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May 6, 2022

Dear Fae,

Thank you very much for sending Ontario Greens your questions around 2SLGBTQIA+ issues. We appreciate the opportunity to speak on these important issues that matter to Ontarians. I am happy to provide you with a response on behalf of the party.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Crist
Office Manager
Green Party of Ontario

Queer Vote Ontario

Addressing 2SLGBTQI+ Community Priorities for Election 2022

- 1. Should your party form government, do you commit to supporting the creation of a Provincial 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat and the creation of a Provincial 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan? Y/N**

YES

- 2. Should your party form government, do you commit to supporting the expansion of current Ontario public health insurance to include all medically necessary gender affirming care procedures? Y/N**

YES

- 3. Should your party form government, do you commit to supporting the creation of a dedicated funding program of no less than \$25 million a year for 2SLGBTQI+ social and community services? Y/N**

YES

Education

- 4. How will your party respond to the critical need for 2SLGBTQI+ representation in K-12 curricula (including the exclusion of blended and 'non-traditional' families as taught in Catholic schools)? How will your party support capacity building so that teachers/faculty can**

adequately and responsibly support this learning and support 2SLGBTQI+ students in their classrooms?

Ontario Greens are committed to updating the K-12 curriculum to include informed discussions of 2SLGBTQIA+ prejudice and discrimination. We will also ensure adequate funding for counselors, and other specific supports to provide equitable access to learning and school activities for all students. We will ensure that all staff undergo mandatory staff training around issues related to equity and diversity, including issues faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

5. How will your party address systemic homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in the Ontario publicly funded school system (including the Catholic system)? What specific steps will your party take to ensure all 2SLGBTQI+ students, in both public and Catholic schools, have an inclusive educational experience?

Ontario Greens believe that changing hearts and minds starts with education. We will update the curriculum to include informed discussions of 2SLGBTQIA+ prejudice, and all forms of discrimination across subject areas. We will also work with school boards to ensure recruitment and retention practices for staff are transparent and reflect the diversity of Ontario's population and ensure culturally relevant and responsive programming is included in mandatory staff training.

Ontario Greens are also committed to establishing clearly visible all-gender washrooms and updating school communications to become more gender inclusive, recognising that gender exists on a spectrum. We will dedicate resources and funding to directly support 2SLGBTQIA+ youth groups. We will also implement standard procedures around the reporting of incidents of discrimination.

6. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (sex-ed) is integral for 2SLGBTQI+ students. What steps will your party take to improve 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion within the existing Health and Physical Education Curriculum?

Ontario Greens believe that our children should have the information they need to be safe in the modern world. We support updating the existing Health and Physical Education Curriculum to ensure discussions include 2SLGBTQIA+ diversity and inclusion. A fulsome 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusive education enables children to gain clear understanding about bodily health, emotional wellbeing and consent and should ultimately lead to a safer, more supportive environment among their peers.

Health and Healthcare

7. Offering 2SLGBTQI+ comprehensive and competent healthcare should not be considered a specialization; it needs to be a standard of care that all practitioners can offer. What are your party's plans to ensure that medical practitioners and surgeons have access to contemporary information/training so that they can offer proficient care specifically to intersex and trans communities?

We are committed to creating a comprehensive strategy to ensure equitable, inclusive and affirming access to care and treatment for 2SLGBTQIA+ people within public services. We plan to immediately strike a task force to identify and develop policies and initiatives that address the adverse effects of homophobia, and transphobia on peoples' mental health and the barriers to accessing healthcare faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Ontario Greens would provide cultural responsiveness training for all healthcare professionals across our system that is trauma informed and rooted in equity. We would also increase core funding for community-based, grassroots mental and physical health supports in marginalised communities that have traditionally been underserved.

8. Will your party expand and improve gender-affirming care? What will your party do to remove barriers within the healthcare system? How will your party improve the range of gender-affirming care services within the province to remove the barrier of travel?

Ontario Greens will expand and improve access to provincially funded healthcare services for 2SLGBTQIA+ Ontarians, including gender affirming procedures and transition medications.

We are committed to immediately striking a task force to identify and develop policies and initiatives that address homophobia and transphobia and the barriers to accessing healthcare faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

To ensure better access to gender-affirming care services in rural and remote areas we will rebalance the healthcare funding formula and use incentives to bring properly trained physicians and allied health professionals to northern and rural communities.

