

Foreword:

Hello Manawatū!

My name is u/zakian3000, and I am running as an independent candidate in this by-election. I appreciate that you may not know me as well as you might know the other candidates, which is why I have put forward this platform to explain who I am and what I stand for.

Manawatū is crying out for change. It needs renewing and repairing to make it the best place to live, not only in New Zealand, but in the world. Only I have the skills and abilities to build back better in Manawatū. That's why you should put your trust in me to represent you.

Please Manawatū, vote to make a difference. Vote for me to be your MP.

Building our Economy Back Better:

I believe in a Social Democratic economy that supports small businesses to grow and prosper whilst having strict regulations to prevent big businesses exploiting workers. This will keep money flowing around the local economy whilst ensuring that the average person is the ultimate beneficiary.

The government should not be taking money out of your pocket without using it to invest in services which benefit you. As such, I will vote against any budget that would increase our surplus, either getting more money invested into public services or more money kept in your pocket.

If elected, I would call for reforms to income taxes, allowing working and middle class people to keep more money in their pockets whilst focusing the tax burden on the wealthiest.

I would call for corporation tax to be split into two bands, with small businesses paying a rate of 20% and larger businesses paying a rate of 25%. This would allow smaller businesses in Manawatū to keep more money so they can stay open and keep money in the community whilst ensuring that big businesses pay their fair share.

If elected, I will call for a universal cost of living relief package which would support people across Manawatū and New Zealand more widely through the current crisis.

I want to see our economy brought into the 21st century with modern technology and innovations to support it. I would call for subsidies to be given to businesses to buy new technologies that would help them deliver for the community.

Building Back New Zealand's Place in the World:

I want to reform the Pacific Islands Forum into an EU-style organisation, acknowledging that places like Manawatū thrive not when New Zealand is isolated, but when it is a major power in the world with close allies and strong international relationships.

Recognising the abhorrent war President Putin has waged on Ukraine, I will push for incredibly severe economic sanctions against the Russian Federation, as well as allies of it, including the Republic of Belarus.

We cannot keep being blind to the fact that there are billions of people living without access to clean drinking water, and millions living in hunger or absolute poverty. I want to see New Zealand spearhead the fight against this and work with the international community to identify the problem and create the solution.

I would push the government to ask countries like Canada, Australia and the USA to make formal apologies for their oppressive treatment of indigenous peoples, whilst also recognising that it would be hypocritical of us to do this without recognising our own mistreatment of Māori people.

I believe that we need to stand up for the right to self determination across the world, even when that may be difficult. I believe that our government ought to be putting pressure on the UK government to hold a second referendum on Scottish independence, putting pressure on the Spanish government to respect the result of the 2017 Catalan independence referendum, and putting pressure on the Danish government to hold a referendum on Greenlandic independence.

I believe that we should be pressuring the international community to relax restrictions on the right to an abortion, with an ultimate aim of securing the right to abortion worldwide.

Building Back Better with a Fair Immigration System:

Immigration systems aren't just about ensuring the country has skilled workers, it's also about lending a helping hand to those who no longer feel safe in their own countries. I believe we ought to open ourselves up as much as possible to people fleeing countries that are being consumed by war or human rights abuses.

Immigration restrictions should be little more than a simple screening process to ensure those coming in don't pose a threat to our national security. Beyond that, we should be welcoming in anyone who wants to live in New Zealand.

Where deportation is deemed necessary, I believe it should be done as swiftly and humanely as possible, and no one should be sent to a country where there is any risk that their human rights won't be respected.

I believe that visa fees serve very little real purpose and that scrapping them would offer a huge incentive for high skilled workers to immigrate to New Zealand, supporting local economies like the one here in Manawatū.

I believe that Oceania should establish a shared migration zone, with freedom of movement between countries here. If elected, I would call upon the government to open up negotiations with other Oceanian countries as soon as possible to do just that.

Once people are let into our country, they should be under exactly the same rules that other citizens are under; there should be absolutely no disparity in the way we treat immigrants and the way we treat everyone else who lives in New Zealand.

Building Back Better with a Stronger Justice System:

I believe that communities like Manawatū should have an established forum where they can raise any concerns about the management of crime in the area, as well any other issues with local law enforcement.

Police officers are not mental health experts, so we need to stop treating them like they are. Mental health call-outs should be referred to an entirely separate organisation specifically designed to deal with such issues.

The first and foremost priority when dealing with crime should be supporting victims, and ensuring they have full access to emotional support, as well as legal representation.

Prisons should operate under a Norway-style model, focused on rehabilitation and reducing re-offending. Retributive justice serves no purpose and ought to be left in the past.

Prisons should be subject to regular and random inspections from an independent organisation to ensure that inmates are not being mistreated and that any abuse isn't covered up.

