

## ONTARIO VOTES 2025

Ontario's senior population is nearly 3 million strong and is projected to grow significantly with Generation X approaching retirement age. Supporting seniors in their retirement is essential for the overall health of our economy. The National Association of Federal Retirees calls on all candidates to prioritize the needs of older people in Ontario during this election.

### Health care is a priority

A reliable healthcare system is vital for maintaining health and quality of life, yet Ontarians cannot access the care they need, when they need it. Addressing this issue is critical for the well-being of aging Ontarians.

- Access to primary care is essential for sustaining good health and promoting healthy aging. However, according to the Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2.5 million Ontarians are without a family doctor.
- Ontarians can face unacceptable ER wait times, ER closures, as well as overcapacity and 'hallway' medicine in our hospitals.
- As people age, their health care needs evolve. Older adults prefer to age in place, but our home and community care system is unable to meet patient needs or demand.
- When it's needed, safe, quality long-term care must be available. According to the Ontario Long Term Care Association, the wait list for long-term care is expected to surpass 50,000 in 2025.

### Healthy aging with dignity

- Older adults represent the fastest-growing segment of the population. There is an urgent need to develop a framework and robust infrastructure to ensure healthy, active aging with dignity in Ontario.
- This requires a senior's lens in policy and decision-making. Legislation like Bill 7 is not the solution to hospital pressures. Bill 7 allows hospital patients deemed "alternate level of care" to be directed to long-term homes not of their choice, potentially far from their families, or face a \$400-a-day charge if they refuse, and remain in hospital waiting for placement in their preferred home.

### Power of Pensions

- Pensions lead to a strong economy and pick up the slack in communities that have less employment. The recent study, [The Power of Pensions](#), makes it clear that governments benefit from retirees' pension income. Ontario will see an improved balance of \$6 billion because of pensions.
- The power of pensions is real: 5 of the 10 cities that rely most on pension income in Canada are in Ontario – including Cornwall, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, Peterborough and Thunder Bay.

### CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### Economic Security

- Cost of living is the number one issue among Canadians – with good reason. Prices have increased everywhere: groceries, shelter, transportation, healthcare, etc. This has eroded savings and purchasing power of seniors who are often on fixed incomes.
- Housing continues to be a growing source of anxiety. One fifth of seniors in Canada are renters – many are facing rent increases or renoviction. With surging prices and decreased availability, seniors are often left with few options. According to the CMHC, 2 in 5 Canadian seniors who rent live in unaffordable housing.

### Questions to Candidates

1. What is your party's plan to fix healthcare for Ontario's seniors and the growing aging population?

Ideal Response:

- Build capacity to ensure every Ontarian has access to the right kind of health care, in the right place, at the right time – including family doctors and primary care practitioners, home care and personal support workers, nurses and nurse practitioners, and other health-care professionals.
- Respect and enforce national long-term care standards – for better accountability, transparency, better quality care, and better outcomes in all long-term care facilities.
- Repeal Bill 7 and respect the rights and dignity of older persons to make decisions about where they get care and take a preventative lens to address hospital capacity pressures.
- Ontarians deserve an independent Senior's Advocate who will work in interests of older Ontarians on issues ranging from ageism to long-term care.

2. What is your party's plan to develop robust infrastructure to support active, healthy and financially secure retirement for aging Ontarians?

Ideal response:

- Ensure a legislative environment that encourages more employers to have good defined benefit pension plans
- Address the housing crisis to ensure seniors have access to adequate accommodations.
- Make investments that help make life more affordable, by committing to national pharmacare and funding things like public transit and social programs.

**ABOUT FEDERAL RETIREES** The National Association of Federal Retirees (Federal Retirees) is the largest national advocacy organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors. With more than 170,000 members from coast to coast to coast, including 63,500 members in Ontario, Federal Retirees has advocated for improvements to the financial security, health and well-being of our members and all Canadians since 1963.

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