

# OCSCO OUTREACH

Ontario Society (Coalition) of Senior Citizens' Organizations  
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## OCSCO RESPONDS TO DRAFT REGULATIONS UNDER THE RETIREMENT HOMES ACT

Last month, OCSCO prepared a detailed position paper in response to requests for public submissions regarding the proposed regulations for the Retirement Homes Act,. The paper addresses how to maximize the safety, comfort and dignity of those who choose to reside in Retirement Homes. Below is a summary of OCSCO's position.

The areas of most concern to OCSCO are:

- ❖ Whether seniors will be equitably represented on the Retirement Home Regulatory Authority (RHRA).
- ❖ Whether the fees charged to licensees will be adequate to fund an effective inspection agency.
- ❖ Whether the mandated complaints process will be modified so that vulnerable residents, who depend on the care offered, feel safe to complain.
- ❖ Whether the minimum number of residents proposed in the Regulations (six) will be further reduced to protect low-income seniors who seek care in unregistered boarding-house type homes.

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For a full copy of OCSCO's response to draft regulations under The Retirement Homes Act, visit our website at [www.ocSCO.ca](http://www.ocSCO.ca).

For details regarding The Retirement Homes Act visit the website for Ontario Senior's Secretariat [www.seniors.gov.on.ca](http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca)

*Thanks to Ethel Meade for her work in this area.*

## OCSCO RELAUNCHES WEBSITE

[WWW.OCSCO.CA](http://WWW.OCSCO.CA)

OCSCO's new site supports our mandate to improve the quality of life for Ontario's seniors with improved resources, user friendly tools and an updated visual design. Bookmark our homepage for the latest news impacting today's seniors and check out our Upcoming Events. As always we welcome your feedback at [ocSCO@web.net](mailto:ocSCO@web.net).

## OCSCO CELEBRATES 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

OCSCO celebrated their 25th anniversary on November 9th, 2010, with a day-long celebration held in Toronto at the Latvian Canadian Cultural Centre. The anniversary celebration was attended by over 220 seniors from across the province who were treated to a diverse selection of speakers and entertainment.

The morning started with Bea Levis – a founding member of OCSCO – presenting a historical perspective of the organization. Following Bea, Senator Sharon Carstairs (Chair of the Special Senate Committee on Aging) spoke eloquently on the issue of aging in Canada. Her presentation was an impassioned plea for seniors to get involved to ensure that their concerns are heard and addressed – now and in the future.



*Senator Sharon Carstairs speaks at OCSCO's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

The afternoon session started with the presentation of the 2010 Dan Benedict Award for social justice to Amy Nelson.

Dan Hill, renowned Canadian singer songwriter, wowed the audience with his musical talents – playing some of his well-known songs. He also read excerpts from his deeply personal tribute to his father entitled, *I Am My Father's Son*.

Finally the event concluded with Lalita Sharma leading a brief session of Laughing Yoga. All attendees left for home with wide smiles -- courtesy of Lalita's unique form of yoga.



*Dan Hill performs at 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

## ONTARIO SENIORS' SECRETARIAT

Ontario Seniors' Secretariat (OSS) was established by the Ontario government in 1996 to meet the needs of Ontario's growing population of seniors. For more information about OSS and its activities visit their new website at [www.ontario.ca/seniors](http://www.ontario.ca/seniors)

## OCSCO FOCUSES ON PHARMACARE AND PENSION REFORMS

For 2011, OCSCO will focus on the issues of Pharmacare and Pension Reform. These strategic issues were selected at the October 2010 Board session which included a one day strategic meeting. Since the October meeting, OCSCO members have been extremely busy articulating and then advocating OCSCO's position around these issues. Position statements and papers have been prepared and are available for review at our website – [www.ocSCO.ca](http://www.ocSCO.ca)

### OCSCO's Pharmacare Draft Position Statement

*The incorporation of Pharmacare into our public health care system would, to some degree, prevent the need for more costly kinds of care, making the whole system more cost-effective. Further savings are also available in a public plan by allowing the single payer to negotiate lower prices for the bulk purchase of the most frequently prescribed medications. By broadening the scope of our publicly funded system we can, therefore, make it more sustainable.*

### OCSCO Pension Reform Position Statement

*OCSCO supports improving the Guaranteed Income Security (GIS) to help the living condition of Ontario's current low income seniors. We also endorse expanding the Canadian Pension Plan to provide a support for younger people in the future.*

## MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

As a registered charity we do not receive core funding. We depend on donations to support the work that underlies our advocacy, educational programs, joint educational programs –computer training , counseling information and referral, research and policy development, outreach and other programs on behalf of the half million diverse members of the 160 seniors' organizations who are our affiliates.

Your generosity helps to send out our quarterly newsletter, organize our multi-cultural fairs, advocate for senior's pension and pharmacare reform.

To pay your membership and/or make a donation:

Phone: 1-800-265-0779

Email: [ocSCO@web.net](mailto:ocSCO@web.net)

Web: [www.ocSCO.ca](http://www.ocSCO.ca)

# Save on Your Energy Bills

## ENBRIDGE'S FREE WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM HELPS LOW-INCOME CUSTOMERS

Enbridge Gas Distribution's Home Weatherization Program helps customers in financial need reduce their energy bills with free energy efficiency upgrades like draft proofing and insulation in walls and attics.

**To participate, you must:** have a valid Enbridge account and pay your own gas bill; own or rent a home built more than 25 years ago and heat by natural gas; live in the GTA, York, Durham or Niagara region, City of Ottawa, Counties of Renfrew, Prescott, Russell, Lanark, Leeds, Grenville, Stormont, Dundas or Glengarry, City of Peterborough or Kawartha Lakes; be either a beneficiary of certain government support programs or your total adult household income must fall below a certain amount.

Those who meet the criteria can fill out an application and send it to Enbridge along with proof of eligibility. A professional energy advisor will visit customers who qualify for a free

assessment. If the home can meet a minimum level of energy savings economically, contractors qualified to install the recommended upgrades will return to do the work at no cost.

The program can cut your energy demand by 30%. That means lower bills.

**For an application and details on eligibility if you live in:**

GTA, Durham or York Regions, call GreenSaver at **416-203-3106** or **1-888-885-3106**;

Ottawa area, call EnviroCentre at **613-580-2582 Ext. 4** or **1-877-580-2582 Ext. 4**

Niagara Region, call Green Venture at **1-866-540-8866**;

Peterborough area, call Peterborough Green Up at **705-745-3238 Ext. 202** or **Ext. 200** or **1-888-745-3238 Ext. 202** or **Ext. 200**;

or call Enbridge at **1-888-427-8888** or visit **enbridgegas.com/weatherization**

Feeling the heat when your energy bills come in?



We may be able to help.

Enbridge Gas Distribution offers a number of free programs\* for customers, including:

- Weatherization Program: Free energy-efficiency upgrades which may include insulation, weatherstripping and caulking for participating low-income homes
- Enhanced TAPS Program: Free energy-efficient showerheads, programmable thermostats and more for qualifying customers
- Winter Warmth Program: Financial assistance for those living at or below the poverty line
- Budget Billing Plan: Helps make monthly budgeting easier by spreading out natural gas charges over 11 months
- Golden Age Service: Special payment arrangements for seniors 65 years and over

\*Conditions apply. Visit [enbridgegas.com/winterwarmth](http://enbridgegas.com/winterwarmth) for details.

**"Did you know you can lower your natural gas heating bills by regularly cleaning your furnace filter?"**

For more energy efficiency tips, visit [www.enbridgegas.com/save](http://www.enbridgegas.com/save) or call 1-877-SAVE GAS