It's far better if we can keep prisoners as close to their communities as possible. Manawatū Prison can generally do this job for men here, but I believe a women's prison ought to be built in Manawatū as well.

Building Back Better with a Secure New Zealand

We are better defended if we work with allied countries. I believe that Oceania ought to have one shared defence force, with all countries in the region contributing resources to make an effective military force.

New Zealand cannot prevent the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine. But we can help. New Zealand should offer as much military and humanitarian aid as possible to Ukraine in order to help it fight off this disgraceful attack.

I believe that New Zealand should be putting pressure on countries that hold nuclear weapons to ditch them, pushing for a nuclear-free world.

There are three circumstances which would justify New Zealand going to war: defending ourselves from foreign invasion; defending democracy and self determination across the world; and defending human rights. Petty battles over things like oil or resources do not justify putting the lives of Kiwis at risk.

The military budget should only be set as high as necessary to maintain peace and security. Any additional funds would be better spent on more pertinent matters.

I believe that the military, as well as international organisations like Five Eyes, need to be accountable to the people of New Zealand and to the people of Manawatū, and I will be open to supporting any proposed reforms on that front.

Building Back Better with a Cleverer Generation of Kiwis

Class sizes in Manawatū are far too big, and a series of reforms should be undertaken to reduce them to a maximum of 20 or less pupils.

Gendered schooling should become a thing of the past: neither all-boys nor all-girls schools should exist in New Zealand, diversity in education must be promoted, and segregating pupils of different genders from one another isn't preparing students for the real world where they are going to meet people with a variety of gender identities.

Education needs to be accessible to people regardless of wealth. Free school meals and free university tuition must both be considered in order to ensure this.

All young Kiwis should be taught their history, and not just the history of their country, but also the history of their local community. Every pupil in Manawatū deserves to know about the history of the area.

Instead of taking parents to court if their child misses school, there should be an investigation into why it has happened. Often these issues are a result of deeper problems like poverty or mental health issues which need to be considered.

I believe that there should be legal requirements in place for schools to listen to pupil voices. Schools exist for the benefits of students, their voices in the way they're run must be listened to.

Building Back Better with a Healthier Manawatū

Stronger mobile health services would be beneficial in providing effective health services to rural Manawatū. If elected, I would urge the government to seriously consider expansion of such services.

All healthcare should operate under a fully nationalised and free model, and if elected I would seek to ensure that this is the case.

All drugs ought to be decriminalised, and addiction should be treated as a health issue rather than a criminal one.

I believe that vaccinations against dangerous illnesses should be mandatory in order to protect public health.

Mental health services should operate with a triage system in order to ensure those most at risk are prioritised and treated quickly.

Doctors work everyday to create a healthier Manawatū, and I think we should support them in that with an above inflationary pay rise.

Building Back Better with a Plan for Communities

Housing should be built on every corner. Everyone in Manawatū deserves a place to live.

The housing sector should be nationalised in order to slash prices and ensure that everyone can get a home offered by the state.

I am a firm believer in subsidiarity. Every service that can be devolved to local authorities without causing havoc should be.

I believe that New Zealand should operate a Denmark-style model to reduce second home ownership, allowing local authorities to decide whether certain properties can be held for secondary use.

Territorial authorities should be scrapped and merged into regional councils, which I believe are just as capable at providing a service to local communities.

Local authorities should be legally obliged to consult with their communities before making large decisions, whether that be meeting with people who would be affected, or holding a local referendum.

Building Back Better with Strong Transport Infrastructure

I will back the government in their plans for an anti-pothole fund, a sensible policy that will make roads in Manawatū much better.

I believe that Manawatū should have a tram network that allows people to access any part of the area. Trams are effective and have a low running cost.

If elected, I would push the government to establish a fund to improve active transport provisions. Walking, running, and cycling are fantastic methods of transport which do not have a negative impact on the environment and keep people active.

Public transport must be accessible for people with disabilities, and whether it is or isn't should be something that is subject to regular review.

We should transition to electric cars as soon as practical, allowing us to cut our carbon emissions significantly.

All public transport should be nationalised. It is essential that services that allow people to do things like get to work in the morning are run with the best interests of the general public in mind, rather than private profit.

Building Back Better with a Carbon-free New Zealand

I oppose nuclear energy. It is costly, it is unsafe, and it isn't even particularly good for the environment.

New Zealand should go 100% renewable rapidly, with wind farms, solar panels, and wave energy converters across the island.

I believe that companies should be obliged to report annually on their carbon emissions and how they intend to reduce them.

I believe that we should be investing as much as possible into carbon capture technology to reduce the amount of CO₂ in our atmosphere.

New Zealand should be planting as many trees as possible, and back this up with plans for the protection of existing forestry.

All sectors, whether it be heavy industry, or something like the police or the military, should have a plan to reduce their carbon emissions rapidly.