



Manifesto

2015

 **ELECT P A M**
WEBSTER
Independent Candidate District 1

Manifesto:

A NEW ANGUILLA NOW

Introduction

My Dear Friends,

As an independent candidate, I have the ability to avoid the perennial political habit of churning out lists of pie-in-the-sky projects and never-to-be-realised plans. I am thrilled to be able to exercise that freedom and give you a straightforward and clear assessment of what I have come to believe Anguilla needs. I didn't come up with all these ideas by myself. That is not leadership, that's a dictatorship. These proposals are the result of conversations I have had with neighbours, friends, associates—fellow Anguillians who have taken the time to share their concerns, their suggestions, and their dreams with me.

And now I thank you for taking the time to read this Manifesto, and I encourage you to give me your own ideas, whether they be constructive criticism, encouragement, new points of view, or whatever you have to offer. And check back to my website again as we approach the election to see what's new in the Manifesto, because I listen to my constituents, and I take what they say seriously. It's only together that we can make A NEW ANGUILLA NOW!

Pam Webster

April 13, 2015

The Economy: Correcting Mistakes, Getting It Right

A Plan to Make Our Government Part of the Solution, Not Part of the Problem

The intersection of government and economics presents societies with an ancient and nearly intractable problem. How do we strike the right balance between regulation and the free markets? Between responsible borrowing and necessary spending? Between raising revenue and encouraging growth? Unfortunately for the citizens of many countries, politicians often leave sound economic and fiscal principles behind when they step into the halls of power. What should be a level playing field in business gets tilted in favour of big investors, outside investors, and investors with the right connections. The rights of workers are subjugated to the interests of corporations, so the financial “bottom line” means the weakest suffer most when things go badly. And the collection of revenue takes precedence over all else, even as those who pay the taxes wonder whether the politicians really know best how to spend the money that the people have earned.

We all experience similar problems in the microcosm of our family finances, so we know that while it is complicated, it isn't rocket science. Too often, the reason fiscal policy goes wrong is simple lack of transparency. Backroom deals and hidden relationships are toxic for an economy. At the very foundation of the economic plans put forth here is the unwavering principle that the government is answerable to the people, and that all aspects of our government's fiscal policy must be open to inspection by any interested Anguillian: salaries and other forms of remuneration, bidding processes and the awarding of contracts, details of development projects and land leases. Just as important is the value of cooperation. To fix our economy, we must ensure that our identity as Anguillians is paramount, and that lesser allegiances to political parties or even to our districts come second to our commitment to the betterment of our blessed island for the benefit of all Anguillians.

5 Pragmatic Steps We Can Take Now:

The health of our economy relies on a complex web of interacting forces, such as bank lending rates, tax reporting and compliance, shifting trends in business and tourism in the

Caribbean, currency exchange rates, the price of oil and subsequently the price of jet fuel, and the looming effects of recession vs. recovery both regionally and worldwide. Some of the forces, such as tax compliance and tourism, are partly within our control in that we can affect them to some extent with smart policies. Others, like the price of oil and jet fuel, are simply and forever entirely outside of our limited range of influence. Through a tight focus on the range of economic drivers over which we do have power, along with a set of goals that are clear and achievable, we can kickstart Anguilla's lagging economy within the next year.

- Restore confidence.

The top priority from Day 1 must be to restore internal and external confidence in our government's financial stewardship. The simple reality of a new government will take us some way toward that goal, but the new government must quickly show that it is not simply a new iteration of the previous one, dragging along the same old bag of poor decisions and band-aid fixes. To this end, we must rapidly and decisively implement an open assessment of what went wrong in the past ten years. Most importantly, the current budget must be scoured and all questionable expenditures and amounts analysed. Wasteful expenditures must be eliminated, and a clear and thorough report published on the changes made. We will adopt new, tighter controls will be established over future expenditures, and will make this new system of oversight, review and accountability public in the report as well.

- Restore tax fairness.

The Interim Stabilisation Levy was ill-conceived and badly explained from the start, and it should be phased out as quickly as possible without causing more disruption than its creation did. Citizens People should look askance at a government that racks up unserviceable debt, but they should be equally suspicious of a government that imposes onerous taxes with the hidden intent of running a surplus. Surpluses inevitably lead to profligate spending. The Interim Stabilisation Levy has not only suppressed Anguilla's economic growth in a time when our most important partners and neighbours experienced recovery, it has damaged our government's ability to raise tax revenue responsibly by diminishing internal confidence in our fiscal decision-making. When people trust that their taxes are necessary and fair, taxes will be paid in full and on time.

