

March 29, 2016

The Honourable Bill Morneau
Minister of Finance
Department of Finance Canada
90 Elgin Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0G5

Dear Minister:

Re: Response to the Government of Canada 2016-17 Budget

On behalf of our 18,500 members, I would like to respond to the Government of Canada's 2016 budget.

First, we congratulate the government for having revoked the previous government's unwise change to the age of eligibility for Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement. While certainly many seniors choose to work past age 65, and while unfortunately many must, many who reach 65 are in dire need of relief from the rigors of work. For millions of seniors, eligibility for OAS/GIS will be the key to this relief.

Second, we reiterate our support for your government's commitment to a fully funded expansion of the Canada Pension Plan. Indeed, an expansion of the CPP will reduce our children's and grandchildren's reliance on the tax funded OAS/GIS. The current sustainability of the CPP, and the investment success of the CPPIB, clearly demonstrates the wisdom of expanding the CPP.

We recognize that you must convince at least seven provinces and that further study is underway. In the course of that study, however, we trust that the Government of Canada will not stray from expanding the existing CPP model. A mandatory, universal, employer/employee funded CPP is and should remain a fundamental element of Canada's just society.

Finally, we congratulate your government for your commitment to health care a matter of intense interest to retirees. We recognize that all provinces are struggling not only with health care costs but also with the need to innovate and to transform their health care systems toward more home and community based care models. Additional federal funding will help.

As always, we stand ready to offer further input at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William J. Harford".

William Harford, President

About the Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario

The Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario (MROO) was created as a not-for-profit corporation in 1977. We speak on behalf of 140,000 Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) pensioners and provide services to 18,500+ members.

MROO is the largest OMERS retiree organization and the only one with membership open to retirees from all walks of local government life – former union, non-union and management employees of municipalities, police and fire services, libraries, hydro commissions, school boards, health units, and other employers in the OMERS pension plan.

Our board consists of elected directors from nine zones across the province. We are an independent, non-partisan organization formed to voice the interests of OMERS retirees to OMERS and governments of all levels, represent our membership in legislative matters that affect retirees, and provide services that benefit our members.

Our advocacy focuses on the OMERS pension plan and retirement income adequacy, as well as improved home health care support for seniors. MROO offers its members health, dental, life, and home and auto insurance coverage; scholarships for members' relatives; and ongoing communication on retirement issues.

For more information, please visit our website, www.mroo.org.