



ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES ENSEIGNANTES ET DES ENSEIGNANTS RETRAITÉS  
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED TEACHERS

## THE POLITICAL ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT AGM 2024

### Committee Members

Lawrence Hrycan (Alberta), Chair  
Bob Fitzpatrick (New Brunswick)  
Grace Wilson (British Columbia)  
Katherine Snow (Quebec)  
Don Gabel (Saskatchewan)  
Bill Berryman (Nova Scotia), President  
Gerry Tiede (British Columbia), Pension and Retirement Income  
Sharon Penney (Newfoundland & Labrador), Health Services  
Marilyn Bossert (Alberta), Communications  
Roger Régimbal ACER-CART Executive Director

### Terms of Reference

The Political Advocacy Committee shall

- a) Develop and recommend to the Executive actions to accomplish goals and objectives established by the Board;
  - b) Monitor political issues and advise the executive or the Board on emerging issues relevant to ACER-CART;
  - c) Plan and organize political action if so directed by the Executive
- The Political Advocacy Committee, with its new format, met for the first time on December 15, 2023. The committee has been expanded to include the Chairs of the Communications, Health Services, and the Pension and Retirement Income committees, the President of ACER-CART, and the Executive Director, Roger Régimbal, making a committee of ten.

### National Pharmacare

- The committee decided to pursue only the National Pharmacare Program followed by "Ageing in Place."
- A national campaign using the New Mode Software—easy to use and subscribed to by ACER-CART—commenced. The campaign, promoting National Pharmacare, began by posting on the ACER-CART website a letter from President Bill Berryman, explaining the importance of a National Pharmacare Program.
- The content of the letter that would go to elected officials was prepared and, thanks to Tony Esteves (ARTA), New Mode went live. Member Organizations encouraged their members to

go to the ACER-CART website to access the New Mode letter that would go to elected officials—Minister of Health Mark Holland, Prime Minister Trudeau, MP Pierre Poilievre, MP Jagmeet Singh, Minister of Seniors Seamus O'Regan, all provincial Ministers of Health, plus provincial MLAs and MPs relevant to the sender's address.

- A second letter was prepared by President Berryman within days of the tabling of Bill C-64, followed by a third letter with more explanation on the implications of the proposed Act. All three letters can be accessed from the ACER-CART home page.

### **Ageing in Place**

- Ageing in Place covers a huge array of topics, and it was felt that no more than 3-5 areas should be explored. The Health Services Committee will work on 'Ageing in Place' and will bring to the Political Advocacy meetings what they feel are the top issues.
- It was agreed that when letters are sent to the Minister of Health, Minister of Seniors, the Prime Minister, and so on, that there should be a letter from the President of ACER-CART on behalf of its members. Individuals would also be encouraged to continue to send their own letters.

### **Dental Care**

- While National Pharmacare and Ageing in Place are the two main areas of concern, discussion did take place regarding the Dental Program announced by the Federal Government. There is concern for low-income people who cannot afford or do not qualify for the Dental Program because they might have access to a dental program. There is confusion as to how the government has laid out the program and no one is sure who qualifies and how the program will work.

### **Affiliations**

- It was felt by the Political Advocacy Committee that the National Pensioners Federation would be a good organization to have an affiliation with. Four provinces have affiliations with the National Pensioners Federation: B.C., ON, N.S., and SK. Grace Wilson from BCRTA is the representative in that province. Talks are continuing between Bill Berryman and Trish McAuliffe, from the National Pensioners' Federation.

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence Hrycan  
ACER-CART Political Advocacy Chair