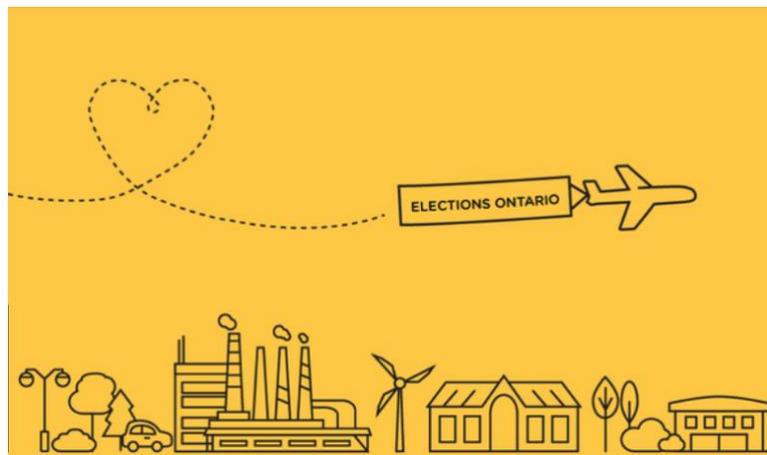


Ontario Election 2022

OUR ISSUES OF CONCERN



Election Toolkit

Part 2





In this Part 2, ISSUES OF CONCERN

How to Use the Election Toolkit

Updates

Thanks

The Issues:

Affordable Housing

Child Care

Climate Crisis

Environmental Assessments

Gender Based Violence

Home Care

Human Trafficking

Indigenous Peoples Welfare

Long-term Care

Poverty

Found in Part 1, [PREPARING FOR THE ONTARIO ELECTION 2022](#)

Getting Informed

1. What is the provincial government responsible for?
2. What is your riding (or constituency)?
3. Who are the candidates?
4. What are the provincial issues?
5. What are the local issues?

Getting Involved

1. A voter
2. A poll official
3. A party supporter
4. An activist
5. A Club

Harassment

HOW TO USE THE ELECTION TOOLKIT

Part 2, *Issues of Concern* are the ones important to both Ontario Council and its member Clubs. Each issue page gives you the Key Message, some background, and suggested questions for your riding's candidates. We hope you will use this document to gain some insight and information both for your personal use and for your Club

Share this with Club members - put the link into your newsletter, take out bits and pieces and make it your own. Create your own questions from the information. Share it with the candidates. Do check out the links as these will lead you to more information.

Share it on social media – On our [Elections](#) page on the [CFUW Ontario Council website](#), you will find a link to graphics that are excerpts from the Toolkit that you can use on social media – Facebook and Instagram and link to for Twitter. An example below:



CFUW Ontario Council

Published by Teri Shaw · Just now ·



EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE Key Message

Research has shown that **affordable, quality early learning and child care (ELCC)** is good for children and families, by enhancing child development and increasing employment participation.

Staffing issues such as low wages, no benefits, poor working conditions are at a crisis level, highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Child care spaces cannot be expanded if qualified staff and ECEs cannot be hired or retained.

"The real missing piece' to economic recovery is childcare": Economist Armine Yalnizyan

Questions for Candidates

1. What will your party do to expand child care spaces, improve wages, benefits and working conditions for ECE's and staff?
2. Will your party commit to funding and put working families first, by providing quality, affordable child care where all children are nurtured and receive the developmental education they require?
3. Will your party sign onto the National Child Care plan as proposed by the Federal Government?



Responsibility for housing in Ontario is shared by all three levels of government in a complex relationship involving funding, policies / laws, and service administration. Funding for housing programs is shared with the federal government. There is a consensus that there is a housing affordability crisis in Ontario. The need for affordable housing crosses the spectrum from supportive housing essential to those receiving social assistance and community housing, through to market rental and market ownership.

What are the Issues?

Tenant Protection

- Changes to the [Residential Tenancies Act](#) in 2018 weakened rent control regulation. Rent control no longer applies to any rental unit – apartment, condo unit, or basement apartment - that became newly occupied as rental since November 2018. Also, there are no controls on what landlords can charge for rent when a unit becomes vacant ([vacancy control](#)). This is an incentive to evict tenants which in turn decreases the stock of affordable rental units.

