QUESTIONS FOR BRAMPTON RIDING CANDIDATES IN THE 2015 FEDERAL ELECTION

CANDIDATE: DAVID LAIRD

QUESTION # 1  PENSION REFORM
BRAMPTON CARP HAS STRONGLY ADVOCATED FOR A MUCH ENHANCED CANADA PENSION PLAN (CPP) WHICH WILL PROVIDE A RETIREE WITH AT LEAST 60% OF HIS/HER PRE-RETIREMENT INCOME SO THAT ALL RETIRED CANADIANS CAN LIVE IN DIGNITY WITH A LIFE STYLE COMPARABLE TO THEIR PRE-RETIREMENT LIFE – STYLE. THE PROPOSED ONTARIO REGISTERED PENSION PLAN (ORPP) WILL ENHANCE PENSIONS FOR RETIRED WORKERS IN ONTARIO. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE CANADA PENSION PLAN (CPP) PAYROLL DEDUCTION SYSTEM HAS PROVIDED INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT TO THE PROVINCIAL PENSION PLANS IN QUEBEC AND SASKATCHEWAN. BRAMPTON CARP STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT, AT LEAST THE SAME LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE FROM THE CPP SYSTEM ALSO SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ONTARIO.

• DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS POSITION?
  X YES   ___ NO   ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
• IF ELECTED WOULD YOU ADVOCATE FOR THIS POSITION WITHIN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS?
  X YES   ___ NO   ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
• DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT ENHANCING THE CPP?
  X YES   ___ NO   ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED

QUESTION # 2  RRIF REFORM
BRAMPTON CARP HAS ADVOCATED FOR AND RECOMMENDED THAT THE MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO REGISTERED RETIREMENT INCOME FUNDS (RRIFs) IMMEDIATELY BE ELIMINATED.

**Please see comments below**

• DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS POSITION?
  ___ YES  ___ NO  X DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
• IF ELECTED WOULD YOU ADVOCATE FOR THIS POSITION WITHIN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS?
  ___ YES  ___ NO  X DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
• DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT THE ELIMINATION OF MANDATORY RRIF WITHDRAWALS?
  ___ YES  X NO  ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED

QUESTION # 3  NATIONAL PHARMACARE
A NUMBER OF RECENT RESEARCH STUDIES HAVE DETERMINED THAT IF A NATIONAL PHARMACARE PROGRAM WAS IMPLEMENTED OUR OVERALL NATIONAL COSTS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS COULD BE REDUCED BY SEVERAL BILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY. AS WELL, FOR THE MILLIONS OF OUR CITIZENS OF EVERY AGE, CURRENTLY WITHOUT BENEFIT PLANS, PRESCRIPTION DRUGS WOULD BE AVAILABLE.

• DO YOU SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIONAL PHARMACARE PROGRAM?
  X YES   ___ NO   ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
• IF ELECTED WOULD YOU ADVOCATE FOR THIS POSITION WITHIN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS?
  X YES   ___ NO   ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
• DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIONAL PHARMACARE PROGRAM?
  X YES   ___ NO   ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
Further, according to respected opinion the feasibility of a national pharmacare program could be jeopardized by terms and conditions in the ‘Canada – Europe Trade Agreement (CETA)’ and ‘Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP)’. Brampton Carp strongly advocates for:

1. FULL PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT ON THE CETA AND TPP AGREEMENTS;
2. COMPLETE PROTECTION FOR CANADIANS FROM ANY PROVISION IN EITHER AGREEMENT WHICH PROTECTS THE PATENT RIGHTS OF ANY FOREIGN PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY.

**Please see comments below**

- DO YOU AGREE WITH BRAMPTON CARP’S POSITION ON THE CETA AND TPP AGREEMENTS?  
  __ YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED
- IF ELECTED WOULD YOU ADVOCATE FOR THIS POSITION WITHIN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS?  
  __ YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED
- DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT BRAMPTON CARP’S POSITION ON THIS ISSUE?  
  __ YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED

**Question # 4  **Federal Healthcare Transfer Payments

Canadians of all ages have grave concerns that health care transfer payments will be limited to a per capita support from the federal government in 2016 – 2017. Health care transfer payments for the period 2004 – 2014 from the federal government, provided bulk transfers to the provinces that allowed for equalization of resources and more equitable health care for people across Canada.