Human Rights

9. The rights of sex workers are important to gender and sexually diverse communities and human rights for all 2SLGBTQIA+ people. What will your party do to help end the criminalization of sex work in Ontario, ensuring full labour rights and protections?

Ontario Greens support decriminalizing sex work in Ontario to ensure that the health and safety of those involved in the industry is protected.

10. Intersex children, often face involuntary medically unnecessary and invasive cosmetic surgeries to more closely align their genitalia to the binary concepts of male and female. What actions will your party take to protect intersex children from these harmful practices? How will your party assist and compensate intersex adults to deal with the trauma and pain they have faced because of involuntary surgical operations?

Ontario Greens support ensuring that Ontario adheres to international standards of human rights by prohibiting non-consensual, medically unnecessary surgeries on intersex children.

Ontario Greens are also committed to providing cultural responsiveness training for all healthcare professionals across our system that is trauma informed and rooted in equity. We are open to exploring a way to make reparations for the injustices and resulting trauma that intersex people have faced.

We will also include mental health and addiction care under OHIP by offering services provided by psychotherapists, psychologists, social workers, and other regulated professionals to support those who have faced these types of traumas.

Social Services

11. Organizations working with or for the gender and sexually diverse community struggle to gain or maintain long-term, sustainable funding. How will your party support 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations, specifically ones that provide important health and social services and ones that work in arts, culture, and heritage?

All public service providers within Ontario's health and social services system will need to participate in anti-oppression, equity and diversity training. Ontario Greens will ensure that local arts and social enterprises are supported in the following ways:

- Decrease land taxes payable for buildings in which below market rent opportunities are available to creative and social enterprises.
- Develop a made-in-Ontario social enterprise strategy with the nonprofit and cooperative sectors to drive local job creation and support rural, remote, and urban self-reliance.
- Create a stabilisation fund of \$680M for the nonprofit sector to ensure that nonprofits and charities can help rebuild the economy and communities.
- Affirm the arms-length operations of, and increase investment in, the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.
- Invest in more Youth Wellness Hubs and community centres that offer access to local mental health services, spaces for social interaction, and supports for families.
- Expand homecare funding by 20% to better meet the needs of people

12. 2SLGBTQIA+ community members continue to face barriers accessing health and social services, and frequently receive inadequate care due to lack of service provider competence on 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion. How will your party work to ensure an inclusive and accessible health and social service experience for all 2SLGBTQIA+ people?

Ontario Greens are committed to creating a comprehensive strategy to ensure equitable, inclusive and affirming access to care and treatment for 2SLGBTQIA+ people within public services. We are also committed to providing cultural responsiveness training for all healthcare professionals across our system that is trauma informed and rooted in equity.

We will also increase upstream investments in the social determinants of health, such as social isolation, housing insecurity, and poverty to prevent substantial, long-term healthcare costs and severe disease.

Housing

13. Many Ontarians fear that rising rents will leave them homeless, while others struggle to find housing within their limited means. 2SLGBTQI+ people who are often under- or precariously employed and can face housing discrimination (directly or indirectly) are particularly at risk. How will your party address these issues in an inclusive manner?

Ontario Greens know that systemic injustices and discrimination have led to greater housing insecurity among members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

We have prepared a comprehensive housing strategy that challenges and changes the way Ontario delivers on affordable housing. Some of the highlights include:

- Build 160,000 affordable rental units, including 60,000 supportive housing units.
- Mandate inclusionary zoning so 20% of units are affordable units in housing projects above a certain size.
- Renew 260,000 community housing units over the next decade in partnership with the federal government under the National Housing Strategy.
- Extend financial support to 311,000 Ontario households via the portable housing benefit.
- Reinstate rent controls on all units and implement vacancy control to limit rent increases between tenancies.
- Provide nonprofit housing providers with the support needed to buy rental buildings to maintain affordability permanently.
- Create a seed fund of \$100M for co-operative housing.
- Allow triplexes and fourplexes within urban boundaries and midrises on transit corridors.
- Create a task force to address the financialisation of housing.

