

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance
United for a Barrier-Free Society for All People with Disabilities

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Call to Immediate Action: Urge Key Members of Parliament to Strengthen Bill C-22, the Proposed Canada Disability Benefit Act

November 25, 2022

The Call to Action

Please email or call members of Parliament in the next two weeks. Press them to amend the weak Bill C-22, the proposed Canada Disability Benefit Act. Tell them to make sure that this bill will lift hundreds of thousand of people with disabilities out of poverty, as the Trudeau Government promised it would.

It's great that the Federal Government committed to create a new Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) for people with disabilities who are languishing in poverty. However, the weak Bill C-22

- Sets no minimum amount for the CDB or a start date for the Government to start paying it. It doesn't ensure the CDB is indexed to inflation.
- Excludes [almost one third of people with disabilities age 15 or older](#) from the CDB solely because of their age, and regardless of their poverty. The CDB can only be paid to "working-age" people with disabilities. Disproportionately, people with disabilities are seniors. Disability poverty doesn't end at 65.
- Gives Cabinet arbitrary power to make all the decisions if and when it wishes, over the size of the CDB, when it will start, how much if any it will be increased due to inflation, and who is eligible for it. It imposes no deadlines for Cabinet to ever act.
- Lets a future Cabinet unilaterally gut the CDB, voting in a secret Cabinet meeting.

Concerns about this bill are shared by 41 community organizations, spanning six provinces and people with diverse disabilities, who all signed a powerful [open letter](#) to Parliament. We list those organizations below. This includes more than the 37 signatories when we tabled this open letter in Parliament on November 4, 2022. Our concerns are also supported by a powerful [Toronto Star editorial](#).

The Trudeau Government has led some to think that money will get into the pockets of impoverished people with disabilities more quickly if Bill C-22 fixes none of these problems, sets no deadlines, assures no rights to people with disabilities, and leaves everything up to the Cabinet to decide at some future time. We respectfully disagree. Bill C-22 should give people with disabilities rights, not just a vague hope and lots of uncertainty. We want the bill to be quickly fixed and then quickly passed.

Use email and even Twitter to contact the leaders of all four parties in the House of Commons, their lead MP on this issue, and all the members of the House of Commons HUMA Standing Committee. That is the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. It's easy! We give you their names, email addresses and Twitter handles below. If you are part of a community organization, please get your members and supporters to all join in our blitz.

It is very important for everyone to write their messages to MPs in their own words. If an MP gets identical messages from a group of different people, they discount them. We offer you the key point to make here. However, please modify it, or add to it in your own words, so they get the message that you are speaking from your heart.

Tell MPs to amend Bill C-22 to strengthen it. They must put more specifics in the bill. Don't just leave it to the Cabinet to decide everything about who gets the Canada Disability Benefit, how much they will get, and when they will get it.

Please act now! We expect that the HUMA Committee will be voting on amendments as early as the start of December. The parties are deciding right now what amendments, if any, they will propose for Bill C-22.

Be sure to email and tweet to all the opposition parties (the Conservatives, NDP, Bloc Quebecois and Greens), as well as the Liberal Government. We need the opposition parties to step up with amendments if the Trudeau Government does not. Canada has a minority Parliament. The opposition can pass amendments to Bill C-22, even if the Liberal Government does not agree with them.

Do you want to learn more about this issue? Check out:

- The captioned 21 minute [captioned video of AODA Alliance Chair David Lepofsky's November 14, 2022 testimony at HUMA. It tells you all you need to know.](#)
- The [November 14, 2022 open letter](#) on Bill C-22, originally signed by 37 organizations (now increased to 41) from six provinces across Canada, that the AODA Alliance tabled with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.
- The [15 amendments to Bill C-22](#) that the AODA Alliance has requested.
- The [AODA Alliance brief to the House of Commons on Bill C-22.](#)
- The [AODA Alliance's guest column](#) in the November 7, 2022 edition of the Toronto Star, and the [powerful Toronto Star editorial](#) that day that cites the AODA Alliance's concerns with Bill C-22.
- The AODA Alliance website's [Bill C-22 page](#), which shows our efforts to strengthen this proposed new law.

Which Members of Parliament to Email and Tweet

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

@JustinTrudeau

Or go to the [Prime Minister's feedback web page](#) and fill out the form with your input.

Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

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Irek Kusmierczyk, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

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Signatories to the November 14, 2022 Open Letter to Parliament

The following is an updated list of organizations that have signed the [November 14, 2022 open letter to Parliament on Bill C-22](#):

1. [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance](#)
2. [Canadian Council of the Blind](#)
3. [Centre for Independent Living in Toronto CILT](#)

4. [StopGap Foundation](#)
5. Accessibility Hamilton Alliance
6. [Epilepsy Ontario](#)
7. [DeafBlind Ontario Services](#)
8. [Accessible Housing Network](#)
9. [CP Association of Manitoba](#)
10. [Canadian National Institute for the Blind CNIB](#)
11. [The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder – Elgin, London, Middlesex, Oxford Network](#)
12. [Access for Sight Impaired Consumers \(British Columbia\)](#)
13. [Poverty Free Halton](#)
14. [The Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians/l'Alliance pour l'Égalité des Personnes Aveugles du Canada](#)
15. [Ontario Disability Coalition](#)
16. [Barrier-Free Manitoba](#)
17. [Disability Collective of Osgoode \(at Osgoode Hall Law School\)](#)
18. [New Brunswick Coalition of Persons with Disabilities \(NBCPD\)](#)
19. [Citizens with Disabilities Ontario CWDO](#)
20. [Ontario Autism Coalition](#)
21. [Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children \(Also called Views for the Visually Impaired\)](#)
22. [Barrier-Free Saskatchewan](#)
23. [Advocacy Centre for the Elderly](#)
24. [Inclusion Action in Ontario](#)
25. [Abilities Manitoba](#)
26. [Autism Ontario](#)
27. [Balance for Blind Adults](#)
28. [FAIR \(Fair Association of Victims for Accident Insurance Reform\)](#)
29. [Millions Missing Canada](#)
30. [Canada without Poverty](#)
31. [Voice of Albertans with Disabilities](#)
32. [Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty](#)
33. [Canadian Epilepsy Alliance](#)
34. [Basic Income Manitoba Inc./ Revenu de Base Manitoba](#)
35. [Oakville and District Labour Council](#)
36. [Coalition Canada Basic Income-revenu de base](#)
37. [Thunder Bay Family Network](#)
38. [Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities](#)
39. [Citizens for Public Justice](#)

40. [Basic Income Canada Youth Network | Réseau canadien des jeunes pour un revenu garanti](#)
41. [FoodShare Toronto](#)