



association of consumers and taxpayers

Party Manifesto 2018

A party for the libertarian-right, a combination of social liberalism and fiscal responsibility ranging from neoliberalism to classical liberalism to libertarianism.



Our core beliefs:

- **That individuals are the rightful owners of their own lives and therefore have inherent freedoms and responsibilities.** This means that the government should not dictate what you can or can not do if it does not directly harm another individual, and that, as an individual, you are responsible for your own actions and should not infringe upon the rights of others.
- **That the proper purpose of government is to protect such freedoms and not to assume such responsibilities.** This means that government should work to ensure that each of its citizens' rights are upheld, not to infringe upon the individual's rights themselves outside of what is absolutely necessary.



Our Achievements:

In the First MNZP General Election, ACT went into its campaign with the hopes of electing one MP and siding with the National Party to keep the well-meaning but economically mistaken Labour and Greens, or the dangerous and authoritarian New Zealand First, out of power. Instead, National failed to elect a candidate while ACT gained 2 seats in parliament. In order to stop NZF from entering government, ACT sided with Labour and the Greens in a confidence and supply agreement, and extracted substantial concessions from our colleagues on the left. During the course of the agreement, ACT achieved the following:

- Party Leader /u/Fresh3001 was appointed the Minister of Health, Regulatory Reform and Regions whilst /u/LiberalKiwi served as the Finance Under-Secretary.
- The Misuse of Drugs (Recreational Cannabis) Amendment Bill 2017 passed its third reading in the house and received royal assent, legalising the use, growth and commercial sale of cannabis. It ends the prohibition on a relatively harmless drug and its associated utensils, allowing an entirely new market to grow.
- The End of Life Choice Bill 2017 passed its first reading, and will legalise assisted dying for the terminally ill and those with irremediable and grievous medical conditions. This allows those in insufferable pain to end their lives legally, and with dignity, rather than having to attempt amateur, violent suicide themselves.
- Tax cuts were passed, making the first \$6,000 of all New Zealanders' incomes tax free. This returns an estimated \$1.98 billion to the taxpayer each year.
- In addition to this, the excise tax on cigarette sales was halved, reducing it to the 2015 level. This helps lower-income Kiwi families who now spend less proportionally on cigarettes, and reduces the incentive for criminals to target dairies or other stores where cigarettes are sold.
- As Health Minister, /u/Fresh3001 consolidated New Zealand's 20 District Health Boards into 6, as recommended by multiple studies conducted by health service professionals, thus improving efficiency and coverage.
- In the Committee of the House and the Select Committee process, ACT managed to moderate a number of bills from the government, such as the Consumers' Right to Know (Origin of Food) Bill 2017, where the minimum size of type was reduced to a more reasonable level.
- ACT kept the Labour-Greens coalition in check, by opposing bills such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement Repeal Bill 2017, the excessive KiwiRail Emissions Reduction Bill, and the unnecessary Parihaka Day Bill, while still maintaining a steady government. ACT also voted against NZF's expensive Electorate Electoral Referendum Bill, and many of their unnecessary proposed amendments to Labour's Electoral Amendment bill.



Economy and Taxation:



- The ACT Party will work to promote efficient government spending alongside lower tax rates in order to grow a more productive economy for New Zealanders.
- ACT believes that while taxation is necessary for government to function, we should seek to reduce the negative impact it has on everyday New Zealanders. This means reducing the burden government has on the taxpayer by advocating for a lower income tax, and opposing any proposed increases by the government.
- ACT has made progress towards this in the current government by making the first \$6,000 of all New Zealanders' incomes tax free, and by halving the excise tax on cigarettes to benefit low income families.
- ACT will abolish corporate welfare in New Zealand by closing the 'charitable purpose' tax loophole to level the playing field, and end costly subsidies to failing businesses. The government should not pick winners by giving money to favoured firms.

Foreign Affairs & Trade:



- New Zealand is, and always will be, a trading nation. Free movement of goods and services between nations is integral to global economic prosperity, and this is true no less for New Zealand. Our wealth depends on purchasing goods that we cannot produce cheaply, and exporting ones that we can for higher prices on the international market.
- ACT is a strong supporter of free trade agreements and the abolishment of barriers to free trade, including the Trans Pacific Partnership.
- ACT believes that New Zealand should maintain and strengthen her traditional alliances, as well as seek to maintain good relationships with neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region, in order to ensure the national security of New Zealand.
- As a strong defender of Western, liberal values, ACT believes that New Zealand should aim to promote the ideas of liberty and equality under the law in our foreign policy.
- New Zealand's role as a leading nation in the South Pacific should also be maintained, but not at unnecessary expense to the taxpayer.



