

2019 Federal Candidate Inclusion Profile

HSCC.

Halton Social Capital Committee

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2019 FEDERAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

A brief overview of Halton's federal candidates, and their commitment to inclusion.

Project Overview

As our nation heads to the polls with a new slate of hopeful leaders aiming to steer the direction of Canada, our committee members were curious about their positions relating to inclusion and social capital. The purpose of this report is to provide all Halton candidates with the opportunity to clarify positions to voters who may weigh their choice based on this topic area.

Rules of Practice

All candidates were provided the exact same questions and instructions, in writing, to their official campaign e-mail address. Each candidate was provided with the same timeline, 10 days, for response. Candidates who did not provide a response received equal reminders via e-mail and social media. All candidates who submitted a response were given the opportunity of two additional days to review their response to ensure accuracy prior to public release. We hope that this exercise will be fruitful for both voters and candidates - providing a host of solutions proposed by our community's prospective leaders.

Question Selection

The selected questions were provided by the members of the Halton Social Capital Committee. These questions were in attempt to understand the candidate's position on matters impacting the community on a federal, local, and personal level. Questions were posed in plain language to provide a clear understanding to the greatest volume of readers.

The Halton Social Capital Committee would like to thank all candidates for their dedication to our nation and taking the time to consider the importance of inclusion and social capital.

Contact

Please direct any inquiries regarding this process, or the Halton Social Capital Committee, to Daniel at info@haltonsocialcapital.ca.

CANDIDATE DIRECTORY

*A list of individuals seeking leadership in your community. *Denotes incumbent.*

Burlington

- A. Conservative Party – Jane Michael
- B. Green Party – Gareth Williams
- C. Liberal Party – Karina Gould*
- D. New Democratic Party – Lenaee Dupuis
- E. Other – None of the Above Party – Nadine Bentham
- F. People’s Party of Canada – Peter Smetana

Milton

- G. Conservative Party – Lisa Raitt*
- H. Green Party – Eleanor Hayward
- I. Liberal Party – Adam van Koeverden
- J. New Democratic Party – Farina Hassan
- K. Other – Rhinoceros Party – Charlie Currie
- L. People’s Party of Canada – Percy Dastur

Oakville

- M. Conservative Party – Terence Young
- N. Green Party – James Elwick
- O. Liberal Party – Anita Anand
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Oakville – North Burlington

- S. Conservative Party – Sean Weir
- T. Green Party – Michael Houghton
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- V. New Democratic Party – Nicholas Dion
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Wellington – Halton Hills

- X. Conservative Party – Michael Chong*
- Y. Green Party – Ralph Martin
- Z. Liberal Party – Lesley Barron
- AA. New Democratic Party – Andrew Bascombe
- BB. People’s Party of Canada – Syl Carle

APPROVED RESPONSES

Statements received and reviewed by all candidates.

Burlington

A. Conservative Party – Jane Michael

- i. **What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

A Conservative government will introduce the Fairness for Persons with Disabilities Act, allowing 35,000 more Canadians to qualify and apply for the Disability Tax Credit. This new act will reduce the number of hours spent per week on life-sustaining therapy needed to qualify for the credit from 14 to 10. It will also expand the definition of what counts as life-sustaining therapy to include determining dosages of medical food and activities related to determining dosages of medication, including dietary or exercise regimes.

- ii. **What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?**

Many seniors in Burlington struggle with mobility. Canadians are waiting too long for potentially life-saving tests and wait times can have serious consequences, such as increased pain, suffering and mental anguish.

Conservatives will invest \$1.5 billion to replace and add new medical imaging equipment. This investment will be used to purchase MRI and CT machines and to replace the aging ones. Wait times will be reduced; allowing healthcare providers to quicker deliver quality services with the most up-to-date technology. Canada's Conservatives understand the unique challenges that seniors face, and we are committed to working tirelessly to help Canadians get ahead, not just get by.

- iii. **How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?**

Burlington is a great city and we, as Burlington residents, should be proud of how engaged residents are in the community, and how much local organizations do to give back to the community. Events like the Sound of Music, exhibits at the Art Gallery, downtown runs, and charity events strengthen our community and are part of the many reasons that make Burlington a great place to live.

