



Seniors and people with disabilities demand universal design housing

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For immediate release

Nicholas Rabba, NDP candidate, Mississauga East Cooksville, pledges support for accessible housing

Toronto - Nicholas Rabba, NDP candidate in Mississauga East Cooksville riding is the latest election candidate to sign the Accessible Housing Pledge.

The Accessible Housing Network is urging all candidates in the June 2 Ontario election to pledge that they will: “Actively work to change the Ontario Building Code to require that 100% of units in every new multi-unit residential building be built according to *universal design* principles, so anyone of any age or ability can live there.”

“I am fully on board with the urgent provisions outlined in this pledge”, Mr. Rabba said. “We cannot consider ourselves a society of love and justice until we guarantee the right to housing to all communities, regardless of their (dis)ability. The very notion of (dis)ability must be thought of as a socially-constructed category, one that is variably defined by the amount of care placed in the foundational structures of our society to accommodate (or exclude) the people who live in it. I hope to do my part in building a society of equity that respects and embraces all different peoples and communities.”

He added, “My goal is to be a voice for folks who need accessible housing. I see it as a very important issue. If elected, I will fight for those who need urgent access to accessible housing. This is the exact reason I signed the pledge! “

The pledge has also been signed by NDP Critic for Accessibility, Ottawa Centre MPP Joel Harden, Green Party leader Mike Schreiner, and several other candidates from both the NDP and Green parties.

The Accessible Housing Network (AHN) invites Ontario voters to urge candidates in their ridings to sign the pledge, which can be printed from the AHN website.

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NDP candidate Nicholas Rabba (left) and AHN member Ben Fulton
(photo courtesy AHN)

The **Accessible Housing Network (AHN)** is a non-partisan network of Canadian organizations working to support the human rights of persons with disabilities to end the extreme lack of accessible housing.

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Quotes:

“It costs the same to build a new apartment whether accessible or not,” says Minette Samaroo, President of the Toronto chapter of the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC).

“Although 24% of Ontarians have a disability and millions of seniors also have one or more disabilities, the Ontario Building Code requires only that 15% of new units be “visitable” - not accessible enough to live there”, says Kate Chung, co-chair of the Accessible Housing Network.

Maddy Dever, AHN steering committee member, says, “I am in a precarious housing situation. We can't leave here because even if there was anything more accessible, there is nothing even remotely affordable. I'm on ODSP, and there is nothing I can rent in our county.”

Candidate's Pledge: Accessible Housing 2022

I pledge that if I am elected as a Member of the Provincial Parliament of Ontario, I will:

Ensure that the Government of Ontario implements fully the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its associated Protocol;

Actively work to change the Ontario Building Code (OBC) to require that 100% of units in every new multi-unit residential building be built according to *universal design** principles (UD), so anyone of any age or ability can live there.