



## **Survey Response: Queer Vote and 2SLGBTQIA+ Issues**

### **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?**

Yes. Everyone in Ontario deserves to love and live as their authentic selves. An Ontario Liberal government will create a 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan based on engagement with 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

### **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?**

Yes. We will work to remove barriers and wait times for medically necessary gender affirming procedures.

### **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?**

Yes. Our Liberal Plan for Ontario includes a \$20 million commitment toward funding for 2SLGBTQI+ social and community services, as well as additional funding for 2SLGBTQI+ health, long-term care and housing supports.

## **Education**

We'll ensure that 2SLGBTQ+ young people feel welcome and supported in schools – including in an affirming, updated curriculum. What students learn in the classroom should not only be up-to-date and modern, but they should also be able to see themselves reflected. We'll review and update curriculum, evaluation and training tools – working closely with educators, school boards, parents and experts to make sure lessons and learning materials include diverse communities.

Two years of a pandemic dealt a devastating blow to the mental health of all our kids who feel more isolated, anxious and uncertain about the future. In 2019, the Ford Conservatives cut planned funding to student mental health. We'll hire 1,000 more mental health professionals to directly support students and staff year-round, to eliminate community service wait times and focus especially on culturally-competent services that understand and affirm all kinds of lived experiences and identities.

Hate and intolerance have no place in Ontario. We'll also extend the limitation period for putting forward human rights complaints from one to five years.

## **Healthcare**

We'll improve training and provide accessible, competent and gender affirming health care for 2SLGBTQI+ people, including contemporary information about proficient care specifically for intersex and trans communities. We'll also provide full coverage for medications required to prevent and treat HIV, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and antiretroviral therapy – as well as expand access and reduce wait times and barriers to gender-affirming surgeries through our \$1 billion investment in the surgical backlog.



To meet demand for mental health care, we'll train 3,000 new mental health and addictions professionals, social workers, psychologists and psychotherapists, ensuring they reflect Ontario's diversity and are culturally-competent – including for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

## **Social Services and Culture**

Our Liberal Plan for Ontario includes a \$20 million commitment toward funding for 2SLGBTQI+ serving organizations, including Pride festivals.

## **Housing**

One of the biggest reasons why housing costs are so high is because demand is much greater than supply. To meet demand, we'll get at least 1.5 million new homes built in Ontario over the next 10 years – doubling the pace of building from the past decade. This ambitious target is what experts say we need to catch up to the rest of Canada, keep up with population growth and bring affordability back to Ontario's housing market.

As part of these 1.5 million homes, we'll build at least 138,000 new deeply affordable homes – including much-needed 2,000 supportive homes for 2SLGBTQ+ youth that meet their unique needs. By doing so, we'll aim to end the waitlist for affordable public housing. We've also committed \$360 million in annual operating funding to operate and improve social, supportive and community housing services – funding that will increase as we work together to build more homes.

There are too many people currently experiencing homelessness. We'll work to establish housing as a fundamental human right in Ontario and provide people with safe and reliable shelter, as well as the robust wrap-around services they need to live with dignity and stability. We'll provide municipalities and housing support providers with \$100 million per year to promote a 'Housing First' approach to ending chronic homelessness that will quickly move people into independent, permanent housing with comprehensive supports.

We'll fund new emergency shelter beds and drastically improve the condition of existing shelters so that there are safe and respectable options to those who need them. We'll also renovate older shelters as long-term residences and supportive housing units as people are effectively transitioned into stable housing. Finally, we'll relaunch the homelessness census that the Ford Conservatives scrapped to better understand people's comprehensive housing needs and issues. We'll also make the child welfare system more responsive, flexible and sensitive to the needs of diverse communities, including more placement options and programs to support completing education.

We strongly believe in building more homes and meeting housing demand – and have a plan to do just that. But when the Ford Conservatives created an arbitrary rent control exemption, they didn't do it for Ontarians. They did it for developers, making renters' lives unpredictable and less affordable each year. We'll end the two-tiered rental market, bringing back rent control to all rental homes across Ontario and providing much-needed stability to renters who can prepare for smaller, more predictable rent increases.

As part of our plan to revolutionize seniors care, we'll expand access to safe and affirming not-for-profit long-term care homes for 2SLGBTQI+ communities. We'll end for-profit long-term care as quickly as possible with a target of 2028 by no longer renewing licenses



for for-profit long-term care homes, as well as by negotiating and financing the transfer of existing homes to not-for-profit entities and municipalities. We'll also improve conditions for seniors in long-term care homes, enhancing inspections to enforce – with zero-tolerance sanctions – when homes endanger residents or don't meet new standards. We'll prevent homes from admitting new residents when they're not appropriately staffed and repeal the Ford Conservatives' rules that protect long-term care companies from legal liability for harming residents. We'll also increase training, awareness and enforcement mechanisms to eliminate elder abuse in long-term care and beyond. We'll give funds to non-profit long-term care homes to provide at least an average of four hours of direct care per day, as well as provide pharmacy services, high-speed wi-fi, air conditioning and other standards of excellent care.

### **Employment Services**

We'll increase funding by \$7 million for newcomer settlement services with a focus on more support for young newcomers, a 24-hour support line and school translation services and language classes. We'll also ensure a dedicated Immigration Minister supports these newcomers to work in their field of expertise and develops a new generation of entrepreneurs.

The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) helps students pay for college and university, but the Ford Conservatives cut the program's budget by more than half – forcing thousands of students to take on more debt or leave school. We'll reverse these damaging cuts, giving significantly more grants that students never have to pay back and ensuring no qualified student is prevented from pursuing higher learning due to a lack of resources. We'll also keep tuition costs from rising and eliminate the interest rate so current and future student loans become easier to pay off. We'll also expand universal access to free career counseling with targeted services for people in communities underrepresented in certain careers.

A student's time on campus should always be enriching and engaging, so we'll give funding to colleges and universities to create safe, healthy and inclusive environments for students, including through more mental health supports and gender-based violence prevention programs. Behind many of the efforts to make campuses better are student-led groups, so we'll scrap the Ford Conservatives' harmful Student Choice Initiative that unfairly targeted student groups and gave them less funding to work with.

We'll also boost the flow of capital to small businesses to fuel economic recovery and job creation, partnering with financial institutions and credit unions to backstop loans and support tens of thousands of small businesses with start-up costs like equipment and real estate through a \$300 million loan portfolio, with targeted outreach to small businesses led by diverse communities including 2SLGBTQI+ people.

Around half of working people in Ontario don't have access to basic workplace benefits like prescription drugs, dental care, vision care, mental health care, parental leave and retirement savings. We'll create a package of high-quality, affordable benefits that everyone can use, including self-employed, gig, contract and creative workers. Employers without comparable benefits would be required to enroll their staff while offering employees the option to opt-out.



## **Internal Party Development**

Inclusion and diversity is at the heart of our new team of Ontario Liberal candidates. Three of our candidates – David Morris (Toronto Centre), Paul Saguil (Willowdale) and Tyler Watt (Nepean) – identify as 2SLGBTQI+. More than half of our candidates are women – a historic first in our party’s history. Our candidates are community builders like teachers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, small business owners, entrepreneurs, farmers, councillors, mayors and more. Our team reflects Ontario.