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To: Julia Douglas, Clerk
Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
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Re: 2020 Pre-budget Consultations

Nearly one quarter of the Ontario population is being neglected, and this is costing Ontario taxpayers millions of healthcare dollars.

As of 2017, according to Statistics Canada, 22% of Canadians had a disability of some kind. Disabilities play no favourites. Anyone can have been born with a disability, and anyone of any age can be struck by illness or accident which creates a temporary or lasting injury. We're all one missed step, one fall or one medical complication away from disability ... As we get older, we're likely to have two or three types of disability. This is a **Public Health** issue

The **Living in Place campaign** advocates that the **Ontario Building Code be changed to require that all units in new multi-unit residential buildings be entirely *universal design*, so anyone of any age or ability can live there** and can continue to live there despite changes wrought by age, illness or trauma.

Universal design takes into account all forms of disability. At the same time, it makes life easier for everyone. (We all benefit from curb cuts, automatic doors, etc.)

Universal design makes sense financially. It is not expensive. When included from the planning stage, **universal design costs less than 1% more**. (It is renovations made to standard construction which are exorbitantly expensive.) In fact, **Accessible housing keeps people out of long term care, saving millions of healthcare dollars.**

There is **no** law in Ontario requiring that **housing** be accessible. The **AODA** does not mention housing. The **Ontario Building Code** only requires that 15% of new apartments be “visitable”, not accessible enough to live there.

In addition it's a matter of **HUMAN RIGHTS** - and the law. **The Human Rights Code legally takes precedence over all other legislation.**

Thus, the Ontario Building Code and the AODA are both in contravention of the Human Rights Code (which outlaws discrimination on the basis of disability). They are also in contravention of the Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Changing the Ontario Building code to require that all units in new multi-unit residential buildings be entirely *universal design* will cost the Ontario government nothing. Instead, it will save millions of healthcare dollars.

Kate Chung
for **Living in Place Campaign**