Funding Supportive and Community Housing

- According to the 2021 [Report on Housing and Homelessness Programs in Ontario](#) by the FAO (Financial Accountability Office of Ontario), in 2018, 13.9 % of households in Ontario were in core housing need, the second highest rate among all provinces. FAO projections indicate the share will remain at 13.9% until 2027. Shelter use and length of stay has been increasing since 2014. [Women's National Housing and Homelessness Network](#) reports that, in Canada, 28% of women-led households are in core housing need and 36% of people experiencing homelessness are women. In its 2020 report [Urban and Rural Indigenous Housing Plan for Ontario](#), ONPHA (Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association), reports a need for approximately 22,000 additional subsidized Indigenous community housing units over the next 10 years to meet the current and future housing needs of Indigenous Ontarians living with 'core housing need'*. The [Maytree housing report](#) calculates that less than 0.3 % of the province's own annual spending has gone towards housing programs, estimating that that Ontario's current and projected spending is an annual shortfall compared to 2019/20

Provincial Policy

- The Provincial government through the [Planning Act](#) and its [Provincial Policy Statement](#) (PPS) controls land use zoning in Ontario. The 2020 PPS was criticized by housing advocates as over emphasizing market driven development. The recent [Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force](#) recommends increasing the supply and density of new housing, but also limiting consultation and appeals to speed up building new communities.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING Key Message

There is a **housing crisis in Ontario** that spans the full spectrum of housing needs. Key areas where the Ontario government has the authority to relieve the housing affordability crisis:

- Tenant protection through reform of the ***Residential Tenancies Act***.
- Increased funding for supportive and community housing.
- Planning Policy: Working with municipalities to ensure the building of a healthy mix of new housing.
- Taxation measures to limit real estate speculation.

Questions for Candidates

1. How would your party address the current level of homelessness and lack of affordable housing for low-income earners and those on social assistance in your riding?
2. Is your party willing to address the issue around rent control by expanding controls to include all residential rental units?
3. Is your party willing to curb speculation in the housing market through taxation?

- Ontario's Big City Mayors, although agreeing with some of the recommendations, are concerned, wanting more collaboration and respect for municipal planning that takes into consideration local needs and issues such as the environment, existing services, and infrastructure. There are red flags associated with fast tracking development. Over the last few years, the Ontario government has allocated only 0.3% of its annual budget to affordable housing issues. Significantly more funding needs to be invested. In some areas of Ontario, the subsidized housing wait list time is 7 to 10 years (Settlement Org, Jan.8, 2019).

Real Estate Speculation

- [Multi-property owners now represent over 25% of total transactions](#) (Ontario 2021 data from housing market insights by Teranet). Real estate investors drive up prices and make it more difficult to compete in bidding wars. A tax on real estate speculation and vacant properties held by speculators could cool the market, increasing opportunities for those in need of homes.

Why now?

Housing is a human right. In Ontario, too many are without homes, in core housing need, or unable to find affordable housing in their communities. The greatest barrier to financial stability is the rising cost of housing. Data shows that rent and housing costs eat up most of the household budget for lower income earners. Little is left for the other necessities of heat, hydro, transportation, and food. Unless the government takes steps to increase adequate, safe and affordable housing, and puts in place stricter rent controls, any increases in the income of individuals and families experiencing poverty will be eaten up by rent.

*Terms Based on: ***The National Housing Strategy Glossary of Common Terms***

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: a housing unit that can be owned or rented by a household with shelter costs that are less than 30 per cent of its gross income.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: Housing that provides a physical environment that is specifically designed to be safe and secure, with support services such as social services, provision of meals, housekeeping, and social and recreational activities.

COMMUNITY HOUSING: An umbrella term that typically refers to either housing that is owned and operated by non-profit housing societies and housing co-operatives, or housing owned by provincial, territorial, or municipal governments.

CORE HOUSING NEED: means the unit is either (1) not large enough for the number of people living in it; (2) not in good repair; (3) not affordable. Or perhaps all three.

CHILD CARE IN ONTARIO



Quality early learning and child care (ELCC) is beneficial to young children developmentally, academically and socially. Child care in Ontario has failed families due to high costs and low availability. The Covid-19 pandemic has further eroded child care in Ontario with [many centres closing](#). This, plus lockdowns, have forced [women out of the workforce](#).

What are the issues?

