Candidates urged to sign accessible housing pledge

March 20, 2022. FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

People with disabilities urge election candidates to sign pledge

Toronto - All Ontario election candidates are being asked to sign a Pledge to “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.”

“The Building Code currently only requires that 15% of new units be “visitable” - not accessible enough to live there”, explains Kate Chung, chair of the Older Women’s Network housing committee and co-chair of the Accessible Housing Network. The Network is asking people all over Ontario to call on candidates in their ridings to sign the Pledge.

"The cost of building a new apartment is the same whether accessible or not - if it is planned from the design stage. It is renovations to conventional housing which are expensive. This is why making 100% of new housing accessible is practical and affordable”, says Minette Samaroo, President of the Toronto chapter of the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC).

Maddy Dever lives in a small Ontario town. “We are the forgotten. I'm on ODSP, and there is nothing affordable let alone accessible in our county. I am in a precarious housing situation.”

The Accessible Housing Network points out that seniors and people with disabilities are voters. 24% of Ontarians have a disability and millions of seniors also have one or more disabilities. The Ontario Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, all prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability, and they take precedence over all other laws. “This is ignored by governments”, says Dever.
Anthony Frisina lives in a Hamilton condo he owns. Calling on all election candidates to listen, he says, "The lives of those living with disabilities cannot hang in the balance of ableism and discrimination."

---

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 ratifies and implements 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.

---

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

MEDIA CONTACT:
For more information, please contact:
Accessible Housing Network <accessiblehousingnetwork@gmail.com>
Co-chair: Kate Chung (416) 925-0745
Website: accessiblehousingnetwork.org
Email: AccessibleHousingNetwork@gmail.com
Members of the Accessible Housing Network include: