



RTOERO's Ontario advocacy meetings focus on system reconstruction post-pandemic

Toronto, October 26, 2022 – RTOERO volunteers and staff met with Ontario MPPs and government officials during the sixth annual Vibrant Voices Advocacy event on Oct. 24 and 25. During virtual meetings on Oct. 24 and an in-person breakfast on Oct. 25, RTOERO Board of Directors, Political Advocacy Committee members and senior staff dialogued with MPPs about RTOERO's key advocacy issues:

- Seniors strategy, including addressing ageism, creating age-friendly communities and rights for Ontario's aging population
- Geriatric health care, including geriatric training, focusing on holistic, upstream care, transitioning systems to support aging in place and addressing elder abuse
- Environmental stewardship, including common recycling standards, environmentally sustainable transportation and safeguarding the water supply and drinking water

"Societally, we're at a defining moment," says Marsha Foster, chair of RTOERO's Board of Directors. "The pandemic exposed and worsened the deep cracks in our social service system. Older adults are one of the demographic groups falling through the cracks. This is a chance for collaborative system reconstruction."

Throughout the day on Oct. 24, the RTOERO team met with 17 MPPs and staff covering various ministries. Information packages were sent to all Ontario MPPs with background on RTOERO's key issues and urging collective action towards a more sustainable and just future for all Ontarians.

Notes Foster, "No one wants to go back to so-called normal because normal wasn't working. The question is, where will we go from here? What kind of society do we want to live in and leave for our grandchildren? What matters?"

In addition to advocacy, RTOERO focuses several initiatives on these key priority areas, including:

- Funding for research related to geriatrics and innovative solutions to support the social inclusion of older adults through the RTOERO Foundation
- Scholarships for post-secondary students studying fields related to geriatrics and supporting Canada's aging population
- Community grants to support and partner with local organizations to improve the lives seniors.
- Webinar series for members and guests to provide deep learning on various topics related to healthy aging, advocacy, environment and more

RTOERO is a bilingual trusted voice on healthy, active living in the retirement journey for the broader education community. With 82,000+ members in 51 districts across Canada, we are the

-more-

largest national provider of non-profit group health benefits for education retirees. We welcome members who work in or are retired from the early years, schools and school boards, post-secondary and any other capacity in education. We believe in a better future, together!

-30-

RTOERO media contact:

Sylvia Link, Director of Marketing and Communications, slink@rtoero.ca, 416-209-1249 (cell)