

## **Proud Vote Questionnaire**

On Thursday, June 2nd, 2022, Canadians will vote in the 43rd Ontario general election, electing Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in 124 ridings, including 5 in Simcoe County.

The results of this election will have a significant impact on gender and sexually diverse communities in Simcoe County and Ontario as a whole. We are sending all candidates representing the main parties in Simcoe County ridings, a list of questions about issues important to our community. We will grade and share the candidate's response.

### Policy Questions

1. What do you believe are the main concerns of gender and sexually diverse people in Ontario? What specific actions will be taken to improve the lives and wellbeing of gender and sexually diverse communities?

**Since the 2SLGBTQIA+ community isn't a monolith, it's difficult and perhaps even unfair to generalize. However, I will offer a somewhat informed opinion, based on both my own observations and the experiences reported to me by my allies in the community. These include, but are not limited to, the following:**

**First, experiences of discrimination, hate, violence, and economic challenges faced by 2SLGBTQIA+ members may adversely affect their psychological and physical health and well-being.**

**Ensuring an inclusive society, free from hate, violence, poverty, and bigotry is the ultimate goal, but as we all work to achieve that, I will continue to work to ensuring our governments and NGOs are urgently equipped with the necessary resources and knowledge to offer trauma-informed, mental health supports, which are accessible, effective and comprehensive.**

**Second, there are adverse economic impacts resulting from physical and psychological health issues, and from discrimination and marginalization, faced by the 2sLGBTQIA+ community. We must offer meaningful economic supports to offset such impacts, and I will work to advocate for such supports.**

**Finally, we need to recognize and thoroughly address the often multiple, overlapping (intersectional) forms of discrimination experienced by gender and sexually diverse persons, including racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia and/or biphobia, and I will continue to raise awareness about, and work to eliminate these issues in my advocacy efforts.**

2. Many gender and sexually-diverse youth haven't seen themselves reflected in the curriculum. Where do you stand on the current elementary and secondary health and physical curriculum, and how will you ensure that youth get the information they need?

**I commit to working with knowledgeable stakeholders to ensure elementary and secondary school curricula is geared towards the needs of gender and sexually diverse youth, so they will receive the information they need, delivered in an inclusive, safe and supportive environment.**

3. Trans and gender diverse people lack quality, accessible healthcare in Ontario. In what ways do you think the Government can better support access to medical services and specialists for trans patients in Ontario? In what ways will you bolster access to trans-inclusive healthcare?

**Publicly funded healthcare must be bolstered to ensure expanded, reliable access to all aspects of gender affirming, trans-inclusive healthcare, including counselling, medications, specialists, surgeries, etc. I will absolutely work to ensuring these services are available and accessible.**

4. The gender and sexually diverse community are disproportionately affected by mental health and addictions due to various social and economic factors. What steps will you take to improve our community's overall mental health and wellness?

**I commit to ensuring that mental healthcare services are completely covered through OHIP, and to creating an accessible system with round the clock access, improved access to children, youth and students, and expand care options for those with complex needs.**

5. Gender and sexually diverse youth are overrepresented in the homeless youth population. What specific steps would you take to address the gender and sexually diverse youth homelessness crisis in Ontario?

**Every Ontarian needs and deserves a supportive place to call home. Gender and sexually diverse persons require a "housing first" approach, which incorporates wrap around health services, appropriate to their specific needs.**

**Moreover, everyone deserves the financial supports to afford safe housing, where they can live with dignity. I have and will always demand Universal Basic Income, as a means to provide some of those financial supports.**

6. Many gender and sexually diverse people are concerned about moving into retirement communities, care facilities, or having at-home care out of fear of having to "go back into the closet" or because they fear they won't receive sensitive, informed care. How will you ensure

long-term care will competently accommodate and work with the gender and sexually diverse community? What steps will you take to improve long-term care for our community?

**All LTC facilities, whether non-profit or for profit, must be required to implement ongoing DEI training and operational standards and practices set forth by actively consulting 2SLGBTQIA+ stakeholders for their input. This must be done on a continuous basis. I advocate for implementing such informed protocols in LTC homes, practices which must be mandated through legislation.**

7. The repeal of the three-month MSM (“men who have sex with men”) blood ban has been replaced by another deferral policy that still primarily impacts men who have sex with other men. The new deferral policy ignores advancements in HIV diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, while also disqualifying some straight donors. What steps will you take to make blood donation fairer and based on science instead of stereotypes?

**I’m committed to the evidence-based removal of deferral policies, and to collaborating with public officials and community stakeholders to determine alternatives to such discriminatory practices.**

8. Do you intend on increasing support to HIV/AIDS organizations in Ontario or access to healthcare? If so, what will you do to increase support or accessibility?