Canada's Conservatives are focused on bringing forward initiatives that prioritize people over government. A Conservative government will live within its means and put more money in the pockets of Canadians so they can get ahead, not just get by.

B. Green Party – Gareth Williams

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

Nearly 10% of Canadians live below the poverty line, a rate that is far higher among people living with disabilities - 28% according to a 2017 Statistics Canada survey. Burlington and Halton Region are no exceptions to this rule, and while we've seen our poverty rates decline some with the rest of the country, ODSP and Ontario Works cases are on still on the rise, and we've known for a while those programs simply don't provide enough support. There are too many of our residents and neighbours that are put in an unnecessarily precarious position, especially as we witness the cuts to social assistance programs at the provincial level. Poverty is a systemic problem that affects not just those without the ability to earn outside income, but also those who are employed but in industries with low wages and few or insufficient assistance programs.

The Green Party and I are committed to ending anxiety about social assistance by introducing a Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) to replace the current grab-bag of income supports, disability payments, and assistance programs. Our GLI would also be benchmarked at the regional level, not a national or provincial one, through working along with municipalities and community groups to set a livable income for where people live now - after all, the cost of living in Halton Region can be very different compared to cities like Toronto or Hamilton over something as simple as the efficiency and accessibility of public transit.

We are also committed to creating a Canada Disabilities Act and advocating for an equitable society across the country, unifying the many acts, standards, and policies we currently have. We're committed to supporting and strengthening the National Housing Strategy, coupled with an enshrined right to housing at the federal level, and will invest in social housing that recognizes and adapts to the needs of those with disabilities, as every Canadian deserves a place they can be comfortable and safe in.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

As a Green Party member, one of my primary concerns is the looming climate crisis that all of us will face the consequences for. Often however, those living with disabilities are either not included enough in the conversation about how we adapt to climate change, or sometimes entirely left out - which is incredible since climate change will disproportionately affect those who are facing unacceptable barriers even today.

As such, I'm committed to echoing the principle of "nothing about us, without us" as Member of Parliament on behalf of my constituents who live with disabilities. Every aspect of what we do must include input and solutions from the community. In a similar manner to how indigenous, youth, and women's groups have become a vital part of the conversation around climate change, so must those with disabilities. Anything else is purposeful social exclusion and therefore unacceptable.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

As threaded in my previous answers, the answer is simply including those with disabilities in the conversation. Too often in our conversations about topics facing Canadians at the national, provincial, or local level, the simple fact is that not everyone is actually involved - the baseline considered are those in steady employment and facing far fewer barriers to social mobility than many actually are. That's how we talked and made policy decisions fifty years ago, when society and government didn't talk about those outside the normative ideal of a middle class household. We know better today, so there's no reason we should not act better as well, and that's an idea I try best to live up to.

C. Liberal Party – Karina Gould*

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

As the Liberal candidate for Burlington, I firmly believe that all Canadians, regardless of their exceptionalities, should have access to the resources and support that they require to live a meaningful life in their communities.

I am proud to have been part of a government that brought in the first-ever Federal Accessibility Law, and we've provided \$290 Million to support the Accessible Canada Act. We approved nearly 800 accessibility projects, including one right here in Burlington.

A re-elected liberal government will continue to build on the hard work that we have done over the last four years investing in and developing legislation that marked the most significant advancement in federal disability rights in 30 years. These efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Changes to the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) and the Disability Tax Credit (DTC);
- New and renewed support for inclusive employment opportunities for people with disabilities, ASD and visual impairments through the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities \$40 million funding stream;
- Enhancements to existing supports for students with disabilities, such as increases to grants for disability related services and equipment and expanded eligibility for loan forgiveness for students with severe permanent disabilities;
- Investments in accessible services for people with visual impairments, such as \$3 million for new accessible reading materials for public libraries across Canada and a \$22.8 million investment in independent book publishers for the production of accessible books;
- Improving the accessibility of electronic payment terminals.

An example of our continuing commitment is our pledge to double the child disability benefit. This increased benefit would give families of a child with a disability more than \$2,800 in extra help, right away, with up to \$5,664 in total financial support available

each year. This means giving more than 150,000 children and their families more money to help with the costs of care.