- Rejuvenate Our Fishing Industry.

Lastly, we must energise and stabilise Anguilla's fishing industry. Fishing is not only a vital part of our economy, it is an intrinsic element of our cultural heritage and patrimony and

we are not taking advantage of the vast resources of our 200 miles fishing limits. We should begin immediately the initial steps of creating a municipally organised and constructed central fish market. Smoothing out fluctuations in the operating costs and market opportunities of our fishermen is necessary as well to ensure the long-term health of this vital arm of our economy. Additionally, a cost-benefit analysis and environmental-impact study of conch farms should be undertaken immediately so that we may move forward with these projects in 2016. Other marine-oriented endeavours, such as coral-restoration projects, may be considered as well, within the scope of the same effort. The sea is part of our history and tradition, and this time of renewal is not the moment to turn away from it.

- Borrow responsibly.

As confidence in our government's fiscal management is restored, we should find it possible to raise a modest borrowing amount at on reasonable terms to address urgent requirements in terms of infrastructure improvement. The key here is to borrow at competitive rates and only in limited amounts based on Anguilla's GDP and current trends. Anything more than that will only serve to damage external confidence in Anguilla, leading to a downward spiral. Physical infrastructure restoration is precisely the type of budgetary outlay for which borrowing makes sense, for it is a necessary, long-term investment with clear benefits and not a short-term expense for questionable or uncertain gain (such as building a convention centre in the hopes of attracting corporate visitors to the island). Infrastructure repair and development will focus on roadways and water systems, health facilities and schools.

- Make It Easier to Succeed.

Anguilla has proved itself capable of attracting foreign investment as many of our larger, wealthier counterparts around the Caribbean. Yet business development by Anguillians remains suppressed for lack of adequate support from our government. The fourth step that we must take immediately is to establish a comprehensive support scheme for local business entrepreneurs and investors. Our people have a wealth of talent and energy, as well as good ideas that could expand and enhance Anguilla's reputation beyond just tourism and banking. This scheme would provide to local business people the same or better concessions as those customarily afforded to outside investors. Furthermore, it will simplify the formalities and regulatory requirements that often discourage first-time entrepreneurship among our younger people. Lastly, it will create specific incentives for the establishment of businesses in construction, manufacturing, information technology, financial services, arts, architecture and design.

7 Ideal Goals That Deserve Budgetary

Consideration:

As the economies of our major partners continue to respond to the measures they undertook following the recession, Anguilla's restored confidence and fiscal responsibility should provide us with greater budgetary freedom to expand our vision and seek even greater advances. The following will be at the top of our list of priorities.

- Beginning planning and development of Anguilla's harbour waterfronts in a manner that will adapt them better to enjoyment by our community as well as visitors on vacation. Harbourside promenades and open areas reserved for public use are crucial to maintaining the character of our island while accommodating change.
- Resolve ongoing tourism issues, especially the issue of MOUs (Memoranda of Understanding) entered into and purported to be agreed upon. All such MOUs will be reviewed to ensure that contemplated development would result in balanced and sustainable tourism without the risk of unsustainable capacity.
- Create legislation setting a reasonable minimum wage for Anguilla's workers based on a careful analysis of the current cost of living. This legislation must maintain a floor that will sustain wages at a liveable level while allowing for the concerns of small and start-up businesses.

- Establish an incentive scheme to encourage expatriate Anguillians to return to the island and contribute their training, skills, and expertise to building A New Anguilla Now. The new government will examine a range of possible incentives, including tax credits for new businesses and new homeowners.
- Explore possible future renewable- or clean-energy sources for electricity production. In particular, the dropping cost of solar energy (thanks to the glut created by China's entry into solar panel manufacturing) makes this form of clean energy a more likely option for the Caribbean than in years past.
- Strengthen the existing Job Link-up programme and the jobs.ai website. These are under-utilised resources whose necessity will grow greater as the economy grows and business are increasingly seeking qualified Anguillian staff for their workforces.
- Amend legislation on customs duties to give Anguillian homebuilders the same benefits that large developers receive. Stalled construction on the island is a blight and an obstacle to increased tourism; we will do everything possible to enable property owners to who wish to complete construction to do so.