- Low wages, no benefits, poor working conditions for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)
- Staffing instabilities
- High costs for families
- Lack of spaces
- Childcare sites with flexible hours and those located in rural centres are few
- Higher ratios of children to staff
- Centers closing due to staffing issues, and the inability to hire qualified staff

The pandemic has highlighted the frailty of the child care sector in Ontario. The high costs and lack of quality spaces for working families has created a barrier for both parents to work outside of the home.

Why now?

Child care in Ontario is at a crisis point. At the time of this writing, \$10.2 billion from the Federal Government as part of the [Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Plan](#) is still being negotiated. A good deal for Ontario needs to be sustainable and create more spaces for ALL Ontario families, urban and rural. All services should be funded sufficiently to provide high quality, accessible and affordable child care. ECEs should be compensated through wages, benefits, and education opportunities to prevent the loss of staff to higher paying jobs.

When fees are set as a matter of public policy along with substantial operational funding, this not only helps affordability, but also allows operators to pay higher salaries to staff. It helps to reduce staff turnover, and with it improves quality.

The federal-provincial plan calls for \$10.00/day or \$220. per month. If Ontario women were to participate in the workforce at the same rate as Quebec's, [Ontario's economy would benefit from 150,000 more workers](#).

Resources

Child Care Now <https://www.timeforchildcare.ca>

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care <https://www.childcareontario.org/>

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

Key Message

Research has shown that affordable, quality early learning and child care (ELCC) is good for children and families, by enhancing child development and increasing employment participation.

Staffing issues such as low wages, no benefits, poor working conditions are at a crisis level, highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Child care spaces cannot be expanded if qualified staff and ECEs cannot be hired or retained.

“The real missing piece' to economic recovery is childcare”: Economist Armine Yalnizyan

Questions for Candidates

1. What will your party do to expand child care spaces, improve wages, benefits and working conditions for ECE's and staff?
2. Will your party commit to funding and put working families first, by providing quality, affordable child care where all children are nurtured and receive the developmental education they require?
3. Will your party sign onto the National Child Care plan as proposed by the Federal Government?

THE CLIMATE CRISIS



The climate crisis is now. Emissions have been rising and our weather has been impacted. We are experiencing extreme weather, heat waves, storms, flooding, and fires. Arctic ice is melting, and sea levels are rising. The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) states that greenhouse house gases are warming the world which is in turn leading to these extreme weather events.

What are the issues?

Canada is one of the worst carbon emitters on a per-capita basis. While the Canadian government continues to provide support to fossil fuel companies, it has pledged to phase out some of this, as well as capping and reducing pollution from the oil and gas sector to net zero by 2050.

Canada is emitting as much greenhouse gases as a generation ago. While Ontario’s greenhouse gas emissions per capita are the 2nd lowest in the country, as we are the most populated province, we still bear a great deal of responsibility.

In late 2018 Ontario released its “[Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan](#)” in which the province committed to reducing its CO₂ emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. The [2021 Auditor-General’s Report](#) forecasts that the targets will not be met.

Why Now?

Southern Ontario and Québec are warming twice as fast as the rest of the world. Northern regions are warming three times as fast. This July enough ice melted on the Greenland Ice Sheet to cover the entire state of Florida with two inches of water. In western Canada 8,700 square kilometers of land were on fire with the highest recorded temperatures in several places.

Recently, policies and programs to protect Ontarians from some of the impacts of climate change have been cancelled including: renewable energy projects contracts (A [renewable generation subsidy program](#) was created. While intended for everyone, only large commercial and industry ratepayers will receive a net reduction in electricity costs), the Green Commercial Vehicle program, Drive Clean, clean energy programs, the Environmental Commissioner position was eliminated.

As well as the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan, other actions proposed and added by the government include: emissions performance standards for large industry, two major highways - Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass, Driving Prosperity electric vehicle production, climate change impact assessment done by Climate Risk Institute, reporting 2022.

CLIMATE CRISIS Key Message

Ontario has a [Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan](#) that, according to the Auditor General, will not meet the forecast of reducing its CO₂ emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.

Ontario must do its part with an array of policies and programs to reduce emissions, increase renewable energy projects and expand the funding and staffing for climate change work.

The time to act is now.

Questions for Candidates

1. Will you support a climate crisis action plan with specific projects and targets?
2. Will you steadily escalate carbon pricing for high-emissions industry sectors?
3. Are you in favour of tax credits so homes, condos and apartments can upgrade to energy proficiency?
4. How to you propose to engage youth so their voices and issues can be recognized.