Every person – regardless of ability – should be able to fully participate in society. I am committed to protecting and advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in my community, and across Canada.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

Over the past four years, there have been three common themes that have come up in my meetings with families and advocates: access to housing, access to employment and further income supports. My commitment is to continue to work with the community to advance access to all three of these important areas to ensure that the 650,000 Canadians that live with a disability can live fulfilled, dignified and meaningful lives.

Our government brought in a National Housing Strategy to take over 500,000 Canadians out of housing need, including for Canadians living with disabilities. Right here in Burlington, I was proud to partner with Habitat for Humanity and a number of community organizations to build 18 new affordable units, 12 of which will go to community partners. My understanding is that some of these units will be for adults with developmental disabilities. There is more to do, but we need to get re-elected to ensure we build on these innovative and exciting partnerships.

On employment, I was pleased to join my colleague in Oakville- North Burlington, Pam Damoff, to host a roundtable on accessible employment. She brought together advocates and employers to build partnerships and networks to show employers how they can find the right employee and reduce the stigma around hiring someone with a disability. I have been a strong advocate for greater programming and partnerships to increase employment opportunities for people of all abilities and to find a way to connect employers with job seekers.

I also hear from constituents on how expensive it is to manage a disability, specifically in terms of accessing the medication that makes their lives easier to navigate on a day to day basis. I'm proud that our liberal government has taken concrete steps to implement universal pharmacare, breaking down barriers and making medication more available and affordable. A re-elected liberal government will continue to deliver on this promise by taking the critical next steps to implement national universal pharmacare so that all Canadians have the drug coverage they need at an affordable price.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

As the Member of Parliament for Burlington, I have met with hundreds of vulnerable families across the riding in the last four years. Whether these families are struggling with support for their loved ones in terms of accessing medication to aid in the management of their disability, support after the provincial Conservatives cut autism

funding or accessing services that improve their day-to-day lives, I have been there to listen and advocate for them.

These conversations inspired the decisions I make in Burlington, and in the House of Commons. In my constituency office, I replaced the previous conservative MP's office door and ensured our entryway was accessible for all. I've ensured that my office is fully accessible, and on a bus route to service those who do not or cannot drive. In addition, I have previously ensured that there are ASL interpreters available at my public town halls. One's participation in democracy should not be limited to their ability. My business cards also have braille to ensure people who are visually-impaired can have my contact information.

In Burlington, our liberal government has funded two new handivans to service those in our community who rely on this mode of transportation to get them around the city from day to day. East Plains United Church in our community has also benefited from the Enabling Accessibility Fund (EAF) by receiving grant money to install a much-needed elevator. The YMCA Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford also received EAF funding in 2017, to make improvements to a community space that serves many across Burlington.

As Minister of Democratic Institutions, I am proud to have been able to make it easier for those with accessibility challenges to vote. Through the Elections Modernization Act, Bill C-76, anyone with a disability will have the option to vote at home, vote in another polling station with better accessibility, or take advantage of mobile polls. We have also created incentives for political parties to make campaign materials and events more accessible to people with disabilities.

In May of 2017, I held a community consultation on our proposed accessibility act and have brought forward the concerns of our community and advocates to Ottawa.

One of the best events I participate in each year is Community Living Burlington's Got Talent Show. I was a judge for the first two years and a spectator for this final year. I love working with Community Living Burlington and supporting the amazing work that they do. I am also really privileged to work with our local Special Olympics athletes every year at their Hometown Soccer Games.

I hope to continue to advocate for those in our community that face unique challenges because of developmental disabilities and further exceptionalities. I firmly believe that all Canadians should have access to the resources that enable them to live a dignified and fulfilled life, and look forward to continuing to make your voice heard in Ottawa.

D. New Democratic Party – Lenae Dupuis

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

Removing barriers for persons living with disabilities.

We can do much more to make Canada an inclusive and barrier-free place. As a start, New Democrats will uphold the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and strengthen the Accessibility Act to cover all federal agencies equally with the power to make and enforce accessibility standards in a timely manner.