Education: Anguilla's Key to Success Overall

A Practical Strategy for Real Improvement in Our Classrooms and Beyond

“Education is the most powerful weapon to change the world.”

—Nelson Mandela

Think for a moment about the quote above. There is probably no one in history who understood better than Nelson Mandela what it takes to change the world. And yet Mandela did not point to money, or political power, or sheer brute force. He recognised that our minds are the ultimate key to attaining a free, prosperous and just society. And the key to opening our minds is education—education on all levels, from the earliest interactions with our children to the proud day we see them graduate.

We Anguillians understand as well the vital role that education plays in our lives and in the civic well-being of our island. In April of 2014 a survey was conducted in District 1, the results of which are fascinating but by no means a surprise. The vast majority of respondents, 69%, considered formal education as “very important” to them. It should be also noted that 70% of the same participants rated “education” overall as one of the most urgent socio-economic problems affecting them, and 66% of those polled thought that the Anguillian Government can do a lot more nowadays to improve this sector.

The same survey revealed that an even greater majority of respondents, 83%, rated “unemployment” as the most urgent problem affecting them. Given the statistically proven correlation between level of education and subsequent success in finding, keeping, and excelling in a chosen career, this finding further bolsters the urgency of identifying and fixing the weaknesses in our current educational system in Anguilla. Reform of our education sector is needed, not only in District 1, but for Anguilla as a whole. This important issue cannot be ignored and action must be taken.

Our overarching goal should be to encourage steady but solid reform of the educational system with the involvement of all stakeholders. Reform should be “steady” in the sense that we are not seeking trendy, radical alterations to what we do that will frustrate our dedicated teachers and confuse our students. And it should be “solid” in the sense that when we find a change that works, we make it permanent. Until the worth of a specific

alteration has been tested and proven, it is experimental. Furthermore, we must not attempt to make change without the input of those who know the system best: the educators and administrators who work tirelessly with our children, often without optimal conditions and tools. Their opinions should be given the greatest weight in determining what actions and reforms we undertake. Seeking input from recent graduates may also be highly useful, as they know best the current requirements of college or of entry into the workplace. Input from current students can also offer valuable insight as well, in particular as their fresh perspective can reveal entrenched flaws that older people merely take for granted. However, their opinions should be given the least weight compared to that of educators and recent graduates, as their perspective on the problem is limited by their youth and inexperience.

With these parameters for change in mind, the following proposals serve as our roadmap for future change.

4 Pragmatic Steps We Can Take Now:

Pie-in-the-sky ideas make nice campaign platform planks, but the realities of budgets and taxes tend to turn such goals into empty promises. The following four proposals are practical and achievable without drastically raising government spending on education.

- Bring our schools' curricula in line with the reality and demands of the modern world.

By seeking input from moderate-to-high-achieving recent graduates, our young people who are currently in university or in the workplace, we can determine what gaps in the current curriculum have a negative effect on their employability and success. In short, let's approach those who attained the most possible from Anguilla's educational system and ask them, "What more do you wish we had taught you?" As the pioneers in a fast-changing work world, they may know far better than even our school administrators what parts of the curriculum are valuable, what parts are less useful, and what currently missing elements might make all the difference for the class of 2020.

- Examine our curricula for outdated material or material with little current relevance.

Teachers have only so much time, and expecting them to supplement the curriculum without making room for what will be added is unreasonable and will rightly upset

dedicated people who are just trying to do their best for students. We should look to administrators, teachers, and recent graduates from our schools to identify parts of the curriculum and the corresponding lessons and classes that can be safely “retired” in order to clear classroom time for new material.

- Make business-level proficiency in written and spoken English a number one priority.

Our young people must be able to compete in today’s highly interconnected world in fields like marketing, tourism, website design and development, journalism, environmental science, e-commerce, logistics and more. To do so, they must be fully capable of professional communication in face-to-face interaction, in everyday business emails, and in reports written to specific professional requirements.

- Enhance educational funding without landing ourselves in a budget crisis.

Money exists outside our government’s normal revenue stream that could supplement key areas of our educational system, but it will take imagination and ingenuity to channel it toward Anguilla. In particular, grants are available for early-childhood education and for special-needs students that could not only bring greater success in those areas but could give us more budgetary flexibility to devote resources to areas for which little grant money is available, such as introducing our teens to IT-related skills like programming and coding.