- DO YOU AGREE THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD ENHANCE THE TRANSFER PAYMENT FUNDING MODEL SO THAT THE CANADA HEALTH ACT UNIFORMLY CAN PROVIDE MORE EQUITABLE HEALTH CARE FOR CANADIANS OF ALL AGES?  
  X YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW / UNDECIDED
- IF ELECTED WOULD YOU ADVOCATE FOR THIS POSITION WITHIN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS?  
  X YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW / UNDECIDED
- DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE TRANSFER PAYMENT FUNDING MODEL?  
  X YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW / UNDECIDED

**Question # 5  **Electoral Reform

- The use of the ‘First Past the Post (FPTP)’ method of electing politicians at every level of government does not adequately reflect the needs and wishes of the voting population. Various other election models can be considered (ie. ranked ballot, proportional representation).
- At every level of government voter turn – out is pathetically and unacceptably poor. Mandatory voting has successfully been implemented in other democratic countries.
- Many other jurisdictions have implemented term limits for elected officials so that new thinking can be infused in the government and potential conflicts and biases of sitting representatives lessened with a new election.

- DO YOU AGREE THAT, AFTER APPROPRIATE STUDY:  
  1. A DIFFERENT MODEL FOR ELECTING POLITICIANS, AT EVERY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT, SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED?  
     X YES  __ NO  __ DON'T KNOW / UNDECIDED
  2. MANDATORY VOTING SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED?  
     __ YES  __ NO  X DON'T KNOW / UNDECIDED
3. TERM LIMITS (IE A MAXIMUM OF TWO TERMS CAN BE SERVED) SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED?

___ YES  ___ NO  X DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED

- DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT:
  1. A NEW ELECTION MODEL?
     X YES  ___ NO  ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
  2. MANDATORY VOTING?
     ___ YES  X NO  ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
  3. TERM LIMITS?
     ___ YES  X NO  ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED

- IF ELECTED, WOULD YOU ADVOCATE IN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS FOR:
  1. A NEW ELECTION MODEL?
     X YES  ___ NO  ___ DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
  2. MANDATORY VOTING?
     ___ YES  ___ NO  X DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED
  3. TERM LIMITS?
     ___ YES  ___ NO  X DON’T KNOW / UNDECIDED

QUESTION # 6  A NATIONAL AGING STRATEGY
PRESENTLY ALMOST 15% OF CANADIANS, MORE THAN 6 MILLION PEOPLE, ARE 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER. IN 20 YEARS IT’S EXPECTED THIS FIGURE WILL CLIMB TO ALMOST 11 MILLION CANADIANS – 23% OF THE POPULATION. IN ORDER TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE THE ISSUES RELATED TO AGING CANADIANS BRAMPTON CARP STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOP A NATIONAL AGING STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH THE MANY AND VARIED CRITICAL ISSUES FACING AGING CANADIANS (SUCH AS HEALTH CARE, ECONOMIC SECURITY, PENSION / RRIF REFORM, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AGEISM AND ABUSE – AMONG OTHER ISSUES)

- DO YOU AGREE THAT A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, NATIONAL AGING STRATEGY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME?
  X YES  ___ NO  ___ DON’T KNOW/UNDECIDED

- DOES YOUR PARTY PLATFORM SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIONAL AGING STRATEGY?
  X YES  ___ NO  ___ DON’T KNOW/UNDECIDED

- IF ELECTED, WOULD YOU ADVOCATE IN YOUR PARTY CAUCUS FOR A NATIONAL AGING STRATEGY?
  X YES  ___ NO  ___ DON’T KNOW/UNDECIDED

GENERAL COMMENTS:

RIFF: The NDP will protect pension income splitting for seniors and provide RRIF enhancements. We will provide for the long term security of pension income splitting and of new rules that give retirees more control of withdrawals from their registered retirement income funds. The NDP has committed to a review of the RIFF requirements.