To help tackle the unacceptable rate of poverty among Canadians living with a disability, we will launch a full review of income security programs. When it comes to employment, everyone deserves a fair shot at a good job that fits their unique abilities. A New Democrat government will continue and expand employment programs to make sure that quality employment opportunities are available to all.

For Canadians facing a serious illness, we'll make Employment Insurance work better by extending sickness benefits to 50 weeks of coverage and by creating a pilot project to allow workers with episodic disabilities to access benefits as they need them.

Canadians living with disabilities shouldn't need to worry about the cost of prescription medication, how to find housing, or how to get their mail. In addition to putting in place a universal, publicly funded national pharmacare program that will offer full benefits to all Canadians, a New Democrat government will restore door-to-door mail delivery for those who lost it under the Conservatives and create affordable, accessible housing in communities across the country.

Finally, we will work with Canadians living with Autism Spectrum Disorder to develop and implement a national Autism strategy that will coordinate support for research, ensure access to needs-based services, promote employment, and help expand housing options.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

I believe that pharmacare, housing, employment opportunities and access. To help tackle employment we will continue and expand employment programs to make sure that quality employment opportunities are available to all. We will also be putting in place a universal, publicly funded national pharmacare program that will offer full benefits to all Canadians, as well as add 500,000 affordable housing units, that will allow everyone to have a place to call home.

Additionally New Democrats believe that families need access to quality home care and long-term care, no matter where they live and if required. To that end, we will work collaboratively with patients, caregivers, and provincial and territorial governments to develop national care standards for home care and long-term care that will be amended into the Canada Health Act.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

Your mission resonates with what I want in Burlington. Keeping this in mind I want the community to be a welcoming environment for all people, without exception. I will

advocate, educate, and enrich the community by enhancing social capital for individuals with developmental disabilities.

I would also seek a working relationship with the Burlington Accessibility Advisory Committee, Developmental Services Ontario which is under the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and therefore I would also seek a working relationship with them. Burlington Community Living would be another organization that I would seek a relationship.

E. Other – None of the Above Party – Nadine Bentham

Candidate did not provide a response.

F. People's Party of Canada – Peter Smetana

Candidate did not provide a response.

Milton

G. Conservative Party – Lisa Raitt*

Candidate did not provide a response.

H. Green Party – Eleanor Hayward

Candidate did not provide a response.

I. Liberal Party – Adam van Koeverden

i. **What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

In a word, it's about enhanced inclusion. Accessibility is just a starting point; adding ramps, braille or audio-signals is a good start, but making sure local organizations, boards, rosters and staffs are inclusive and representative takes a proactive and intentional approach.

From a legislative perspective, I will work with communities like yours to proactively seek out gaps and failings of our current systems to get ahead of some issues and fight for inclusiveness at every turn.

ii. **What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?**

Affordable housing and employment. One solution to both is Co-op housing. I grew up in community housing and it meant that my single mother didn't have to choose between rent and sports programs. Many of our neighbours had disabilities, and non-profit housing ensured that their lives weren't over-burdened by high rent and housing costs.

I will speak for - and fight for - more co-op and non-profit housing in Milton.

Ensuring that local workplaces have an effective inclusion policy for staffing and governance is also important. But again, I would consult thoroughly with organizations like yours for more insight and perspective.

iii. **How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?**

As an advocate for various charities and community organizations, I feel strongly that the first and best way to support communities and individuals is to show up at their events and be proactively engaged. You don't know a problem or an issue until a member of the community has had the opportunity to voice those concerns. I don't

think the obligation should rest solely on the shoulders of the community or constituent to have those voices heard. As an elected member, that obligation will be mine.

I've worked with para-sport groups, Special Olympics and prep to step up here in Milton (an educational meet up for intellectually diverse community members). I've visited the deaf community, learned some ASL, and engaged with them locally here in Milton - as you know we have a large deaf community with EC Drury.

In short, engaging with communities like yours will be a priority. I will depend on your advice, perspective and insight to serve you effectively.

J. New Democratic Party – Farina Hassan

Candidate did not provide a response.

K. Other – Rhinoceros Party – Charlie Currie

Candidate did not provide a response.

L. People's Party of Canada – Percy Dastur

Candidate did not provide a response.

