



The Alberta Health Act and the Future of Public Health Care

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The Path We Are On

What is really behind the Health Act

- Foundation Document
- Track Record
- What lobby Groups are Asking for

Foundation Document

- *need for greater 'flexibility in funding and delivering health services.*
- *"Components of these Acts inhibit the system's ability to work out effective ways to access care from the right provider, in the right place, at the right time and at the right cost."*

Track Record

- Bill 11
- Third Way
- De-listing and De-insuring
- Seniors' Pharmacare program

Stakeholders and Lobby Groups

- *The submission from Alberta Health Services CEO, Steven Duckett, one of the key the goals: "Recognize the role of private and non-governmental organizations in service delivery within the Canada health framework."*

- *Calgary Chamber of Commerce*

The Chamber has been advocating for a long time for this form of legislative change. Specifically it asks for the repeal of the Health Care Protection Act and for stripping Alberta Health and Wellness of its role in regulating private surgeries and clinics. Their submission also advocates for increased direct competition between private for-profit providers and public providers, while at the same time allowing private providers to benefit from any economies of scale and other advantages of the public sector through a "levelling of the playing field and co-operation in the distribution of resources."

Is Privatization a Silver Bullet

- Costs
- Wait lists
- Quality
- Peer reviewed academic studies in recognized medical journals have found that for-profit delivery is associated with lower quality and higher cost.
- Studies have shown that wait lists would be longer with a parallel private system

What public say they need

- family doctors
- More hospital beds
- More long term care beds
- More mental health beds
- Pharmacare coverage

The Health Act does not address any of these problems.

