

Seniors as Advocates – Making our Voices Heard

A Summary of Marilyn Bossert's Presentation

at NWARTA's Virtual Annual General Meeting

June 16, 2021

- Seniors are making up an increasing proportion of the population and it's been reported **that over 90 percent of seniors participate in the voting process.**
- **Seniors have a strong voice at all levels of government** – make your voice heard.



- The **Alberta Retired Teachers' Association** (ARTA) and the national bilingual **Canadian Association of Retired Teachers** (ACER-CART) are non-partisan organizations encouraging their members to remain vocal and express their concerns.



- The ARTA website has several resources to assist members in contacting their elected officials, and there is information about issues affecting seniors, including: phasing out the seniors' advocate, protecting Alberta Health Care, and the upcoming elections. Check the link – <https://www.arta.net/advocacy/advocacy-resources/alberta-legislation/>

- Members will also find how ARTA works as an advocate for seniors. Under *Curriculum Development*, there is a letter written by ARTA President, Lorna McIlroy to Minister LaGrange. [https://www.arta.net/wp-content/downloads/Letter to Honourable Adriana LaGrange - April 12 2021.pdf](https://www.arta.net/wp-content/downloads/Letter%20to%20Honourable%20Adriana%20LaGrange%20-%20April%2012%202021.pdf)
- To obtain MLAs' contact information, check under *Contact Your MLA* and enter your address. <https://www.arta.net/advocacy/advocacy-resources/alberta-legislation/>
- There are suggestions to help members get the “most mileage” out of writing one letter or making one phone call. See *Section 4 (p 23)* on the following link -- <https://www.arta.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Fundamentals-of-Advocacy-20180815.pdf>



- Similar information may be found on the ACER-CART website under *Advocacy*. You will find there is focus on the national front including the National Seniors' Strategy. <https://acer-cart.org/advocacy/>
- Members may wish to learn more about the national voice of retired teachers by checking ACER-CART's *Vision and Objectives* -- <https://acer-cart.org/about/vision/>
- Of personal interest is a *YouTube* featuring **Dr. Steve Morgan's** presentation –

A Powerful Case for Pharmacare

Dr. Steve Morgan

University of BC's School of Population and Public Health

A compelling case for why Canada needs a national Pharmacare program, how it would improve our health and save money that could be directed to provide other health needs.



(Why Canada needs a national Pharmacare program, how it would improve the health care system and

save money that could be re-directed to provide other health needs.)
<https://acer-cart.org/june3event/>

For your reference, on the following pages is a copy of Marilyn's PowerPoint slides.

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Seniors as Advocates Making our Voices Heard

Presented by Marilyn Bossert
ARTA Past President
ACER-CART Regional Rep. West

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."
— Margaret Mead

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Thousands upon thousands of classroom teachers raised their collective voices in support of public education.

It was a historic show of professional solidarity in support of students and against drastic cuts to education funding by the Progressive Conservative government of Premier Ralph Klein.

The ATA News
Oct. 4, 1997



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WHAT SHOULD WE KEEP IN MIND WHEN WE ARE PREPARING A MESSAGE FOR OUR ELECTED OFFICIAL?

KISS - Keep message short and simple with the focus on:

- Content – what you say
- Style – how you say it

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PREPARING OUR MESSAGE

Content: What will we say?

1. State the purpose of our communication.
2. Describe why you care. Tell your story.
3. Ask for more information or clarification.
3. Ask questions – especially the hard ones.
4. Request a commitment to a specific action.
5. Request a reply.
6. Identify yourself.
7. Thank you.

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PREPARING OUR MESSAGE

Style: How do we say it?

1. Use **our** voice to tell **our** story.
2. Be concise – preferably one page; no more than two
3. Use simplistic language
4. Be respectful

When we sign a form letter or a petition, follow up to explain why.

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Preparing a one-page brief if we are delivering our message in person

- Valuable to leave with our elected official and to share with others.
- Anything longer than 2 pages will not be read.
- Purpose: to summarize the problem, background information, and solutions you propose.

Your one-page brief should include:

1. Name and contact information.
2. Key message.
3. The problem as you see it.
4. Background on the issue and, if appropriate, your past involvement in it.
5. The rationale for your solution.
6. Your recommendations.