For those experiencing homelessness/ housing insecurity we will:

- Utilize a Housing First model to ensure that stable, permanent housing solutions are the first priority when helping those in need.
- Engage with communities with lived experience with homelessness on program development, as well as communities who, due to systemic barriers, face disproportionate levels of homelessness, including 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

14. 2SLGBTQI+ seniors and elders face several issues related to housing and long-term care (LTC). Some seniors find themselves having to go back into the closet when they enter LTC facilities, fearing discrimination and a lack of inclusive, culturally competent care. How will your party work to improve the lives of 2SLGBTQI+ elders in LTC facilities and alternate housing?

Ontario Greens are committed to amending the Residents' Bill of Rights to align with the prohibited grounds for discrimination in the Ontario Human Rights Code and to strengthening obligations for long term care licensees to respect and recognise residents' gender identity, as well as their social, cultural, spiritual, and language care needs.

We will also amend the Residents' Bill of Rights by adding the right of residents to have accommodations made for themselves and their spouse or life partner so they can continue to live together in long-term care. This will be part of an expanded choice, patient-centred long-term care framework.

Ontario Greens also support expanding options for seniors to age in place. We plan to:

- Increase homecare funding to support expanded home and community services that are integrated with non-profit services. Shift to entirely non-profit homecare providers within the public system.
- Mandate that PSWs are paid for their travel time between visits.
- Increase high-quality homecare options for those experiencing frailty, dementia, and disability.
- Collect meaningful quality indicators to hold homecare organisations accountable and to promote quality improvements.
- Improve support for those doing unpaid caregiving in families and communities.
- Make it easier for seniors to live together by streamlining and simplifying the approvals process for cohousing and coliving developments.
- Create incentives for retrofitting homes and buildings to make them cleaner, safer, healthier, accessible and energy efficient so they can live where they are most comfortable.

15. Many 2SLGBTQI+ people have concerns about their safety when it comes to temporary housing, such as group homes, shelters, transition housing, and halfway houses. There are similar concerns when 2SLGBTQI+ people enter the carceral system and when youth are taken into care. Regulations – such as policies, procedures, and training - can ensure that people are safe, and their identities are respected. 2SLGBTQI+ people often face greater risk of homelessness. Many shelters cannot keep up with the demand for beds and must turn people away. How will your party ensure 2SLGBTQI+ people are protected in these scenarios? What steps does your party plan to take to address the housing crisis while creating structures to protect marginalized populations?

In order to ensure people are safe and their identities are respected in settings like group homes, shelters, transition housing and within the carceral system, Ontario Greens would require anti-racism and anti-oppression training for all public sector employees. We will also reform the Special Investigation Unit to ensure transparency and justice for individuals who are victims of violence and discrimination at the hands of law enforcement.

To address the housing crisis, we would take a Housing First approach by:

- Restoring the goal of ending homelessness in Ontario within ten years.
- Resuming the homelessness census cancelled by the Ford government.

- Utilising a Housing First model to ensure that stable, permanent housing solutions are the first priority when helping those in need.
- Engaging with communities with lived experience with homelessness on program development, as well as communities that face disproportionate levels of homelessness.

We would expand housing options for people in crisis by:

- Building 60,000 permanent supportive housing units over the next decade through innovative partnerships with public, private, and non-profit housing organisations.
- Accelerating the deployment of temporary and permanent supportive modular housing projects on provincially owned land.
- Increasing funding for culturally appropriate transitional housing.
- Provincially fund 50% of shelter and community housing costs to municipalities.
- Support survivors of gender-based violence by increasing funding for Sexual Assault Centres, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and legal supports.

16. How will your party ensure that long-term care facilities are safer and affirming spaces for 2SLGBTQA+ seniors? What are your party's plans for offering anti-oppressive and 2SLGBTQI+ comprehensive training, education, and resources to long-term care providers so they can maintain safer and affirming spaces for seniors?

Ontario Greens will strengthen obligations for long term care licensees to respect and recognise residents' gender identity, as well as their social, cultural, spiritual, and language care needs. We will also repeal Bill 218 that shields long term care owners and operators from liability for negligence and amend the Residents' Bill of Rights to align with the prohibited grounds for discrimination in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

We are committed to providing anti-oppression and 2SLGBTQA+ comprehension training and education for all healthcare professionals, including long-term care providers that are trauma informed and rooted in equity.

Employment Services

17. 2SLGBTQI+ Ontarians have been particularly impacted by the economic disparities of COVID-19. How will your party address 2SLGBTQI+ issues in your pandemic recovery plan?

Ontario Greens believe in treating people with dignity and fairness. This is one reason we support immediate increases in social assistance as the first step towards a Basic Income Guarantee that will provide economic security and resilience. We will double both OW and ODSP rates.

We would also increase the floor of the minimum wage each year by \$1, starting at to \$16 in 2022, with a top-up in cities where the cost of living is higher in order to ensure everyone receives a living wage.

18. We know that many LGBTQIA+ newcomers choose Canada because they see it as a place of refuge to live their authentic lives. However, transitioning to life in Ontario is not always easy, especially given the impacts of the pandemic on our traditionally 'welcoming' communities. Improving the transition to Ontario for LGBTQIA+ newcomers require specialized education and training for those supporting newcomers. Ontario could become a leader in Canadian recruitment of LGBTQIA+ newcomers. What is your party's plan to act on this matter?

Ontario Greens support providing specialized education and training for those workers who support newcomers. We are also committed to increasing core funding for community-based, grassroots mental and physical health supports in racialised, newcomer, and other marginalised communities that have traditionally been underserved.

We will also increase support for community centres and neighbourhood coalitions, which play an important role in encouraging community connections and reducing isolation.

19. Gender and sexually diverse people are less likely to be hired or secure stable employment, and experience wage disparity in comparison to their cisgender (nontrans) and heterosexual peers. What will your party do to reduce 2SLGBTQI+ unemployment and underemployment?

Ontario Greens would implement the Pay Transparency Act as well as empower the Ontario Human Rights Commission to conduct compliance reviews of public institutions and organizations to ensure policies and procedures are in place that comply with OHRC requirements and to ensure supportive workplace environments that achieve OHRC objectives.

Culture:

20. 2SLGBTQI+ communities contribute significantly to Ontario culture through the arts. Ontarians benefit from 2SLGBTQI+ arts and festivals (such as Pride festivals) both culturally and economically. How will your party provide sustained, long-term support to 2SLGBTQI+ cultural endeavors?

We know that artistic and cultural endeavours create social cohesion and identity and give communities the power to shape their own narratives.

Ontario Greens will:

- Create a stabilisation fund of \$680M for the nonprofit sector to ensure that nonprofits and charities can help rebuild the economy and communities.
- Affirm the arms-length operations of, and increase investment in, the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.
- Support community based arts and culture programming, and education in our schools.
- Renew Ontario's culture strategy to ensure it is more inclusive of arts and culture from marginalized groups.

Internal Party Development:**21. Does your party have any openly gender diverse and/or sexually diverse candidates? If comfortable answering: How many and in what ridings? Also, what concrete steps will your party take to increase representation of gender and sexually diverse people among candidates?**

Ontario Greens have several openly gender diverse and/or sexually diverse candidates. We will leave the specifics to be provided by the individuals if and when they wish to do so.

Ontario Greens strongly believe that it's time for Queen's Park to start looking and thinking like the people it represents. Through our Take The Lead recruitment campaign, we actively recruit diverse candidates and we set funds aside to help them campaign. We also provide additional training and mentorship opportunities for women, Black, Indigenous, racialised, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals who are considering running for political office.

We are taking concrete steps to combat systemic racism, sexism and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ behaviour in our party, including:

- Implementing a Safe Spaces Policy and Member Code of Conduct that will not tolerate racism, sexism, anti-2SLGBTQIA+ behaviour or another form of hate.
- Creating a Diversity & Inclusion Fund that provides start up funding for equity-deserving candidates.
- Launching our Take the Lead candidate recruitment initiative to recruit equity-deserving candidates.
- Conducting a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) survey to provide an understanding of our current membership and how we can improve to better reflect the diverse voices of Ontario.
- Providing ongoing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training for Ontario Greens staff, Provincial Executive and riding associations.

We know there is more to do to make the Ontario Green Party a safe, inclusive and welcoming organization for people of all backgrounds. We are committed to doing more with our candidates, riding associations, Provincial Executive and membership.