



Senior Liberals' Commission • Liberal Party of Canada
Commission des aînés libéraux • Parti libéral du Canada

2018-21 POLICY CHAIR REPORT

PREAMBLE

At the 2012 Liberal National Policy Convention, the Commission recognized a need to refine its policy development process in order to enhance the engagement of Senior Registered Liberals (SRLs). It was decided that the policy process should develop resolutions that reflect older Canadians' interests and needs; are aligned with Party values and priorities; and fall within the jurisdiction of the Liberal Party of Canada.

Doug McDonald, SLC Policy Chair 2016-18, in his report delivered at the Halifax 2018 convention said:

“ ... with the support of the SLC Policy Committee, this goal has been achieved. That is not to say that the new process is perfect – it needs refinement. However, I believe that the SLC has made a significant contribution to ensure that the new LPC Policy process has met its' basic goals...”

- a) **Openness**
- b) **Transparency**
- c) **Democracy**

Evidence of that success was apparent in the results ...*“Four of the 12 highest ranked policy resolutions being debated in Halifax were developed by the SLC.”*

The 2018 SLC Policy report set out a **Challenge to the 2020 SLC Policy Chair:**

- Implement continuous engagement as set out by the LPC policy process
- Encourage implementation of priority resolutions
- Initiate activities toward 2020 convention
- Improve SLC policy process as per recommendations of the SLC co-Chairs, including:
 - Role of Sections, Clubs, senior EDA reps
 - Collaboration with EDAs and PTBs
 - Support from LPC

Introduction

Camylle Tremblay was elected SLC Policy Chair at the April, 2018 National Convention. However, Ms Tremblay stepped down and the position was filled by Maryann Kampouris in the fall of 2019. In March 2020, I was asked by the SLC Executive to take over the position. I agreed to take on the role, realizing that almost 2 years had elapsed without addressing the challenges that had been set forth in the 2018 Policy Chair report. The 2020 National Convention was rescheduled twice to November, 2020, and then to a virtual format in April, 2021, due to the pandemic. This gave additional time to implement some missed portions of the 2 year cycle and to continue to fine-tune the process, although it would not be without challenges in the time frame.

Key Steps in a New Process

National Survey – The cycle begins with a national survey of Senior Registered Liberals (SRLs) to determine the critical issues in the next election cycle. Given the lack of time, our SLC Policy committee agreed to use the six broad themes from the 2017-18 survey. They also agreed to accept the new concept of National Working Groups (NWGs).

Create National Working Groups/ Section Working Groups and Background Papers – 6 NWGS were set up based on the past issue themes. The Alberta and Ontario Sections, along with some other Sections had begun work with Section Working Groups (SWGs) and submitted a total of 7 resolutions.

Online discussion, blending and voting – A total of 13 resolutions, many supported by background papers, were submitted to LPCs' first dedicated online site - the **Open Policy Hub** - www.polilib.ca. The site provided SRLs the chance to engage in discussion and prioritization voting. The SLC recorded the greatest number of visitors compared to all Commission and PTBs. The process to identify the top 9 resolutions using this online system shows promise with some system adaptations.

Prioritization of 9 resolutions with focus on the top 4 – Following the prioritization of the top 9 resolutions, SLC submitted 1 Fast Track and the next top 3 resolutions (as directed by LPC Guidelines) for the final LPC online voting.

SLC 2020-21 Resolutions – Ranked by First Round SRLs Voting

All 13 resolutions and their background papers may be accessed at [www.slcal.ca/forums_under_2020-21 Resolutions](http://www.slcal.ca/forums_under_2020-21_Resolutions). (If you do not have access to the Forum email seniorliberalscontact@gmail.com).

Fast Track Resolution

1. Canadian Basic Income – Rethinking Canada's Tomorrow - (blended with *Caucus, LPCBC, LPCA, SLC*) - Conduct a cost-benefit analysis; explore streamlining current income supports; work with provinces, territories, and First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

Top 3

2. Long Term Care –(blended with *Caucus, LPCBC, LPCO, LPCNS*) - Implement national standards; person-centred care including accommodation, staffing levels, qualifications, and compensation; licensing and maintenance of LTC facilities; random inspections and annual public reporting; federal legislation protecting insured service, adherence to standards through inspections and reporting.

