



## Candidates urged to sign accessible housing pledge

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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."



Anthony Frisina

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### **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.

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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:**

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**Members of the Accessible Housing Network include:**

Older Women's Network, Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC), Centre for Independent Living Toronto (CILT), Unitarian Commons Cohousing Corporation, Toronto Raging Grannies, TRAILBLAZERS Tandem Cycling Club, Citizens with Disabilities - Ontario, CERA, Inclusion Canada, Community Living Ontario, Canadian Council of the Blind Toronto Visionaries Chapter, CNIB, LiveWorkPlay, Canadians with Disabilities – Sub Committee of B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights, Ontario Disability Coalition, Open Architecture Collaborative Canada, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities, Seniors for Social Action Ontario (SSAO) Niagara Centre for Independent Living, Live Work Play, Equitable Action for Change, Disability Justice Network of Ontario, Council on Ageing Ottawa, Canadian Federation of the Blind, ODSP Action Coalition, March of Dimes Canada, Disability Justice Network of Ontario, Toronto Seniors' Forum