

## Removing Barriers for Foreign Caregivers

WHEREAS the chronic shortage of affordable, accessible care for children, the elderly and persons with disabilities reduces labour force participation, especially in females, who disproportionately forgo paid work to provide care;

WHEREAS Canada has an aging population, with the percentage of persons 65 and over projected by Statistics Canada to increase from 14.4% in 2011 to 18.5% in 2021;

WHEREAS increasing the number of young, educated immigrants would mitigate the many harmful social and economic consequences of our aging population;

WHEREAS, in spite of the increasing need for affordable, accessible care, and the increasing need for more immigrants, the “annual entries” of foreign caregivers declined from 12,930 to 4,671 between 2007 and 2013 and the number of foreign caregiver work permit holders declined from 39,559 to 16,927 between 2009 and 2013;

WHEREAS reducing the financial and administrative barriers to hiring foreign caregivers would help meet the demand for affordable, accessible care while providing jobs and a pathway to permanent residency for foreign caregivers;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Government remove the requirement for a Labour Market Impact Assessment for foreign caregivers, reinstate the lower \$275 fee for a foreign caregiver permit, remove the annual cap on permanent residency applications by eligible foreign caregivers, restore the single pathway to permanent residency for foreign caregivers, restore the eligibility of foreign caregivers who have high school educations to apply for permanent residency and ensure sufficient administrative capacity to process the permit and permanent residency applications.

Kingston and the Islands Federal Liberal Association

## BACKGROUNDER: REMOVING BARRIERS FOR FOREIGN CAREGIVERS

### Removing barriers for foreign caregivers would:

- increase the availability of affordable, accessible care for children, seniors and persons with disabilities.
- increase labour force attachment, especially among women, who disproportionately leave the workforce to care for children, seniors and persons with disabilities.
- reduce demand for nursing home spaces because increased access to affordable, accessible care would make it safer and healthier for seniors and persons with disabilities to remain in their own homes.
- create more opportunities for motivated, hard-working, educated people from developing countries to obtain employment in Canada.
- allow more opportunities for foreign caregivers who meet eligibility requirements to attain permanent residency status.
- reduce the proportion of the population aged 65 or over. An aging population causes lower productivity, lower economic growth, lower revenue, increased burden for taxpayers and reduced quality of life for everyone due to cuts in services. The increase in eligibility age for OAS from 65 to 67 is just the beginning of the cuts that will need to be made unless immigration and birth rates are increased.
- remove the unnecessary financial and administrative burdens the Conservatives placed on employers and foreign caregivers.
- avoid the application backlogs that were created because of staffing cuts and the imposition of unnecessary administrative processes.

### Consultation

Feedback from non-Liberal party members was received at the riding's open Policy Committee meetings. The author also interviewed staff at Immigrant Services, Kingston Community Health Centres.

### Unmet demand for care:

There are over 6,000 current unfilled vacancies for NOC code 6471 (Homemakers, housekeepers and related occupations -- an old 2006 NOC code), NOC code 6474 (Nannies babysitters and parents' helpers -- an old 2006 NOC code), NOC code 3233 (Licensed Practical Nurses) and NOC code 3413 (Nurse Aides, Orderlies and Patient Service Associates) in the Government of Canada Job Bank.

**Note that there are errors in the NOCs the Conservatives specified for their so-called Caring for Children and Caring for People with High Medical Needs pathways to permanent residency:** NOC code 4411 (Home child care providers) is a new 2011 NOC code *not listed in Job Bank*, yet employment under that code (only) is required for the Caring for Children Pathway to permanent residency. NOC 4412 (Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations) is a new 2011 NOC code *not listed in the Job Bank*, but it is one of four NOC codes eligible under the Caring for People with High Medical Needs Pathway to permanent residency, with housekeepers excluded.

### Reduction in labour force attachment for women due to unmet demand for affordable, accessible care:

Lefebvre P and P. Merrigan (2008). *Child-Care Policy and the Labor Supply of Mothers with Young Children: A Natural Experiment from Canada*. Journal of Labor Economics, vol. 26, no. 3.

Johnson, R. W., and J. M. Wiener (2006). *A Profile of Frail Older Americans and Their Caregivers*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.

Johnson, R. W. and A. T. Lo Sasso (2006). *The Impact of Elder Care on Women's Labour Supply*. Inquiry 43: 195-210.

### The aging population:

Employment and Social Development Canada (2015). *Canadians in Context - Aging Population* <http://well-being.esdc.gc.ca/misme-iowb/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=33>

### Reduction in caregiver entries and applications for residency due to barriers placed by the Conservatives:

Employment and Social Development Canada (2013). *Overhauling the temporary foreign worker program*. [http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/foreign\\_workers/reform/overhauling\\_TFW.pdf](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/foreign_workers/reform/overhauling_TFW.pdf)

Employment and Social Development Canada (Oct 31, 2014). News Release: *Government of Canada Overhauls Temporary Foreign Worker Program Ensuring Canadians are first in line for available jobs*.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=859859>: "The new LMIA will require that employers provide information on the number of Canadians that [sic] applied for a particular job, the number of Canadians the employer interviewed and an explanation if Canadian applicants were not hired." "LMIA fee is increasing from \$275 to \$1,000 for every temporary foreign worker position requested by an employer." "Both pathways will have a cap on applications of 2,750 each year, for a total of 5,500."