The Myths

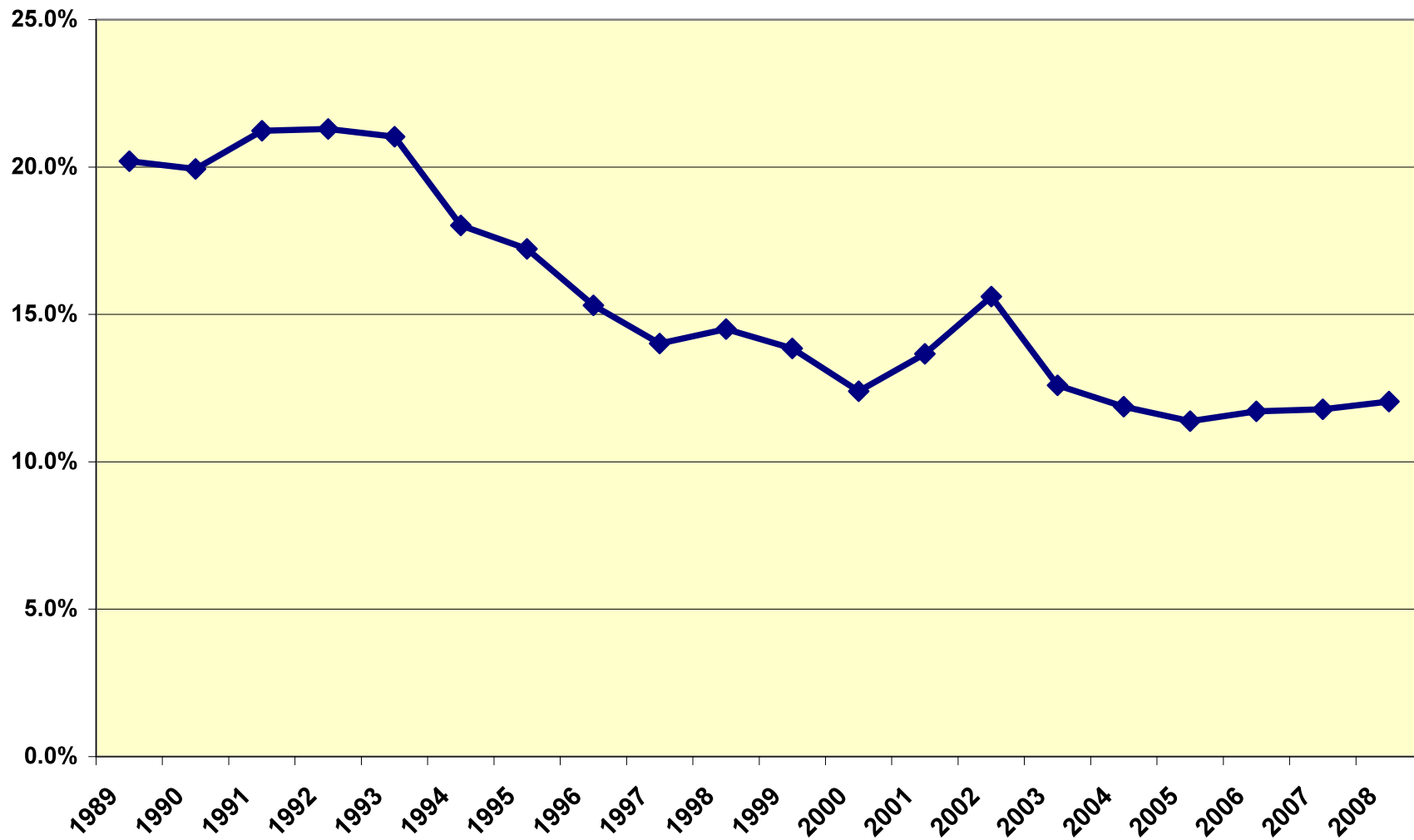
The Cadillac with Gold-plated service

1. Spending is out of control
2. Health care is unaffordable
3. Private solutions will fix the problems

Myth #1

Alberta's spending is out of control

Chart #3, AB Gov't. Spending as % of GDP



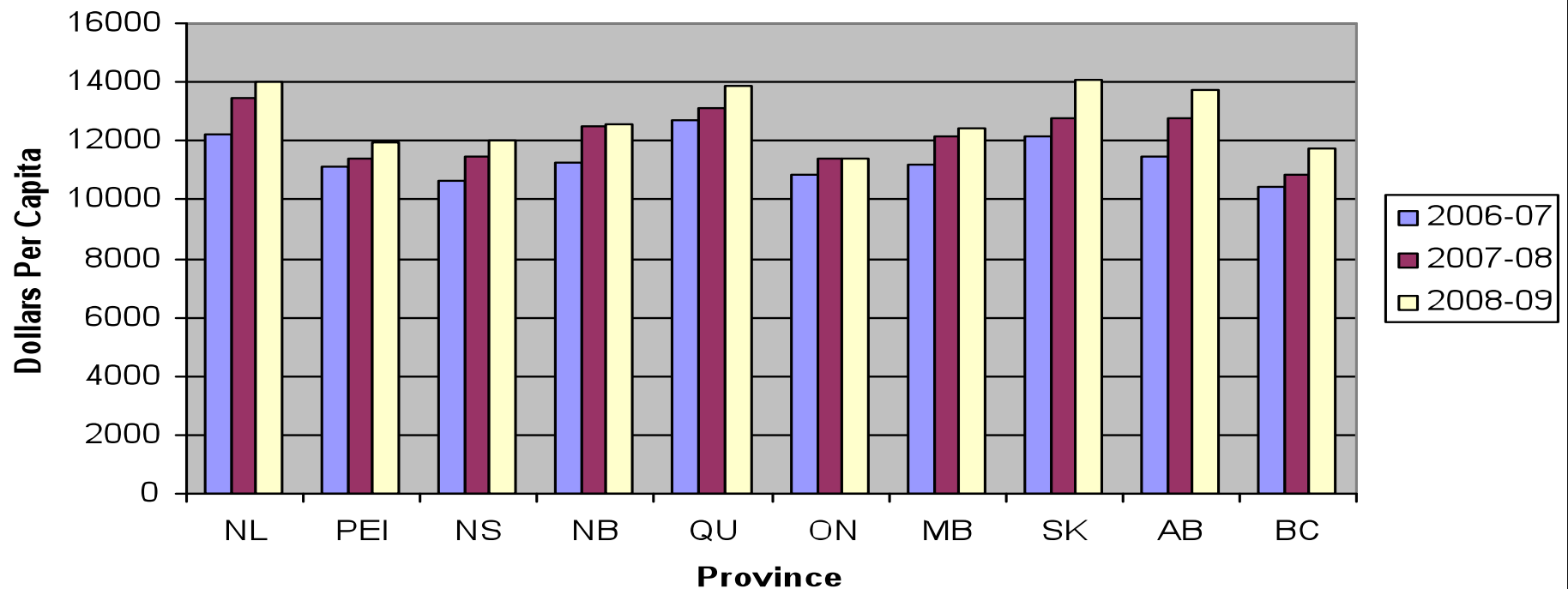
Ab Government Spending as a % of GDP

Under Premier Klein's tenure,
government as a share of the overall
economy fell from 22 percent of GDP
to 12 percent.