3. Stronger Provisions to Protect Employee Pensions in Company Bankruptcies - Create a company pension Insurance plan funded by employers insuring 100% of their pension liability; place pensioners ahead of creditors in bankruptcy; require companies maintain pension liabilities fully funded.

4. Affordable Housing for Vulnerable Seniors - Include in National Housing Strategy, funding for non-profit communities to increase affordable rental stock and support for local municipalities to do so.

Remainder of Top 9

5. Aging in the Right Place – A Matter of Life or Death - Improve community-care for older adults through: funding; standards; tax credits; qualified care givers; multidisciplinary care teams; support unpaid care givers; innovation in community living.

6. Community-based Redesign for Seniors Independence Care - Redesign senior care with local management and delivery; person-centred; publicly owned; community-based decision-making and delivery; empowering seniors' independence; wide-ranging options; defined standards; municipal engagement.

7. Lifting Canadian Seniors Out of Poverty -Increase the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to lift all seniors out of poverty,

8. Seniors Bill of Rights - Consult and engage with seniors to address the challenges and opportunities of ageing; ethical allocation of available resources; safety and security of person, food, transportation; mobility and housing; measurable standards; appoint an Advocate for seniors.

9. Equity in Employment – The Remedy for Systemic Discrimination - Assess age discrimination impact on the economy; ensure adequate remuneration for caregivers to the elderly; end discriminatory practices in federally regulated institutions; companies receiving federal monies adhere to existing equity legislation.

***note:** These top 9 resolutions are retained in the Party Platform database for 8 years. The SLC approved all 13 resolutions for Continuous Engagement (see below) including the following:*

10. No Worker Left Behind in Transition to a Low Carbon Economy – Investments in training and diversification to hydrogen-based sectors, electric vehicles and non-combustion uses of fossil fuels.

***note:** Developed by an SLC NWG, was submitted through NL PTB as their Fast Track.*

11. Converting Commercial Property for Senior Housing Programs - Bylaw allowing commercial buildings to be converted; rebates to retrofit commercial spaces; incentives to encourage builders; rental subsidies; incentives for landlords to allow senior tenants to remain in their dwellings.

12. National Telework Strategy – Invest in technology and communications infrastructure gaps; invest in employer innovation and retrofit; disseminate best practices.

13. Transition of Workers from Industrial to Knowledge -based Economy - Consult stakeholders on interventions for transition through education and training with financial assistance during the process.

Continuous Engagement

All 13 resolutions may be promoted by Section Policy Chairs and committees by engaging registered Liberals in activities, such as those below, promoting liberal values and facilitating forums to share ideas on these and potential future resolutions.

Continuous Engagement (CE) may include:

- organizing town halls, socials and/or community roundtable meetings
- follow-up on prioritized resolutions through advocacy , correspondence, preparation of policy papers,
- liaison with neighboring riding associations and local Commission representatives
- communicating government-led engagement opportunities and regular platform reports on LPC platform implementation by key stakeholders
- surveys on important issues within federal jurisdiction
- being active in local/provincial charitable cause
- other creative ideas developed by Commissions, PTBs and EDAs

In Review

With a new Policy Secretary in 2018, and the untimely passing of 2 visionary and influential SLC Policy leaders, (Doug McDonald and Greg Guptill), some steps in the SLC policy process, begun in 2016-18, were missed in the 2018-2020 cycle: the national survey; orientations for Section Policy Chairs and their committees, and orientation for incoming SLC Policy Chair(s). The SLC Guide is being updated with participation from Section Policy Chairs. The LPC has approved an online application to support SLC grassroots surveys, enabling us to do national and sectional surveys, and portending higher participation rates in the next policy cycle. These tools will allow us to begin the next policy cycle in a timely manner to achieve the following:

2021-23 Policy Process Challenges

- Finalize updates and approve the SLC Policy Guide; conduct orientation for SLC Executive
- Arrange orientation and training sessions for SLC Section Policy Chairs and their committees
- Implement CE process with the preparation of Section and SLC Action Plans
- Develop surveys using the software application recently approved for a national survey and implement the survey within 6 months of the National Convention
- Advocate with LPC for improvements to the online applications used to support the LPC Policy process.
- Promote the expansion of Seniors Reps on EDAs and engage them (as well as SLC Club Chairs) in the SLC policy process.

Respectfully Submitted:

**Judith Berg,
SLC National Policy Chair
April, 2021**