**Yes. I will continue to advocate for increasing supports to HIV/AIDS organizations, and for access to appropriate healthcare, through my ongoing activism.**

9. What steps will you take to end invasive, and medically unnecessary operations on Intersex children?

**Intersex children must be given the autonomy to offer informed consent for any surgery. Doing anything else grossly violates their most basic human rights, and can result in irrevocable physical and psychological harms. I will advocate to legislate bans on all medically unnecessary surgeries on Intersex children.**

10. In today's world, reproductive healthcare, such as abortion rights is being called into question. What will you do to ensure Ontarians have access to abortion services, birth control, and contraceptives?

**I have and always will actively support and advocate for access to reproductive health services, including abortion, birth control and contraceptives, for all Ontarians.**

11. Gender and sexually diverse people are less likely to be hired or secure stable employment, and experience wage disparity in comparison to their cisgender (non-trans) and heterosexual

peers. What initiatives do you believe the Government can develop or support to reduce the rate of unemployment and underemployment in the gender and sexually diverse community?

**In addition to advocating for unequivocal wage parity, wage transparency, anti-discrimination, and DEI legislation, for all workplaces through Ontario's Employment Standards Act, I will continue to work towards implementing income supports across the board, including Universal Basic Income, and substantially increased OW and ODSP supports.**

12. Organizations working with or for the gender and sexually diverse community struggle to gain or maintain long-term, sustainable funding. How will you support organizations, specifically ones that provide important health and social services and ones that work in arts, culture, and heritage?

**I will continue to raise awareness for, partner with, and advocate on behalf of all organizations serving gender and sexually diverse community members, including, but not limited to those which provide health and social services supports, and for those which operate in the arts, culture and heritage fields.**

13. The principles of Truth and Reconciliation are important to address the impact of colonialism on Two-Spirit/gender and sexually diverse Indigenous peoples. What does your plan for Truth and Reconciliation look like? Will you implement the Calls to Action that are relevant to the Province of Ontario?

**By uplifting Indigenous voices and working together, we can build an equitable society, one which honestly addresses our colonialist past and present, and the impacts on Two spirit, gender and sexually diverse Indigenous peoples.**

**I absolutely support implementing all of the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as those set forth through UNDRIP and the Calls to Action that are relevant in Ontario.**

**If you'd like extensive, detailed information about the action steps I support, please go [bonnienorth.ca](http://bonnienorth.ca), click on the link to the Ontario Green's platform, "The Green Plan", and find all the details in the "Truth and Reconciliation" section, beginning on page 19.**

14. The rights of sex workers are important to the gender and sexually diverse community, with our community being well represented within the workforce. What will you do to help end the criminalization of sex work in Ontario, ensuring full labour rights and protections?

**I will continue to advocate for a comprehensive Criminal Code overhaul to decriminalize sex work between consenting adults. Moreover, I will continue to push for sex workers to receive full labour rights and protections.**

**In addition, I will advocate for protections and enhanced counselling and education services to assist sex workers who are trapped in the sex trade through trafficking, poverty and/or addictions, as well as ensuring financial supports to assist those wishing to leave sex work.**

#### Party Questions

Does your party have any openly gender diverse and/or sexually diverse candidates? If comfortable answering: How many, and in what ridings? Also, what concrete steps will your party take to increase the representation of gender and sexually diverse people among candidates?

**Yes, the Ontario Greens does have openly gender and/or sexually diverse candidates running in this election, as they have in all past elections, but since I haven't received consent to disclose their identities, I won't do so.**

**The Ontario Greens are actively committed to DEI, and has already and will continue to ensure increased representation of sexually and gender diverse candidates. In addition, directly as a result of a suggestion I put forward in my capacity as the Central Representative of the party, serving on the GPO's Provincial Executive council, the GPO offered generous financial assistance to assist all equity seeking candidates representing the GPO during this election.**

Does your party have policies and practices that are affirming of gender and sexually diverse people? If so, what are they? If not, will you commit to adding them?

**Yes. In addition to continuous and active outreach and recruitment of equity seeking members, staff and candidates, three years ago the Ontario Greens enshrined, in its By-Laws, a robust, comprehensive Safe Spaces Policy, as well as clear Codes of Conduct intended to reinforce DEI and Safe Spaces policies. These policies are the result of two years of consultation with experts in the field, including individuals from the Human Rights Commission.**

**Moreover, on a regular and ongoing basis, we continue to review and revise these policies, practices and procedures.**

Have your staff and volunteers been through training on gender and sexually diverse topics and issues? If yes, please explain. If not, will you commit to participating in training on an ongoing basis?

**Yes. As enshrined in our By-Laws, The Ontario Greens continue to offer and undergo annual DEI, Safe Spaces and Codes of Conduct training.**