This is a 45 percent reduction in the
public sector proportion of the
economy.

Is Alberta's spending out of control?

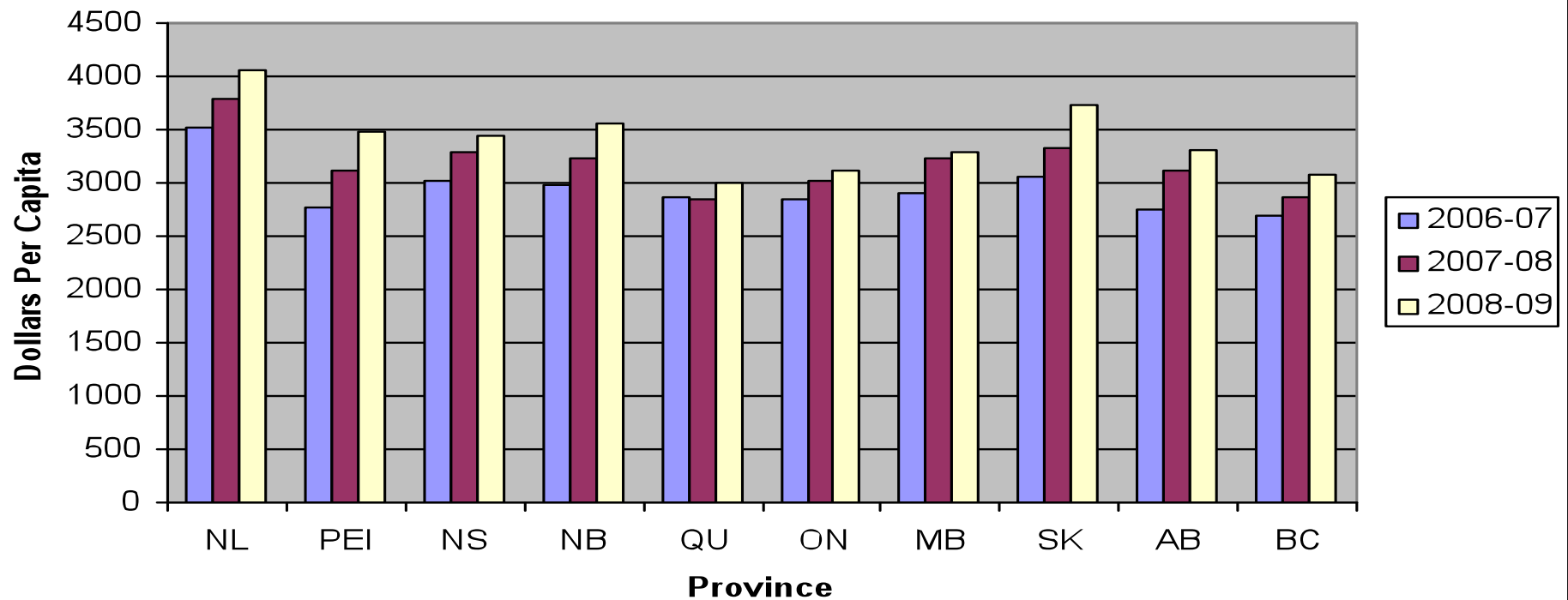
Figure 1. RECENT CONSOLIDATED PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA



HEALTH CARE SPENDING

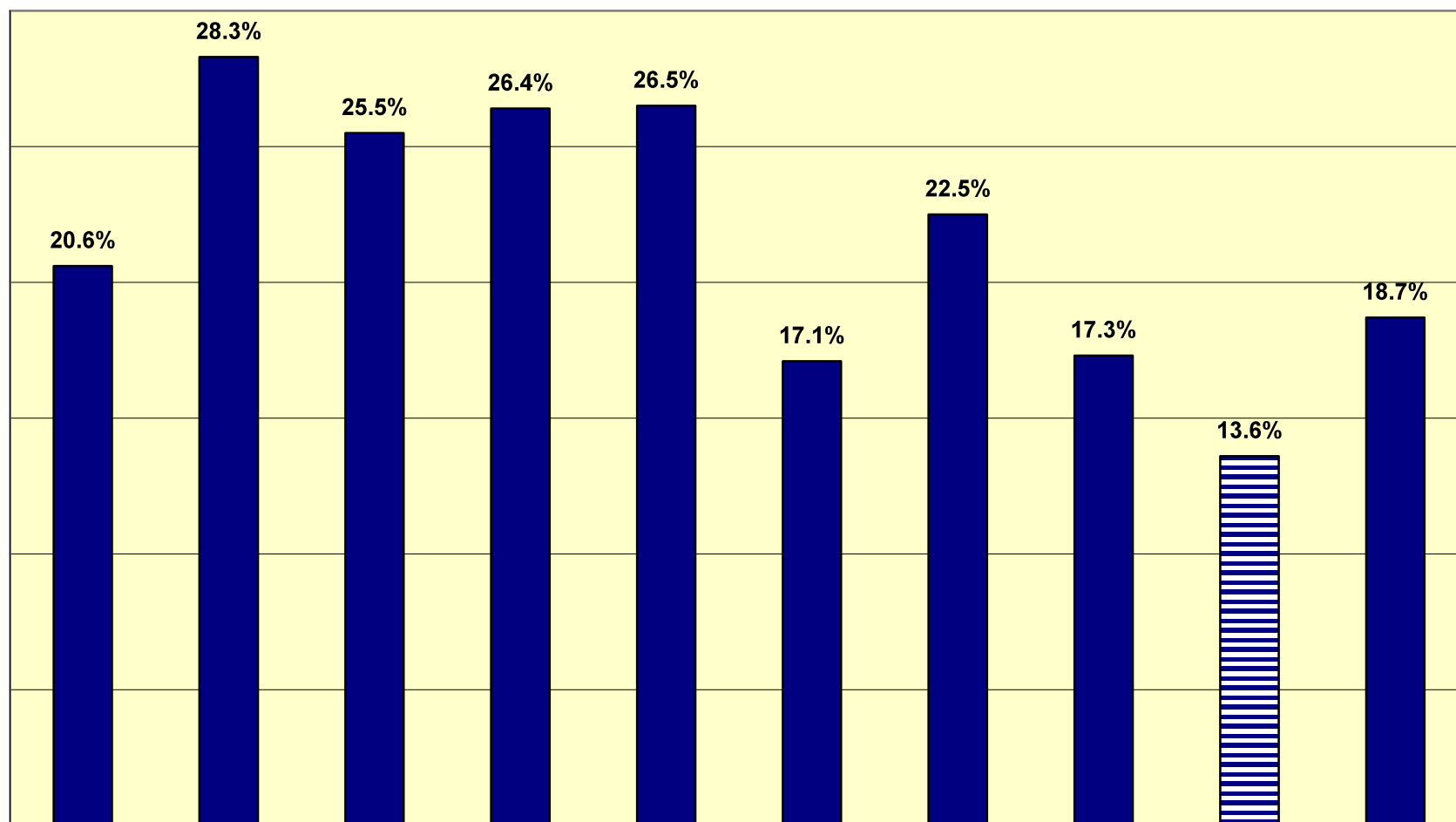
Health spending went from 4.45% of GDP in 1990 to 3.97% in 2006.

Figure 3. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT HEALTH EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA



Myth #2

Can Alberta Afford our Health Care?



The Alberta government has chosen to give away \$8 to 15 billion in potential tax revenue and billions more in forgone royalties.

We have to pay for it somehow

Albertans already have amongst the highest out of pocket health care costs in the nation.

- Shifting costs out of the public system onto the backs of individuals and families does not make the system more sustainable, the same people pay either way.
- It is cheaper to pool resources and buy those services with our tax dollars through public and non-profit providers.