CETA and TPP:

New Democrats believe that the Government of Canada should aspire to transparency and accountability in trade negotiations. Regrettably, the Conservative government has failed to engage in
meaningful consultations with many key actors in Canadian society and left Parliament completely in the dark throughout the CETA and the TPP negotiations. Canadians have a right to know how trade policies are being negotiated, and Parliamentarians have a duty to defend the public’s interests.

While the TPP and CETA presents opportunities to build stronger, sustainable trade linkages with Asia and European countries, health advocates, such as yourself, have raised red flags about their potential impact on intellectual property standards and other important areas. While the full scope of the CETA is still not known, the Conservatives refused to let Canadians see a single line of the negotiated text of the TPP. An NDP government will closely scrutinize the text of any proposed trade deal to ensure that its terms do not unfairly disadvantage or compromise Canadians’ access to health care.

**General Comments:**

Tom Mulcair understands that for middle class families to thrive, we need to strengthen the basic pillars of our retirement system and assure Canadians that pension benefits on which they’re counting will be there for them when they retire.

Tom Mulcair and the NDP will ensure CPP delivers retirement security now and in the future. Within six months of forming government, Tom Mulcair and the NDP will convene Canada’s First Ministers to develop broad-based agreement on enhancing CPP and QPP benefits. We will seek agreement to establish key benchmarks and timelines for enhancements and ensure that any changes are implemented in a way that complements Canada’s economic recovery.

The NDP will also reverse Harper’s plan to raise the age of retirement for Old Age Security from 65 to 67. We will ensure your promised pension is your pension. We will ensure present and future pensioners are paid the benefits they have been promised. We will scrap the Harper Conservatives’ plan to allow employers to downgrade secure defined benefit pension plans for federally regulated workers into riskier, target benefit pensions. We will lift seniors out of poverty by boosting the GIS. We will target those with the greatest need, with the goal of raising 200,000 of Canada’s poorest seniors out of poverty.

As the number of seniors in Canada doubles over the next 25 years, our healthcare system needs to be prepared to meet the challenge of providing quality care at every stage of life. Seniors need timely access to ongoing quality care without having to go to an emergency room. But right now, 14% of acute care hospital beds are filled by seniors who don’t need to be there because there is no home care or long-term care available to them.

Wait times for long-term care beds currently average as high as 230 days with reports of seniors being moved to a nursing home up to hours away from home. Although most Canadians would prefer to die at home surrounded by their loved ones, only a fraction of Canadians have access to hospice palliative care and end-of-life services - 16 to 30% depending on where we live. Home care, long term care, and palliative care services need to be fully accessible, whatever a patient’s income, and provided at the same high quality and standards wherever they live.
Stephen Harper abandoned a strong leadership role for the federal government in healthcare, refusing to meet with the provinces to address important challenges and imposing reckless, unilateral cuts to funding. Under the Conservatives, hospitals are struggling with ‘Code Gridlock,’ with hospital beds occupied by patients who don’t need to be in stressful hospital care, but don’t have another option for care. In 2007, Stephen Harper disbanded the Palliative and End-of-Life Care Secretariat and stopped work on the national palliative and end-of-life care strategy, forcing too many Canadians to end their lives without adequate care and far from their loved ones.

A New Democratic government will invest $1.8 billion over four years to help provinces improve seniors care, including stronger home care, more nursing home beds and better palliative end-of-life care. This funding, which is part of Tom Mulcair’s plan to reverse Stephen Harper’s health cuts, can: expand comprehensive home care services to 41,000 more seniors, help provinces build 5,000 more nursing home beds; and establish a $30 million palliative care innovation fund to help provinces improve access to end-of-life resources, services and support.

A Tom Mulcair government will work closely with provinces, respecting their role in health care delivery, to target these much-needed resources to areas each province identifies as a priority.