ONTARIO ELECTION 2022
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



Environmental assessment (EA) is a tool used to identify, predict and evaluate potential effects of a proposed project on the environment as well as impacts on society, economics, and culture, allowing governments to strike a balance between economic development and environmental protection.

What are the issues?

- Changes to its environmental assessment legislation without providing opportunities for comment by the public.

In July 2019, the Ontario government tabled Bill 197, COVID-197 Economic Recovery Act, 2020, an omnibus bill which used economic recovery to make [changes to the province's environmental assessment legislation](#), including Environmental Assessment Act (EAA). Bill 197, ultimately adopted, was fast-tracked. The Auditor General of Ontario ruled that this was not compliant with the legislative process by [not allowing for public consultation on Bill 197](#).

In the Fall of 2021, Bill 197 was followed with added legislation, [Bill 13, Supporting People and Businesses Act, 2021](#) and subsequent [regulations](#), proposed November 2021, listing those areas subject to EA. Many public infrastructure projects that would have undergone [environmental assessment no longer will](#). The changes also mean that public input into environmental assessment of projects is reduced. Aspects of projects in the areas of forestry management, highway planning and construction, expansion of sewage treatment plants, hydro, mining projects and projects in parks and conservation areas could be exempted from assessment.

- The provincial government has reduced [the role of conservation authorities](#).
- It is also using [Ministerial Zoning Orders \(MZOs\)](#) to fast-track development on farmland and in natural areas including greenbelt lands.

Why now?

Changes to environmental assessment, along with changes to the powers carried by conservation authorities, the extreme use of the [Ministerial Zoning Orders \(MZOs\)](#), and [changes to the provincial Species At Risk Act](#) cumulatively, have significantly eroded environmental protections in the province, while focusing on development. Any further erosion to the provinces environmental protections could lead to both [developers and communities not being assured of a level playing field](#), as well as leaving little protection for species and the environment.

Resources

- <https://ecojustice.ca/ontario-proposes-sweeping-changes-to-environmental-assessment/>
- <https://ontarionature.org/campaigns/mzos/>; <https://ontarionature.org/vote-for-nature-blog/>
- <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/main-news/changes-ontario-s-endangered-species-act-increases-risk-extinction-utm-researchers-find>
- <https://environmentaldefence.ca/campaign/protecting-ontarios-environment/>

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

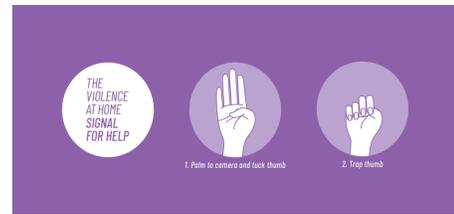
Key Message

Changes to the province's environmental assessment legislation, along with changes to other provincial environmental legislation have removed critical protections for the environment while allowing developers to circumvent environmental protections.

Questions For Candidates

1. How will your party ensure environmental protection is reasonably balanced with development?
2. Will your party aim to reverse the changes to environment-related legislation in Ontario to provide greater protections for species and the environment?
3. How will your party ensure that public participation is restored in the environmental assessment process?
4. Will your party strengthen the role of conservation authorities in environmental protection?

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)



Freedom from violence and harassment in all forms for all people are basic human rights protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December, 1948).

Nevertheless, **gender based violence (GBV) remains a predominant form of violence** which persists, even in Ontario, affecting the safety and lives of women and girls and gender diverse people, making equality, equity and justice a pipedream for most of those affected.

What are the issues?

GBV is intersectional, encompassing education, housing, poverty, drug use, mental health, oppression, race, age, identity, and class stratification, amongst others. Solutions must be multifactorial and government committed.

In early 2018, the then Liberal Ontario government announced the launch of a **new strategy to end GBV** after hearing from more than 200 agencies that help people who have experienced GBV, as well as people with lived experience and Indigenous partners. The government proposed an investment of \$242 million to support and continue the work that it had launched in 2015.

The current government, elected June 2018, **disbanded this strategy** as well as the expert panel providing guidance and eliminated previously proposed investment. Since then, funds for public housing have been cut, tenancy rules have changed in favour of easier evictions, basic income pilot projects have been eliminated, and funding to mental health and addiction centres has been cut entirely or reduced.

These cutbacks adversely affect safety for women, girls and gender diverse people.