Immigration:

- ACT is a pro-immigration party as we honour our nation's heritage as one of immigrants. ACT recognises the economic benefits that come with immigration, as well as the opportunity that it gives to migrants from less developed countries.
- ACT has stood up to racism and persecution of immigrants by political opportunists, and opposes a points-based system that tells immigrants where to live, as it goes against the value of freedom of movement.
- Still, ACT believes that New Zealand should maintain our values of free speech, free assembly, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, property rights and the rule of law, and that immigrants to our country should have to explicitly sign up to these values. ACT does not believe in telling others what to think, but if prospective residents have values inherently incompatible with New Zealand's they should not take precedence over those who don't.

Welfare:

- ACT believes that the state should play a role in protecting our most vulnerable citizens, but that role should be limited. Welfare should be a means for those going through hard times to get back on their feet, not to remain dependent on the money of the taxpayer. Of course, there is an unfortunate number of Kiwis who, due to physical or mental disabilities, are unable to earn an income of their own and the state should have a role in caring for them.
- ACT believes that welfare for upper income earners is a waste of money, and paid parental leave or the domestic purposes benefit should be cut for those wealthy enough to cope on their own.

Housing & Infrastructure:



- ACT believes that the housing crisis and insufficient infrastructure are real problems for urban New Zealanders. Demand for housing is far exceeding the supply, and costs are rising to levels that are far beyond acceptable, making it impossible for many Kiwis to own their own home. The costs of the crisis are often pushed onto the taxpayer, with more money being spent on emergency housing, rent subsidies and accommodation subsidies.
- In government, ACT would remove New Zealand's large cities from the Resource Management Act and replace it with separate urban development legislation which would allow the growth of cities upwards and outwards, free from stifling regulations.
- To better incentivise investment in infrastructure, ACT would also share a portion of GST levied on construction with city councils.



Education:

- It is important that public schools remain well-funded so that Kiwi kids can be sufficiently equipped to achieve in future life. However, there should be room for private investment in public schools, which can alleviate some need for government funding. For this reason, ACT supports Partnership Schools which allow Maori, Pasifika and other minority groups to succeed in academia.
- School curriculums should also be constructed by the government and be nationally applicable to ensure sufficiency in education standards and efficiency in transitioning to tertiary education.
- Schools should also be allowed to opt out of union contracts in order to gain flexibility in being able to pay good teachers more, thus encouraging better performance and education for the next generation.

Personal Freedom:

- ACT believes that liberty is fundamentally good. The government should have zero role in restricting the personal choices of New Zealanders if those choices don't negatively affect anyone else. Simply because a politician personally disagrees with the way someone lives their life, or the choices they make, does not mean it should be illegal. Therefore, we seek to maximise it in every way.
- ACT has made steps towards improving the personal freedom of all Kiwis firstly by passing a bill through the Committee of the House to legalise recreational cannabis use, and its commercial sale. ACT has also submitted the End of Life Choice Bill 2017, to legalise assisted dying and allow those with a terminal illness or a grievous and irremediable medical condition to end their lives with dignity.
- In addition to this, ACT believes in a wider liberalisation of drug laws by decriminalising the use of all prohibited substances and encouraging rehabilitation over incarceration. ACT is also a staunch defender of the right to free speech, and will prevent at all costs any attempt by government to encroach upon that right.

Health:



- Rising government expenditure on health has done little to improve the efficiency or quality of service of New Zealand's health service. While it is clear that increasing expenditure does little, ACT does not plan to cut health expenditure beyond the increases made by the 1st MNZP government.
- ACT has made gains towards fixing the structural problems that cause many of these issues, such as by reducing the number of District Health Boards from 20 to 6. Still, changes can be made to ensure that DHB members and chairs are selected based on merit and experience, rather than elected based on likeability.

Law & Order:



- ACT believes that New Zealand needs to be both tough and smart on crime. The worst offenders should be put behind bars and serving sentences that reflects not only their crime, but their past offences also.
- However, in order to reduce recidivism ACT believes that the justice system should also work to rehabilitate non-violent prisoners by encouraging them to complete educational programs such as learning a trade - in turn, working to fix the shortage of trade professionals that has contributed to the housing crisis.
- In addition to this, private charities and organisations such as the Howard League should be allowed to volunteer in prisons to aid in the rehabilitation process.

Environment:



- ACT believes that protecting the environment and preventing climate change are part of the great many issues New Zealand faces today. However, many of the solutions to these problems proposed by the left often come with excessive expense to the taxpayer, and to the wellbeing of New Zealand's economy.
- ACT believes that the current Emissions Trading Scheme, while not only being broken, is totally superfluous to the carbon tax introduced by the 1st MNZP government. In government, ACT would seek to repeal the Emissions Trading Scheme while maintaining the carbon tax to reduce New Zealand's impact on the environment.