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ADVOCACY can come from:

1. Individuals – As seniors, **We care, we have the time to do the research, and we vote.**
2. ARTA (Alberta Retired Teachers' Association) – Alberta
3. ACER-CART (Association Canadienne des Enseignantes et des Enseignantes Retraités – Canadian Association of Retired Teachers – Canada

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Issues affecting seniors

Using the chat box, enter what you feel is one of the issues affecting us as seniors.

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NWARTA'S HOME PAGE

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The Need for a National Seniors' Strategy

A comprehensive National Seniors' Strategy with clear expectations and targeted funding will guarantee basic rights for Canada's older population and ensure that their needs will be met.

Seniors are the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population:

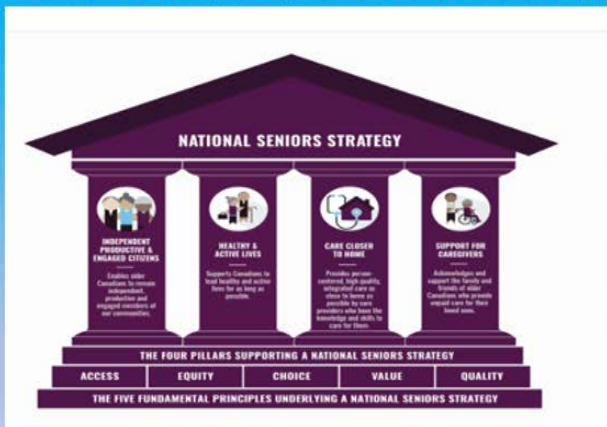
- 15% of our population is aged 65 and older.
- That number is expected to increase to 25% by 2056.

Pillar 2:

Support Canadians to lead **Healthy & Active lives** as long as they can

- wellness and prevention activities
- access to medically necessary & appropriate medications and vaccinations
- informed Health Decision-Making & Advance Care Planning

The Four Pillars Supporting the National Seniors Strategy



www.nationalseniorsstrategy.ca

Pillar 3:

Care Close to Home to provide person-centered, high quality, integrated care as close to home as possible by care providers who have the knowledge and skill to care for them

- high quality long-term care, palliative & end-of-life services
- specifically trained staff
- standardized metrics & accountability standards
- emergency & disaster preparedness planning, response & recovery efforts

THE FOUR PILLARS SUPPORTING A NATIONAL SENIORS STRATEGY FOR CANADA

Pillar 1:

Enable older Canadians to remain **independent, productive** and **engaged** members of their communities

- ageism, elder abuse, social isolation
- access to affordable housing
- income security
- age-friendly communities
- inclusive transportation

Pillar 4:

Support for Care Givers acknowledges and supports the Care Givers (family and friends of older Canadians) who provide unpaid care for their loved ones

- workplace support
- unnecessarily financial penalizing

www.nationalseniorsstrategy.ca

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NSS EVIDENCE BRIEFS:

- Ageism, Elder Abuse, and Social Isolation
- Older Adults and Poverty
- Affordable Housing
- Accessible Transportation
- [Icon: Buildings]
- [Icon: Syringe]
- [Icon: Pharmacy]
- [Icon: Speech Bubble]

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Why Advocate?
 "Unless someone like you cares
 a whole awful lot,
 Nothing is going to get better.
 It's not."
 Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

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ACER-CART is the national voice of the retired educational community.

L'Association canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités - Canadian Association of Retired Teachers (ACER-CART) is a bilingual association of Members representing over 167,000 affiliated members located in all regions of Canada.

As the national voice of retired teachers, ACER-CART focuses on priorities evolving from issues affecting the well-being of seniors all across Canada.

2020-22 Priorities

ACER-CART puts forth positions of importance to the Federal Government on behalf of its Members and all seniors.

Join Our Letter Campaign For a National Seniors' Strategy!

National Seniors' Strategy Webinar

Member Publications

LATEST NEWS

- Retiree Health Ev... 06/03/2021 [No Title]
- National Seniors' Strategy 04/02/2021
- HSD survey collecting Long-term care information 05/18/2021
- Message to Active Teachers during COVID (President Gerry Tiede) 05/11/2021
- Health Committee Survey Results - Winter 2021

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ing Long-term

National Seniors' Strategy

Canada needs a *National Seniors' Strategy* that will address the specific needs of the increasing seniors' population.

Join this *Call to Action* by using the prepared letter to contact your federal and provincial elected officials, asking them to work together to implement a strategy that will:

- Value seniors
- Prioritize care in seniors' own homes
- Implement Pharmacare
- Regulate and monitor long-term care homes.

You can type in your personal comments before clicking 'Send.'