Sexual assault centres have **received \$1 million in additional funding plus** increases for specific geographic areas, for victim and sexual assault services and for Indigenous women in the **2021 Budget**, but GBV has actually increased in Ontario (and worldwide) since the beginning of the pandemic (the shadow pandemic). In Ontario, **58 women and girls** have died violently from November 2020 to November 2021, representing over half of the women and girls violently killed nationally. Sexual assault statistics tell their own horrible story: **one in 10** reported sexual assaults results in a conviction and it is estimated that **only 5% of sexual assaults are reported**.

Why now?

Covid has deepened every social, political, and economic inequality that existed before the pandemic. Social distancing and stay at home orders, along with less access to child care and income loss have created a situation where there is increased intimate partner relationship instability, increased mental health problems, increased drug and alcohol abuse and less access to already overburdened support services for victims of GBV.

It is not just a human rights issue; it is also an economic issue. In Canada, spousal abuse alone costs taxpayers **\$7.4 billion per year** to deal with.

Resources: <https://sexualassaultsupport.ca/policy-political-action/> ; <https://www.learningtoendabuse.ca/>

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Key Message

An **Elimination of Gender Based Violence (GBV) Action Plan** must be developed, services to support those affected must be strengthened and strong laws against GBV must be enacted to create systemic change.

Questions for Candidates

1. Will your party support a provincial action plan for GBV that is comprehensive, intersectional, and well-funded? Why or why not?
2. What specific actions will you take to reduce GBV in this riding? What will your party do to lower GBV across the province?
3. How will you create a safer environment for victims reporting GBV? How will you promote more justice for victims of GBV? How will you increase holding perpetrators accountable?

HOME CARE



Respecting our elders should be fundamental to our society. While we are all very concerned about the conditions of long-term care in Ontario, most of us hope to not use one of the homes until absolutely necessary. Logically, as we age we require additional care, and our [first choice is to receive that care at home](#).

What are the issues?

- Prior to the pandemic, the Ontario government had started a reorganization of the health care system under the name [Ontario Health](#). [Ontario Health Teams](#) are the renamed LHINs, and [Home and Community Care Support Services](#) is responsible for home care, long-term care home placement and access to community services. Ontario was moving towards [a more progressive reform](#) with home care seen as the first step in care and hospitals and long-term care homes the last resort. As a result of the pandemic this reform may no longer be a priority.
- For Home Care there are 3 groups: post-surgical, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. The majority of the latter two groups want to live independently and participate in the community, hence their [demand for services will also include community support services](#). The focus of the 2021 Fall Financial Statement was on the first group: [post-surgical](#). In the latest legislation, Bill 175, *Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act*, [persons with disabilities were left out](#).
- Home care for all three levels currently serves [760,000](#) people with multiple programs and services. Due to underfunding more than [2,860,000 volunteer hours are recorded](#) for these sectors.
- Staff compensation within home and community is [the lowest paid in the entire health system](#). This lack of parity with both long-term care homes and hospitals has resulted in an inability to recruit and retain staff. They move to higher paying positions or leave the profession entirely. Home care has [lost an estimated 4,000 nurses](#) since the beginning of the pandemic with providers now only able to [fulfil 56% of requests](#).
- Fundamental to home care is the support of families. Over [150,000 Ontario families give more than 20 million hours](#) every year to care for their loved ones.

Why now?

- The first baby boomers turned 75 last year. The future that we were afraid of is here. [96% of seniors](#) want to stay in their homes for as long as is possible.
- Severe strain on staffing, from the lack of wage parity with hospitals to the loss of staff due to poor compensation to the lack of training and resources for the staff has been amplified by Covid.
- The underfunding of home care is limiting it as a health resource for the whole system. Ontario's [funding has also fallen behind other provinces](#).
- Policy direction – the government talked about [“an integrated, connected health care system centred around the needs of patients”](#). This could be lost.

HOME CARE Key Message

Seniors want to stay in their homes, as do those with disabilities. Resources and care are needed to do that. Long-term care homes should be the last resort.

Questions:

1. Will you and your party support the position of home care as a fundamental base of extended care?
2. Will you and your party support fully fund home and community care to support this?
3. Will you and your party support wage parity of all health care providers according to their qualifications?

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN ONTARIO



[Human sex trafficking](#) is a hidden epidemic happening in plain sight and its frequency is growing. Amongst all of Canada, Ontario represents the largest proportion of people trafficked for sex. The vast majority are women and girls, [64% of trafficked victims are 24 years of age or younger](#), and the average age overall is 17. Indigenous girls and women make up a disproportionately high percentage.

