

Dear _____

Re: Accessible Housing Crisis

I need accessible housing because.....

As an MP, here are some important facts which you should know and act on:

The government of Canada has declared that **housing is a human right**.

The need for **accessible** affordable housing is a crisis.

22% of Canadians have a disability, and this figure is rising.

Anyone can have been born with a disability, and anyone of any age can experience illness or accident which creates a temporary or lasting injury.

The **Canadian Human Rights Act**, the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**, and the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Though these take precedence over all other laws, they continue to be contravened by other legislation.

Universal design will accommodate anyone of any age or ability.

The cost of building a new apartment is the same whether accessible or not - if it is planned from the design stage. (CMHC reports)
It is renovations to conventional housing which are expensive.

There will be **huge healthcare savings** if people are not needlessly stuck in acute care hospitals or forced into long-term care.

Accessible housing:

prevents burn-out among care-givers,
reduces the need for personal care attendants,
reduces the need for household help,
enables people to increase their work hours,

reduces need for financial support,
enhances dignity, freedom, social inclusion, health and well-being.

The federal government has responsibility for military housing and Indigenous housing, and participates in funding for housing in all provinces and territories. **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)** wields broad influence on housing across the country.

HOW THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN HELP:

The **National Building Code** must be amended to make universal design mandatory in every unit in all new multi-unit residential buildings.

Provinces follow the lead of the National Building Code. To harmonize all provincial Building Codes, the National Building Code must be updated so that all Canadians have access to the housing they need. There is currently **no** provincial law requiring that housing be accessible.

The National Housing Strategy (2017) should guide the leveraging of federal spending on housing to promote accessibility across Canada **by requiring recipients of federal public money to not perpetuate existing barriers or create new ones.**

The **Accessible Canada Act** requires this, and the **Accessibility Commissioner** must enforce it. Appointment of the **Accessibility Commissioner** must be no longer delayed.

No tax dollars should ever create accessibility barriers.

I call on you to publicly pledge to federally mandate that all new housing be fully accessible (universal design). Please confirm with me that you have done so.

Sincerely,

Name

Address & postal code