Oakville

M. Conservative Party – Terence Young

Candidate did not provide a response.

N. Green Party – James Elwick

i. **What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

3.4 million Canadians live below the poverty line, or 9.5% of the population. This rate is far higher for people living with disabilities. It is necessary to tackle poverty as a structural, systemic problem caused by precarious jobs, low wages and insufficient income assistance, a shortage of affordable housing and quality childcare, cuts in social program, and bias and discrimination that lead to exclusion. These interlocking problems too often lock people with disabilities into a vicious cycle toward more vulnerability.

Therefore the Green Party wishes to move toward a Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) to replace the current patchwork of income supports, disability payments, social assistance and income supplements. Payment would be set at a livable level given a particular region, and additional income up to this level would not be clawed back in taxes; above that level, this would be paid back in taxes.

However because moving toward a GLI would involve working with the provinces, which will take time, here are some specific issues the Green Party would push for immediately:

- Push to create a Canada Disabilities Act to help bring about a more equitable society and simplify the current confused multiplicity of acts, standards, policies and programs.
- Support the creation of a national equipment fund to provide equipment such as wheelchairs and accessibility tools to help people with disabilities more fully participate in work and community life.
- Invest in social housing adapted as necessary to meet particular needs – it simply expands our housing program to recognize particular needs.
- Enforce the Employment Equity Act to ensure people with disabilities have equal opportunities at long-term employment and advancement. It is deeply unfair that people with disabilities are usually the last to find employment and the first to be laid off. If a law is already in place to deter such acts, then it is surprising that more vigorous enforcement of it does not occur.

ii. **What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?**

I think that isolation is just as impoverishing as a lack of money. Therefore I think that any effort that helps any person meet others and form a relationship with another person is valuable because it gives both people more power than when they were alone.

I'm interested in introducing 'conversation cafes' (<http://www.conversationcafe.org/>) to Oakville – I'd mainly thought about doing this in the context of the climate crisis, but maybe this can be done for other issues such as the promotion of inclusion. Maybe this could be done in one of HSCC's approved welcome spaces. The advantage of conversation cafes is that they are even more egalitarian than workshops and talks, with rules that make it possible for every single participant to talk and also be genuinely listened to.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

I have learned that individuals with disabilities often hold perspectives that, when others learn about them, reveal their blind spots. In other words, sometimes we can reframe a disability not as a "disability" at all, but simply a different (and sometimes better) perspective that, when revealed to others, has the potential to enrich everyone. So I always want to do less talking and more listening.

O. Liberal Party – Anita Anand

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

I share the Liberal Party's belief that everyone deserves a real and fair chance at success. The Liberal government has been working hard over the last four years to make Canada a more inclusive place. It introduced the first-ever Federal Accessibility legislation in Parliament. The resulting Accessible Canada Act represents the most significant advancement in federal disability rights in 30 years. It will proactively identify, remove and prevent barriers so that all Canadians can fully participate in society. The Act is supported by a \$290 million investment over six years.

The Liberal government also approved nearly 800 accessibility projects, including almost 500 new paratransit buses and improvements to 81 existing transit facilities, making them more accessible to all Canadians. We also invest \$77 million over ten years in the Enabling Accessibility Fund, which will give more Canadians with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in their communities and the labour market.

A re-elected Liberal government will introduce a number of new measures to help disabled Canadians, including:

- Doubling the Child Disability Benefit, a tax-free monthly benefit that helps children with conditions such as learning and speech disabilities, psychological disorders, and autism spectrum disorder.

- Investing \$40 million per year in a new national workplace accessibility fund, which will help more people with disabilities go to school, enter the workforce, and join the middle class. The fund will focus on making small and medium-sized businesses more accessible.
- Making it easier for veterans to get disability benefits. Veterans will be provided with up to \$3,000 in free counselling services before a disability claim is required. We will also move forward with automatic approval for the most common disability applications.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

The issue I am hearing about the most at the doors is the need for more support for families with autistic children. It is heartbreaking to see the impact of the Ford government cuts on these families, and they are desperate for help.