What are the issues?

[Human sex trafficking](#), its abuses and exploitations are increasing. “It’s not something that we can arrest our way out of,” says [RCMP Cpl. David Lane](#), of Nova Scotia Human Trafficking Unit. “The best human trafficking case is the one that doesn’t happen.”

The hallmarks of victim profiles reinforce the need to educate educators, parents and youth early and continuously regarding the forms of manipulation and coercion used by traffickers, what healthy relationships look like, as well as detection of vulnerable youths and early trafficked youths. For those who have been trafficked, appropriate, well-funded support services need to be in place.

Why now?

March 2020, the Ontario government announced the development of a five year, multi departmental anti-trafficking strategy and promised an investment of \$307 million. May of 2021, Bill 251, Ontario’s [Combating Human Trafficking Act](#) was carried into legislation. The Bill is thought to [rely too heavily on law enforcement](#), has others concerned about the [violation several human rights](#) and [the fear of pushing them underground](#). In the Fall of 2021, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) announced details about the Provincial Human Trafficking Intelligence-led Joint Forces Strategy (IJFS) which can investigate and disrupt multi-jurisdictional human trafficking organizations operating in the province.

As part of a multi departmental anti-trafficking strategy, the Ontario government has adopted policy aimed at educator and child/youth education through the Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy ([Program/Policy Memorandum 166, July 2021](#)). As of January 31, 2022, all provincially funded school boards, school authorities and provincial and demonstration schools in Ontario must have anti-sex trafficking protocols in place.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING Key Message

Sex trafficked persons are denied autonomy and dignity, suffer severe emotional and physical abuse and whose lives are at risk. Survivors of trafficking face the consequences of mental and physical trauma, are often ostracised, and often lack independent living skills. Human and societal costs are huge.

Questions for Candidates

1. Ontario has a *Combating Human Trafficking Act* strategy (Bill 251). To what extent will your government expand and improve this plan? What issues will your government tackle? How do you see your government moving forward to reduce this heinous crime?
2. Ontario has introduced new policy for schools and administrators regarding education on trafficking (Program/Policy Memorandum 166). How will your government ensure this policy is being followed and is effective?
3. The 401 corridor and is known for its trafficking opportunities. What does your government plan to do to reduce trafficking along this route?
4. How will your government make it easier for victims to come forward? How will your government strengthen conviction rates for perpetrators of trafficking?

Intersectional (linked) issues which may have priority in your riding/municipality include GBV: Social Services for Victims, Drug Public Health Emergency (Opioid Crisis), Mental Health, Safe Houses for Victims

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WELFARE



Bill C-15 (Federal) and Bill 76 (Ontario) serve to establish in law [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#) aspirations, finally signed by Canada in 2016. However, centuries of colonialism and the Federal Indian Act have served to deny and erase basic human rights for our Indigenous peoples and have embedded institutional and structural racism in such a way that extreme problems still exist.

What are the Issues?

Indisputably, the major issues facing Indigenous peoples in Ontario include:

- the residual effects of residential schools (the [last of which closed in 1991 in Ontario](#)) including the recent spotlight on missing children and unmarked graves, including now at the [former Mohawk Institute](#)
- the continued removal of indigenous children from their parents to be placed in foster care. According to 2016 Census, [Indigenous children](#) make up 7.7% of the child population but 52.2% of children in foster care.
- the overrepresentation of [indigenous women murdered](#) or suffering from [domestic violence](#),
- the elimination of funding for the protection of [endangered wildlife](#) and natural resources
- the [lack of safe drinking water](#) in many indigenous communities
- [disregard for treaty rights](#)
- disregard for Indigenous [wellness, culture and material poverty](#)
- approximately [22,000 additional subsidized Indigenous community housing units are needed](#) over the next 10 years to meet the current and future housing needs of Indigenous Ontarians

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WELFARE Key Message

Institutional and structural racism specifically affecting Ontario's Indigenous populations must be disassembled. The Ontario government must consider all legislation reform through an Indigenous lens and UNDRIP's direction and move to alleviate inequalities through implementation of the TRC's and the MMIWG's recommendations.

