



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

The Honourable Alice Wong, P.C., M.P.

Member of Parliament
Richmond Centre

July 25, 2018

The Hon. Minister Tassi,

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Seniors. Having served in that capacity for four years under the previous government, I know how important your ministry is to ensuring that seniors – soon to be a quarter of Canada's population – have a voice at the cabinet table.

Unfortunately, nearly three years of stubborn refusal by the Prime Minister to re-establish the Ministry means that you have a lot of damage to undo and work to catch up on.

As the previous Minister responsible for Seniors, I understand well the realities of your post, including areas that require urgent attention. Similarly, my colleague, Member of Parliament Mark Warawa, has served as a vital voice for Canadian seniors in Parliament and at the Shadow Cabinet table since the 2015 election.

First and foremost, as the vast majority of seniors are on a fixed income, they are particularly vulnerable to increases in the cost of living. The carbon tax that is being relentlessly pursued by your government, and will increase the cost of everything, is a prime example of an ill-advised policy that will see seniors reduced to collateral damage. Minister, it is my hope that you will be a loud voice at the Cabinet table against the carbon tax, which is not in the best interest of seniors specifically, nor Canadians, in general.

Other areas of concern that I would like to bring to your attention include:

Caregiver support: The caregiver is an integral part of aging in Canada. In a nation with infrastructure limitations and a rapidly aging population, the role and demand of the caregiver is slated to increase dramatically. This is why we are calling on the government to examine options to support both formal and informal caregivers to better meet the demands of today as well as plan ahead for tomorrow.

Elder abuse: The physical and financial abuse of our elders, particularly by family members, friends, and acquaintances, poses a substantial problem for our aging population. I encourage the government to press on and continue to develop best practices aimed at keeping our seniors safe emotionally, physically, mentally, and financially.

End-of-life and hospice care: Currently, 70% of Canadians that need end-of-life hospice palliative care do not have access to it. Effective palliative care, as defined by the World Health Organization, should be made available to every Canadian resident who needs it. Canada needs a National Palliative Care Framework, as required by the passage of Bill C-277.

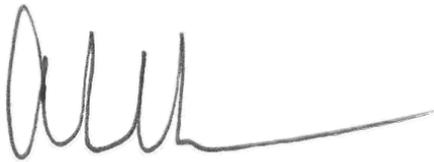
Given Canada's rapidly aging demographics, these are areas of significant importance that must be addressed as soon as possible.

In closing, I look forward to working with you across party lines to improve the lives of seniors from coast to coast to coast by addressing the many pressing issues facing our aging population.

Regards,



Hon. Alice Wong, P.C., M.P.
Richmond Centre
Opposition Shadow Minister for Seniors



Mark Warawa, M.P.
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