



Accessible housing neglected

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For Immediate Release

NDP candidates Mara-Elena Nagy and Mary Rita Holland pledge support

While much attention has been focused on the lack of **affordable** housing, another “**a**” – **accessible** housing – has been neglected.

More than 22% of Canadians have a disability. Yet there is no Ontario law requiring that housing be accessible. Some disabled people search for years for adequate accessible housing.

The Accessible Housing Network is fighting that situation. As part of that effort, it is asking candidates in the upcoming Ontario parliamentary election to sign the Accessible Housing Pledge. The pledge commits elected officials to actively work to change the Ontario Building Code to require that 100% of units in every new multi-unit residential building be accessible.

The most recent signers are NDP candidates Mara-Elena Nagy (Don Valley East) and Mary Rita Holland (Kingston and The Islands).

Nagy once moved in with her parents to help them and her grandmother because of ill health. In addition to accessible housing, she calls for improvements to long-term care, and removing for-profit long-term care.

The NDP accessible housing platform states: “We’ll mandate Universal Design building codes, which are standards that reflect the needs of people of all ages, sizes, abilities and disabilities.”

Other pledge signers are Green Party leader Mike Schreiner, NDP Critic for Accessibility Joel Harden, and several other NDP and Green Party candidates.

“The need for accessible housing is a crisis. The simple solution is for the Ontario Building Code to require that all new housing be universal design,” according to Accessible Housing Network co-chair Kate Chung. “There will be huge healthcare savings if people are not needlessly stuck in acute-care hospitals or forced into long-term care.”

The cost of building an accessible apartment is nearly the same as that of building a conventional one, if it is planned from the design stage. In contrast, it is renovations to conventional housing that are expensive.

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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 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.

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.

Website: accessiblehousingnetwork.org

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