Questions for Candidates

1. What specific actions will you/your party take to implement the recommendations of the TRC and Inquiry into MMIWG here in Ontario?
2. How will you/your party consult, accommodate, and obtain consent from Indigenous Peoples in relation to treaty rights, land rights, and environmental stewardship in Ontario?
3. What immediate actions will you/your party take to deal with the number of children in foster care?

Despite claims to the contrary, Ontario is not doing more for indigenous peoples than ever before. Ontario's auditor general says the provincial government has "[no coordinated approach](#)" to delivering Indigenous programs and services (Dec.2020). This report, [Indigenous Affairs in Ontario](#), the finding of unmarked graves, the reports of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) and the [National Inquiry of Murdered and Missing Women and Girls](#), plus many other exposés over the years have forced us to recognize the unfair and continuing oppression of Indigenous people and take action.

Intersectional (linked) issues which may have priority in your riding/municipality include MMIWG, VAW/GBV, UNDRIP, Residential Schools, TRC, Jordan's Principle, Treaty Rights.

LONG TERM CARE



The COVID pandemic revealed inhumane living conditions in some Ontario long-term care (LTC) homes. As of Feb.28, 2022 there had been [4, 291 deaths in LTC homes](#). The pandemic has also exposed significant [long-standing challenges](#) in the long-term care sector which have resulted in a [Long-Term Care Commission](#) and subsequent recommendations focused on staffing, quality of resident care, and infrastructure. The funding for LTC has not kept pace with the increasingly complex health care needs of the residents or the higher proportion of seniors in the population.

What's currently being offered:

- [Bill 37 Providing More Care, Protecting Seniors and Building More Beds Act, 2021](#) adopted Dec.9,2021
- Funding to cover [COVID-19 related costs](#) and increased Infection control
- Commitment to [four hours of daily care per resident by 2024-2025](#), plus [increase staffing levels](#)
- [30,000 new beds](#),
- A new [Not-for-Profit Loan Guarantee Program](#), with \$388M in lending from Infrastructure Ontario for not-for-profit long-term care home
- [Funded programs to educate personal support workers \(PSWs\) and nurses](#) and encourage bridging.
- A new [inspections program](#)

BUT the provincial funding anticipated for municipal budgeting for 2022 [had not been confirmed](#). as of end of 2021.

What we and others would like to strengthen LTC by adding:

- [Adequate support to ensure staff retention](#) with full-time work, wage parity with hospital wages, and benefits commensurate with skills and training required for the job. Conditions of work are conditions of care.
- [Increase the ratio of medical staff](#) (nurses, nurse practitioner, doctors, allied care) to residents within LTC homes to address the complex health needs of residents to reduce residents being sent to hospital for assessment and treatment.
- Rigorous standards with [an inspections program](#) that is unannounced with substantial penalties.
- Develop, utilize and fund strategies to keep long-term care residents socially and physically as active as possible through [emotion-centred approaches](#).
- Prioritize new LTC construction funding and license renewals to [government \(municipal\) or not-for-profit facilities](#). In 2021, a number of [LTC providers with the highest COVID death](#) and illness received new 30-year licensing agreements and funding for additional beds. Ontario continues to [fund for-profit long-term care homes](#) despite pandemic findings.

LONG TERM CARE Key Message:

The COVID pandemic revealed inhumane living conditions in some Ontario long-term care (LTC) homes. Funding for LTC has not kept pace with the increasingly complex health care needs of the residents or the higher proportion of seniors in the population.

Questions for Candidates:

1. Will your party increase the financial support to LTC facilities and home care to attract and retain staffing to meet the needs of residents with increasingly complex health conditions?
2. Will your party prioritize funding construction of LTC not-for-profit homes that focus on resident care?
3. Will your party support an unannounced inspections program with substantial penalties?
4. Will your party investigate, develop and fund emotion-centred long term care homes?

POVERTY



At a fundamental level, everyone living in poverty has one thing in common: they do not have enough money. The key ingredients for tackling the problems of poverty in Ontario reside in policy interventions from the government that are strategic and ongoing and provide more money to those living in poverty.

When the federal government introduced the [Canada Child Benefit \(CCB\)](#) in 2016, providing a maximum of \$6,400 per year for children under age 6, and \$5,400 for those aged 6-12, it was [the single most effective policy measure for reducing poverty](#). By 2019 those benefits, indexed to inflation, lifted 159,000 Ontario families out of poverty.

What are the issues?

