

2020/2021 Year-end Report of JSA Advocacy Committee to the Annual General Meeting September 23, 2021

During the last year, from September 2020 to September 2021, the Advocacy Committee has been very active. Among its initiatives are the following highlights:

- prepared and distributed a well-received Position Paper on the future of Long Term Care in the province and across Canada
- created an Advocacy Distribution list of people and organizations who will regularly receive Advocacy Committee communications; 1,000 +
- added a number of key members to our committee
- added Margot Beauchamp as a staff Advocacy Committee Coordinator, which has created organizational efficiencies and improved communications and collaboration with other community organizations
- held in-depth zoom meetings with Mabel Elmore, the provincial Parliamentary Secretary for Long Term Care and Seniors' Services; and with the senior staff of Deb Schulte, the federal Minister of Seniors
- sent JSA letter to both the provincial and federal governments commenting on their respective Budgets as they related to seniors' issues.
- wrote to the City of Vancouver and BC Housing about a proposed supportive housing project at 8th and Arbutus in Vancouver and the request to consider designing units for aging in place.
- responded to BC Transit's plan to reduce the number of bus stops in Vancouver
- increased collaboration with other seniors' organizations, highlighted by our initiating and leading a five organization co-hosted All Candidates Meeting on September 13, 2021.

Initiatives planned for the upcoming year include

- Creating a "Seniors Advocacy Council" with representatives from various seniors organizations who wish to have a coordinated, and thus louder, voice when advocating on common issues
- continue advocating for national pharmacare, including vision and dental care
- lobbying the federal government to to pursue a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons
- push for newly designed Long Term Care facilities
- explore different options for a menu of optimal seniors' housing choices

- research virtual health care
- advocate for digital literacy for isolated seniors, including free internet for those on low income
- combat "ageism" wherever it is found.

Respectfully submitted

Tony DuMoulin