10 Ideal Goals That Deserve Budgetary

Consideration:

Effective government can provide true budget surpluses (not the kind of “phantom” surplus created by an ill-advised, job-killing levy). As good governance brings Anguilla to a state of prosperity in a rising world economy, we will see room in our budget to approach some of the following long-term goals. We must never forget the priority these deserve over other goals, for our children are truly our future.

- Enhance pre-primary education to put children on an early track to success.

- Encourage increased enrolment in tertiary education through loans and scholarships.
- Increase funding to provide special-needs students with the help they need to succeed.
- Upgrade the physical infrastructure of all of Anguilla's schools.
- Provide regular training to keep our teachers abreast of educational theory and practice.
- Establish an effective career-guidance program with links to on- and off-island business.
- Provide computers and internet access for the children of low-income families.
- Enhance students' STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) training.
- Adopt a standardised testing system for evaluation of educational assessment.
- Integrate adult education and career training into the current educational system.

Why These Goals Are Necessary

Education is the only guaranteed means of escaping the trap of poverty and it is the only avenue by which a nation can achieve genuine social equality. Education is the key to unlocking the immense potential that lies in each and every citizen of the country. In fact, development and education go hand in hand.

There is a need to recognise that the most valuable resource the nation possesses is its Human Resource. This fact makes clear the necessity of investment in developing the physical infrastructural capacity in terms of building and refurbishing schools as well as concentration on the educational framework in terms of strengthening aspects of the curriculum and optimising the overall efficiency of the education system.

Investment in education is an investment in young people, which in turn is an investment in the future strength, stability, and sustainable prosperity for Anguilla.

Healthcare: The Indication of a Society's Compassion

A Comprehensive Approach to Better Healthcare for All Anguillians

An age-old aphorism says that “the health of a nation is the wealth of nation”. As societies today grow, and grow older, we are learning how true this is. Sadly, the converse is equally true: A people without access to quality medical treatment will struggle against the tide in trying to attain prosperity and stability. Our healthcare system in Anguilla is inextricably linked to every sector of life, and it is a mechanism for ensuring social stability and protecting our socioeconomic resources.

Being a country of limited geophysical resources, our greatest resource is our population itself: our Human Resource. Access to proper health care at an affordable cost is a fundamental right of every citizen, and this strategy statement will outline a path toward facilitating and ultimately guaranteeing this right.

In April of 2014, a survey was conducted in District 1 exploring people's attitudes and perceptions regarding different challenges facing Anguillian society today. Seventy-seven percent of the participants viewed healthcare as one of most urgent socio-economic problems in Anguilla. In further analysis in the same survey, 78% of the participants stated that they believed the current Government could do a lot more when it came to improving the country's health and social services.

Our government is charged with the responsibility of providing adequate health care to the entire population. This government, through the appropriate conduits, must be committed to promoting wellness, ensuring the provision of appropriate, accessible, equitable, and affordable health care. The same survey in April 2014 found that 45% of the participants did not have a positive estimation of their quality of life. An overwhelming majority of the participants (83%) agreed that there is a need for new health care policies for the people of Anguilla.

The operation and maintenance of a modern health system is costly and our people must be prepared to make a contribution to the provision of these services. We are all part of the same social fabric and we cannot achieve true development if we do not do so as a united entity. Those who can afford these services should make their contribution to ensuring that

those who cannot afford to pay can still have access to the full range of services offered within our health system.

We must do our part. Besides improving the infrastructure of our health system, we will seek to introduce a number of new management and information systems and practices. The mechanism and the methodology are fundamentally linked.

3 Pragmatic Steps We Can Take Now:

Healthcare is expensive. Even the wealthiest nations on the planet struggle with policy and budgetary challenges in this area of governance. Yet Anguilla has advantages as well as limitations. We have a culture that places great importance on sport and vitality. We have a growing interest on the island in the culinary arts, which is exposing our people to newer and healthier approaches to diet and nutrition. We have dedicated healthcare professionals who serve our communities with dedication despite the relative lack of resources, and we have a medical school that could prove an even greater asset to the island in the future. Here are four proposals that offer improvements we can achieve without a significant need for new revenue, but rather by reallocation, increased efficiency, and prevention-oriented, pro-active thinking instead of reactive thinking.