Many of these families will benefit from the increased Child Disability Benefit. Should I be elected, I will be following up with my constituents to see whether they are receiving the support they require.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

I am very fortunate to have a developmentally disabled young man on my campaign team. He is one of my most enthusiastic supporters, and he has been a stalwart participant in the campaign! We include him in our campaign events, such as our campaign office opening, and he attended a fundraiser recently with the Prime Minister. He also joins us in our door-to-door canvassing and engages with our constituents. Our team is very welcoming and inclusive!

P. New Democratic Party – Jerome Adamo

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

The number one legislative position the NDP is committed to is including a national and universal Pharmacare system as a right under the Canada Health Act. When Tommy Douglas took advantage of the balance of power situation he was facing 50+ years ago, his intention was to not only bring universal health care system to Canadians but also a national Medicare system which included medications and dental care.

For people living with disabilities all across Canada, our commitment is a game changer where people will no longer need a credit card to access their medication, they will need a health card.

Gone will be the days where Canada is the only country in the world where a diagnosis requires no money from the patient but to access the cure it does.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

As I stated, I think the greatest issues for my constituents, and for ALL Canadians for that matter is access.

Decades of Conservative cuts and Liberal inaction have harmed the services we count on – and Canadians are left struggling. Over time we have seen many who can no longer access the health care they once could access, the medications they require, necessary mental health care supports and the increasing demand our loved ones and aging parents require. In addition to this we need to create a National Seniors Strategy to address the issues of isolation, dementia, caregiver needs (i.e EI reforms to allow family members to take leaves of absences for caregiving purposes).

Recently I personally met with a few representatives from the Canadian Medical Association and we had discussions around added demands Canadians are facing of not being able to find a doctor and the issue of virtual health in remote regions of our nation.

The NDP believes this election to be about priorities so we are committed to stopping privatization and investing in people.

This means making sure our healthcare system stays public and stays free. To ensure this we need targeted health transfers to Provinces not the unaccountable way it's done now where the Provinces can set their own agendas.

We cannot afford to leave the fate of public healthcare to the hands of the Trudeau Liberals or the Scheer Conservatives. Their records of inadequacy are quite known.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

I am happy to answer this question and I'm so proud to say that the NDP has the most diverse slate of candidates in this election and persons living with disabilities accounts for 5%. 17 candidates in all of which I am one.

My campaign has been based on being myself, modelling behaviours and personal accountability for what I can do to advance issues. As an active member of my union, I sit as a member on our internal disability caucus and as a member of the NDP I am a member of the provincial persons living with disability caucus.

As an educator I promote belonging and contributing daily and I pride myself as a community leader to always have that ear and the intentions necessary to be that ally when necessary. As a person living with a disability I hope my community is encouraged by my personal understanding, compassion and empathy for their issues.

Q. Other – Christian Heritage Party of Canada – Sushila Pereira

Candidate did not provide a response.

R. People's Party of Canada – JD Meaney

- i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

Thank you to the people of Oakville and The Halton Social Capital Committee, for your questions and concerns about people living with disabilities.

We will definitely support any legislation that makes the lives of people with disabilities easier to be more mobile and a part of the community. However, as the People's Party, if we do not form the government, I personally as an MP, will support legislation that improves the lives of people with disabilities.

- ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?**

Candidate did not provide a response.

- iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?**

Candidate did not provide a response.

Oakville – North Burlington

S. Conservative Party – Sean Weir

Candidate did not provide a response.

T. Green Party – Michael Houghton

Candidate did not provide a response.

U. Liberal Party – Pam Damoff*

- i. **What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

Parents who care for their special needs children go the extra mile every day. These hard-working parents deserve our respect – and need our help. That’s why a re-elected Liberal government will move forward with more help for these family caregivers by immediately doubling the Child Disability Benefit. This increased benefit would give families of a child with a disability more than \$2,800 in extra help, right away, with up to \$5,664 in total financial support available each year – giving more than 150,000 children and their families more money to help with the costs of care.

- ii. **What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?**

In our community, I have heard that the two greatest challenges for persons living with disabilities are employment and housing. That’s why our government introduced the first ever National Housing Strategy, accompanied by a \$55 billion investment in housing across Canada. 25% of that investment has been allocated specifically to people who need housing most, including persons living with disabilities.

