Advocacy Priority for ACER – CART for 2018-2019 is “to participate in the 2019 Federal election by co-operating with other like-minded groups.

***ACER-CART will participate in the 2019 Federal elections by co-operating with other like-minded groups to protect pensions, to advocate for a single payer national pharmacare plan, and a federal Ministry for Seniors.***

This has certainly been initiated through the generous invitation of **RTO ERO** and **NAFR** (National Association of Federal Retirees) for **ACER CART** to join in facilitating in the ongoing aspects of **‘ VIBRANT VOICES’.** The other involved groups included:

* Canadian Federation of Pensioners
* Canadian Health Coalition
* Canadian Medical Association
* CARP
* College and University Retiree Associations of Canada
* International Longevity Associations of Canada
* National Pensioners Federation.

Collectively these groups have a membership of approximately two million.

**VIBRANT VOICES** Since the last call, Gerry and I had the chance to join representatives from the other organizations for an extremely well organized two days in Ottawa. Resources were well prepared, and then in integrated teams we visited approximately twenty-five MP’s to present the common priorities.

ACER-CART’s advocacy priorities that were part of the collective agenda include:

1. Advocating for **Pension (and Income) Security**, and oppose any legislation such as Bill C-27 which would jeopardize defined benefit plans.
2. Supporting a **Comprehensive National Canadian Pharmacare Plan**. (universal, accessible with one payer.
3. Calling for the **Implementing of a National Seniors’ Strategy**

Our other priorities for this year are:

1. **Opposing the Privatization of Medical Services** in Canada as an expressed threat to public Medicare in Canada.
2. Advocating for the establishment of a **Canadian Federal Seniors’ Ministry**. *(As this has been established, our interest is in seeing its effectiveness and involvement in establishing policy.)*

Attached are copies of the materials that had been prepared by NAFR:

* **Vibrant Voices 2019 Pharma Care**
* **Vibrant Voices 2019 Retirement Income**
* **Vibrant Voices 2019 Seniors Strategy**
* **Vibrant Voices 2019 Cover Pamphlet**

**DECISIONS TO MAKE:**

1. **Do We Use the Collective Materials or Adapt them to our own Format ??**
2. **Do We add a Section on Privatized Medical Services ??**

I had ARTA do a mock-up of a design and format based to the one used four years ago. This format works well in print, on computers and phones. We would take the agreed information from NAFR and format it into our own design, and look for other data to support the statements.

Gerry and I started on this work in Ottawa with the plan of running it past our Marg, JoAnn and others for editing and possible additional content. We would target for completion pre-AGM where it could be presented to members in time to incorporate it into their plans.

My recommendation would be adapt to our own format that would be shared with, and could be individualized by member organizations.

* **Attached – DRAFT ACER CART 2019 Booklet.**

Perhaps the **PRIVITIZATION** is a more of Provincial issue, even though more provinces seem to massaging various aspects into their programs. **DO WE WANT TO INCLUDE A PAGE??**

**UPCOMING:**

Bill and I have a conference call with Sayward Montague and Candace Jazvac of NAFR on Wednesday , the day prior to the conference call to discuss their presentation on Advocacy at our AGM. As indicated in previous communications Gerry and I were most impressed with their professionalism and competence in pulling together our Ottawa Adventure. Bill forwarded my suggestion that they could help us by covering the following areas in their presentation.

Their advocacy strategies including:

 a) logistics of their “War Room”
 b) development and prioritization of positions
 c) establishing key relationships
 d) resources training packets for team leaders and key contacts
 e) empowering members to become effective advocates
 f) everything else that I wasn’t smart enough to observe.

I think members will go away with a lot of good ideas to impact their Fall campaigns.

**LAST ITEM:**

In 2015 we had a second document which sought out **Positions of Political Parties on our Issues**. Do we need that document as well?

Before I bid adieu, I want to let you all in on a secret that Gerry and Bill are quite exceptional in terms of their knowledge and contributions, and I have to acknowledge the ability to bounce ideas off of them as critical to this report.

Gordon Cumming