- Establish a school-based health, diet, and wellness programme.

We must better utilise the opportunity afforded by our schools to monitor, measure, and improve the health of our children. By bringing together representatives from Anguilla's healthcare system and representatives from our education system, we can find ways to better educate students on maintaining a healthy lifestyle while steering children who may need extra attention toward the appropriate medical specialist. Vaccinations and dental interventions are two areas where the school environment gives us an opportunity for early action, early action can mean a happier, healthier child as well as greatly reduced costs to families and to the government. Schools are also the appropriate place for instruction in proper diet and wellness practices, as well as awareness of the dangers of HIV, STDs, and substance abuse. The evaluation aspect of this proposal might be augmented by a partnership with the medical school to give their students real-life paediatric care experience. The lifestyle guidance aspect is best handled through coordination by the appropriate ministers.

- Identify and predict trends in illness and disease act preventatively.

What happens elsewhere will likely happen in Anguilla, and there is no sense in waiting until it does to act. In particular, changes in lifestyle trends over the past few decades have seen a dramatic rise in obesity in many western nations. That epidemic of obesity, while once thought a suitable topic for humour, has now become a diabetes epidemic. And that is no laughing matter. Heading off problems such as this before they balloon out of control can mean the difference between tens-of-thousands and millions in costs. Likewise, some infectious diseases have identifiable vectors that we know all too well, yet prevention remains ineffective. Chikungunya is the best recent example of this, one that affected both lives and economies at island tourist destinations around the Caribbean. The recent measles outbreak in the U.S. is another example. Instances of infections by drug-resistant microbes at hospitals around the world are yet another. By paying attention to these bellwether events and developing pro-active approaches based on tested solutions, we may save lives and avoid potentially devastating future costs with relatively little expense in the present.

- Take the first step toward a better-structured, island-wide healthcare system.

Anguilla's healthcare system could be improved by greater coordination and resource-sharing among its various components. Redundancies and inefficiencies waste precious financial resources, money that could have been applied to tangible increases in quality of overall healthcare for all our people. A thorough analysis of the current state of Anguilla's healthcare system will reveal opportunities for increased efficiency that will in turn liberate revenue for neglected aspects of the system. In particular, advances in information technology and the increasing use of remote analysis and diagnosis may be avenues worth exploring. The Ministry of Health should undertake a comprehensive survey and issue a public report outlining results and recommendations.

12 Ideal Goals That Deserve Budgetary Consideration:

With a new government given the chance to boost Anguilla's economy, we plan to see future revenues opening doors to advances in the island's healthcare system that would have been unimaginable five years ago, and are regrettably barely imaginable still today. The following strategies would be our top priorities for new healthcare spending in coming years.

- Expand the healthcare network by increasing the provision of community health services. The following should be the main areas of focus: 1) Infrastructure and Technology: the continued upgrade and repair of community health facilities; 2) Medical and Nursing Services including the organisation of community-based services to ensure proper delivery of services; 3) Dental Services.

- Implement a comprehensive overhaul of the framework for the development and delivery of mental health programmes. This measure will include the prevention of mental health disorders such as substance abuse, the promotion of the need for mental health and integration of community based mental health services.

- Create an effective family health programme that will place emphasis on reproductive health, and child, adolescent and elderly health care.

- Improve human resource development in terms of monitoring the performance of current healthcare professionals and the training of health workers of all strata on a local, regional and international basis.

- Increase our ministry's focus on environmental health, especially in the areas of solid and water waste management,

vector control, occupational health and safety, and a port health programme.

- Establish better collaboration between the various Ministries and other stakeholders in terms of a food and nutrition programme. This will contain measures for food safety and security and promotion of healthy eating habits.

- Engage in overall health system development that will take place in terms of reorganising the health systems, financing of health services, maintenance and expansion of medical technology and expansion of disaster management.

- Upgrade existing health clinics and centres and explore the possibility of selected regional health centres.

- Improve public/private sector partnerships that will deliver personal health services.

- Reduce the financial burden on individual families through the implementation of a national health insurance programme.

- Support and strengthen specialist healthcare programs for diabetes, cancer, heart disease, hypertension and stress management.

- Increase the range of medical specialists available through regional and international cooperation