



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 24, 2022**

## **Green Candidate First to Sign Accessible Housing Pledge**

### **St Paul's Green candidate Ian Lipton commits to accessible housing**

Toronto - Ian Lipton, Green candidate in Toronto St Paul's riding, is the first Ontario election candidate to sign the Accessible Housing Pledge. Mr Lipton supports the right of seniors and people with disabilities to live independently and joins the Accessible Housing Network's call to "amend the Ontario Building Code to require new-builds to accommodate the needs of senior citizens and those with disabilities." By signing the pledge, Lipton is committed "to support seniors living in their homes as long as possible through home-based long-term support and healthcare."

Green Party Candidate Ian Lipton signs accessible housing pledge.

Image: Provided by Ian Lipton



The Accessible Housing Network (AHN) is calling on all those running for provincial office this June to make accessible housing a priority for the next government of Ontario. AHN is circulating the pledge for provincial parties and MPP candidates to sign committing them to act on this issue. The main commitments of this pledge are:

- Ensure that the Government of Ontario ratifies and implements the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and
- Work to change the Ontario Building Code to require that 100% of units in every new multi-unit residential building be universal design.

The AHN invites people all over Ontario to urge the candidates in their ridings to sign the Accessible Housing Pledge.

The pledge is an important signal from lawmakers. Maddy Dever, who lives in a small Ontario town, says, “We are the forgotten. I’m on ODSP, and there is nothing affordable, let alone accessible, in our county.”

Tracy Odell, president of Citizens With Disabilities - Ontario, noted that “the Ontario Building Code only requires that 15% of new units be ‘visible’. This is not an accessible enough standard for many people with disabilities to live there.”

“All planned housing should be denied government funding and building permits unless 100% of units are accessible,” said Odell. “We have a lot of catching up to do if people are waiting up to ten years for an accessible place to live. If a person can only afford rent with a rental subsidy, an apartment may be out of reach in their lifetime.”

Kate Chung, AHN Co-chair stated, “As Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) reports, 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. There is no good reason why new housing can’t be accessible for all.”

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.

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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.

For more information, please contact:

**Accessible Housing Network** <[accessiblehousingnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:accessiblehousingnetwork@gmail.com)>

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**Citizens With Disabilities - Ontario**

President: Tracy Odell <[main@cwdo.org](mailto:main@cwdo.org)>

**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 (CWDO)
- CERA
- Inclusion Canada
- Community Living Ontario
- Canadian Council of the Blind Toronto Visionaries Chapter
- CNIB
- Live Work Play
- 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
- 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
- NWT Disabilities Council
- Spinal Cord Injury Ontario

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