Social Assistance

- Social assistance rates peaked in Ontario in 1994. In 1995 these were [reduced by 21.6% and frozen for 10 years](#). During that time inflation also eroded their actual value. Despite nominal increases since then, rates have never returned to the 1994 levels.
- Individuals on Ontario Works (OW) are now receiving just \$733 a month to cover the cost of food and shelter. Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) provides only \$1,169 a month to persons with disabilities for those same basic needs, below the [Market Basket Measure](#) poverty line.
- One in 8 households in 2017 was “food insecure”. That means less food, or food that is not as nutritious, or people missing meals. [With 59% of food bank visitors citing social assistance as their primary source of income](#), it is essential that these programs be improved so that people with disabilities or meagre incomes have a basic standard of living.

Quality Employment, Labour Laws and Child Care

- In the 4 years leading up to the pandemic, the [proportion of employed adults accessing food banks grew by 44%](#), largely due to the rise in precarious employment making it more difficult for Ontarians to earn enough for necessities like food. Ontario workers need quality employment opportunities that pay a stable living wage. CFUW has advocated for an income level “adequate for the necessities of life as a means of moving people out of poverty”.
- Labour laws need to be updated and implemented to benefit and protect all workers in Ontario. For example, “equal pay for equal work” for part-time and temporary employees, elimination of misclassification of employees as independent contractors. provincially legislated paid sick days, and full, equal access to benefits such as EI, CPP, WSIB are examples of essential benefits that would decrease poverty levels.

POVERTY Key Message

Ontario’s inadequate social assistance income allowances are keeping people in deep poverty. Solving the problems of poverty will require ongoing policy interventions from government that focus on:

- Building a strong social safety net
- Connecting people to quality employment by improving labour laws and supports for workers
- Investing in affordable and supportive housing.
- Affordable high quality child care and early learning programs.

Questions for Candidates

1. Will you immediately raise social assistance incomes to match the federal government determination that an adult needs \$2,000. per month to survive?
2. What will your party act on creating an income level “adequate for the necessities of life as a means of moving people out of poverty”. How will you do this?
3. Will your party support Basic Income?
4. What will you and your party do to assist with affordable housing, especially for those with ‘core housing needs’.

- **Women's income (full-time, full year) is 88 cents that of men** Racialized men earn 78 cents on the dollar compared to white men, and **racialized women earn 66 cents** (2016 census). Single parents (usually women) and racialized communities are a large part of those whose wages are comparatively disparate.
- Ontarians need access to quality and affordable child care that helps to support working parents entering or re-entering the workforce. Right now, full-time fees for licensed child care are out of reach for any parent living in poverty in Ontario. It is evident that child care fees are lowest in Canada when fees are set as a matter of public policy and child care centres receive substantial operational funding from the government which also allows operators to pay higher salaries to staff.

Affordable Housing

- The greatest barrier to financial stability is the rising cost of housing. Since 2011, the number of Ontario households in **"core housing need" has increased** while the number of households receiving housing support has decreased, leading to an increase in the wait list for social housing.
 - **Core housing need** means the unit is either (1) not large enough for the number of people living in it; (2) not in good repair; (3) not affordable or perhaps all three.
- Over the last few years, the Ontario government has allocated only **0.3% of its annual budget to affordable housing issues**. Significantly more funding needs to be invested. In some areas of Ontario, **the subsidized housing wait list time is 7 to 10 years**.
- Unless the government takes steps to increase adequate, safe and affordable housing, and puts in place stricter rent controls, any increases in the income of individuals and families experiencing poverty will be eaten up by rent.

Cost of poverty

- Often, governments view poverty reduction as a "cost". A **2019 study published by Feed Ontario** estimated that the cost of poverty itself in Ontario to be between \$27 and \$33 billion annually. Reducing poverty would CUT health care costs (\$3.9 billion), CUT justice system costs (\$1.1 billion), INCREASE tax revenues (\$2.7 to 3 billion), and BOOST employment income (\$19 - \$25 billion), putting money directly back into the economy.

Why now?

- The use of **food banks has increased in 2021**. Before the pandemic the child poverty rate had decreased but still **half a million children live in poverty**. With recent changes in employment, **lost employment**, the affordable housing crisis, and lack of affordable child care, the poverty rate will increase.
- Poverty, coupled with the learning losses of these past two pandemic years, will not only affect the wellbeing of the current generation but also the upcoming one.