermore, New Brunswick's debt has grown significantly.

In 2011, it reached 9.4 billion dollars.

As I mentioned earlier, New Brunswick's Auditor General has said "this significant increase in net debt represents a very disturbing trend."

As a government, we agree.

This situation is clearly unsustainable.

The reality is it can no longer be "business as usual" when it comes to the way the Province functions.

We must get our fiscal house in order.

So it's high time our province took a serious look at improving and streamlining government's service delivery.

Comme je le disais, notre gouvernement continue à s'attaquer au déficit.

Our goal is to eliminate it so New Brunswick can:

- stop adding to the debt;
- and start paying it down again.

In this undertaking, we're continuing to engage New Brunswickers through pre-budget consultations.

At the same time, it's necessary for the Province to focus on providing core programs and services.

Je parle ici des programmes et services qui sont essentiels au mieux-être des Néo-Brunswickois.

So as part of Government Renewal, the work is underway to determine exactly what those programs and services are.

A fully engaged public service has identified 325 initiatives, both within departments and across government, that will be implemented over the next three years.

A new strategy map sets the vision for change with balanced scorecards, performance monitoring, and achieving results.

We are driving the execution of the strategy by aligning initiatives and introducing formal process improvement, using Lean Six Sigma methodology.

As you all know, the bottom line is all about results!

This vision for change will focus government efforts on:

- core services;
- accountability;
- and continuous performance improvement.

In all these ways, the new accountability system will help establish a more focused, efficient system of program and service delivery.

To help move our vision forward, we will establish a Panel on Accountability and Responsible Government that will help implement better business practices.

We must make significant changes to how we spend public money if we are to balance the budget and continue to deliver services that are affordable and sustainable.

The Panel, to be announced next week, will be led by a group of independent business people with expertise in key priority areas.

Altogether, these measures demonstrate how we will involve New Brunswickers to:

- restore fiscal stability;
- live within our means;
- and change the culture of government.

Thank you very much for your ongoing engagement in growing each of your communities.

It's our future, it's our province, let's rebuild it together!