I am pleased that here in Halton, Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga has adjusted their funding model to accommodate single adults, including those with disabilities. They are currently building a home to be shared by adults with autism; a need they recognized in our community. As part of the National Housing Strategy, Budget 2017 established a National Housing Fund to help address critical housing issues and prioritize support for vulnerable citizens, including those with disabilities. Delivered through the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, this Fund has received an investment of \$5 billion.

I am of the firm belief that we need to not only build accessible communities, but inclusive ones as well. Accessibility may get someone through the door, but inclusivity creates an atmosphere where everyone is welcome and treated equally. All Canadians, including those living with a disability, deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Building inclusive communities is the cornerstone of our government’s commitment to fostering fair and equal opportunities for every Canadian. If re-elected, I will continue to advocate for inclusive employment for persons living with disabilities

and will continue to support our government's efforts to provide safe and affordable Housing.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

In my tenure as a Member of Parliament over the last four years, I have always advocated for the rights of persons with disabilities, especially when it comes to employment. I believe that every person, regardless of ability, deserves to be fairly compensated for their work, and I have worked with the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility extensively over the last four years to advocate on this issue. In 2016, I held a roundtable on accessible employment with stakeholders from our community. I was so pleased to see some of the feedback from that roundtable included in Bill C-81, the government's first ever accessibility legislation. One of the underlying themes of my time in office that I have tried to bring forward in our community is that of inclusion. The saying, "nothing about us, without us" is something that will now no longer be a just saying but also enshrined in Canadian law with the passage of Bill C-81 — a transformative piece of legislation. With this bill, governments will no longer be able to make accommodations for persons living with disabilities an afterthought. Bill C-81 will ensure that the inclusion of all Canadians has to be top of mind for all future governments when making policy decisions.

In June 2019, I was fortunate enough to be able to give a speech in the House of Commons recognizing local disability advocates and expressing my support for this legislation. You can watch my speech online.

V. New Democratic Party – Nicholas Dion

Candidate did not provide a response.

W. People's Party of Canada – Gilbert Joseph Jubinville

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

For those with moderate disabilities, People's Party of Canada policies are based on 4 core values: Personal Responsibility, Individual Freedom, Respect, and Fairness. Personal Responsibility & RESPECT for everyone. We will not play identity politics to try to buy your vote. Our policies are for all Canadians equally.

We believe for someone to feel a sense of equality, they must be allowed to contribute equally. In this way they earn respect in the community, society as a whole and for themselves. People with disabilities do NOT require "welcome spaces" You are welcomed in all spaces just as everyone else is. You are Canadians, one and all. People with disabilities can earn for themselves positions of prominence and dignified employment through skill, merit and competence. Disability will not limit your possibilities.

People's Party of Canada does not believe in increasing your taxes then buying your votes with a Child Disability Benefit leaving you with less money overall.

All current programs will stay in place but we believe lowering taxes is the right solution.

- No tax on the first \$15,000. 15% tax on oncome between \$15,000 and \$100,000 and 25% on income over 100,000
- Less taxes means more freedom to decide where to appropriately spend money related to caring for someone with disability.

People's Party of Canada will balance the budget, run a surplus then apply this to the national debt and save billions on interest payments. These savings will be applied to social programs like the National Housing Strategy.

The current spending of 55 billion is not an "Investment" if we are adding to the national debt. Debt is the taxes of the future and it's not sustainable. We will support the constitution and leave decisions to local government. They are better suited to solve problems as they are closer to the issues.

We will review all legislative related to disability to make sure they are effective and are aligned with the Canadians who need them the most.

We will review all Accessibility Committee reports and work with provincial and municipal governments to address the issues in federal legislation.

I have worked locally Civil Engineering Consulting developing construction drawings for commercial parking lots with handicap spaces. Engineers need to have more freedom to be creative to solve accessibility issues in an economic and practical way. This starts with simplifying the overlapping regulations.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

Mobility, transportation & employment. We will let the provinces and municipalities move quicker on solutions by not getting involved and creating too many overlapping regulations and bureaucracy.

More services, less waste.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

I have consulted with a People's Party of Canada candidate who is legally blind. This is an issue with culture. We all have limitations in one way or another. Some are visible and some are not. There is a direct correlation with Personal Responsibility and a sense of pride and responsibility. An independent person is a self-reliant person; they work harder to build upon what they've earned for themselves.

They build their own sense of belonging by contributing to the community around them and carving out their own future. Government can't give you a sense of dignity and pride in your own accomplishments. That, we will leave to your capable hands.

Wellington – Halton Hills

X. Conservative Party – Michael Chong*

Candidate responded indicating scheduling difficulties to complete responses.

Y. Green Party – Ralph Martin

- i. **What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

The Green Party proposes to renew a social contract with Canadians www.greenparty.ca/en/platform/renew-social-contract A Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) will significantly reduce poverty and allow social services to concentrate on problems of disabilities, mental health and addiction.

- ii. **What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?**

Poverty rates are higher within marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as people living with disabilities, single mothers and seniors. In a wealthy country like Canada, this is unacceptable. We will address poverty with a Guaranteed Livable Income as noted above. There are also issues of people and businesses not recognizing the talents and gifts of those with disabilities. The Green Party will strengthen inclusion and respect for diversity for children with disabilities, diverse ethnic and racial groups, newcomers and disadvantaged Canadians.

- iii. **How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?**

I practice an attitude of inclusion and respect for diversity for those with disabilities. I encourage businesses and organizations to accommodate those with disabilities to be sure they can have access and participate and enrich our lives with the unique perspectives and gifts.

Z. Liberal Party – Lesley Barron

- i. **What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?**

The Liberal government has passed the first ever Accessible Canada Act which included funding (\$290 million over 6 years) to support it. There are of course a lot of different disabilities to be accommodated and I would seek to make spaces physically and psychologically safe for those with disabilities, including advocating for infrastructure funding.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

The greatest issue for my constituents, especially those with disabilities is housing. We simply do not have enough accessible, affordable, or supportive housing for those with disabilities in Wellington Halton Hills. This would be a top priority for me as your MP. Having stable affordable housing is a key social determinant of health, it is more powerful in improving people's health than virtually any medical treatment we have.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

I personally try to improve a sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities by having an accessible office. We installed a ramp for patients with walkers, wheelchairs and strollers, and also have an accessible washroom for patients. I spend a lot of time talking to patients, and think I am known as a good communicator with them. I think having employment opportunities would be important to promote a sense of belonging.

AA. New Democratic Party – Andrew Bascombe

i. What legislative positions are you seeking to support or introduce to improve the lives of Canadians with disabilities?

New Democrats are about taking care of Canadians, no matter where they reside in Canada. We are a party on care and inclusion.

Canadians with developmental disabilities (especially adults) are more likely to be living in poverty –any policy designed to lift Canadians out of poverty will also affect them. To this end New Democrats are committed to building affordable housing units 500,000 quality, affordable homes across the country. Bring about immediate relief to renters that need help now with a rental benefit of up to \$5000. We would also re-introduce 30 –year mortgages and double first time-home buyer tax credit to \$1500. Starting by introducing Pharmacare by the end of 2020 will allow for a savings of more than \$500 a year, and Canada will save \$4.2 billion. Improvements to health care will include covering dental care which will benefits adults with developmental disabilities because they are least likely to have private benefit packages and most likely to need support in accessing the system. Canada is the only country in the world with universal health care that doesn't cover medication. This will change with New Democrats as we will work to cover you from head to toe.

ii. What are the greatest issues impacting your constituents with disabilities? What will you do to improve these issues?

The biggest issues impacting our constituent with disabilities are employment, housing and accessibility. New Democrats will work funding and building an economy where you don't have to take on debt in order to get an education, find a place to live and provide the medication you need and affordable child care. Programs will be put in

place that allow for them to be contributing members of the community and ways must be found to reduce the load on families with developmental disabilities.

iii. How do you personally improve the sense of belonging for individuals with disabilities in your riding?

Members of our campaign are actively involved in the Special Olympics movement and community living. We shop at local businesses who are providing employment for adults with development disabilities and we advocate on their behalf be lobbying our party to put forth polices that help address the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

BB. People's Party of Canada – Syl Carle

Candidate did not provide a response.

