



*The Honourable Kim Pate, C.M. | L'honorable Kim Pate, C.M.
Senator for Ontario | Sénatrice pour l'Ontario*

Statement from Senator Pate: From Pandemic to Election, Where Do Our Leaders Stand on Poverty?

OTTAWA, FRIDAY, JULY 23, 2021—With news this week of police raids on homeless encampments in Toronto, and as rumours of a federal election swirl, let's each ask our representatives and candidates what concrete actions they are taking to ensure equal and meaningful access to housing, economic, health and social supports.

For years, Canada's approaches to poverty and housing have left behind millions of people, particularly women, those who are racialized, Indigenous Peoples, and those living with disabilities. As this pandemic laid bare, racial and economic inequality have a dire negative impact on health. Limited resources mean people have less access to housing, safety, choices and opportunities to care for themselves, their families and communities.

Politicians and other leaders have spoken at length about inequities during the COVID-19 crisis but many—including [journalists](#) —are concerned this talk is not leading to vitally needed action:

“When the poor are seen to be in the way, they are criminalized, demonized and dehumanized. When they are politically expedient, they are invited to press conferences where they are asked to share their traumas so a party or govt can take credit for doing the bare minimum to help.”

Although redressing inequalities could move us to a more meaningfully fair, just and sustainable future, in addition to costing less than current poverty-entrenching policies, poverty issues are too often sidelined during elections because people without money cannot line political coffers.

Over the coming weeks, we will be reaching out on social media to engage with Canadians and encourage them to tune in to debates, town halls and other fora in order to ask and share the responses of leaders and candidates to questions about what they plan to do about poverty in this country.

Please stay tuned. Together, we can ensure vital issues of equality and inclusion are raised during the upcoming election.

- 30 -

For more information:

Emily Grant

Office of Senator Kim Pate

emily.grant@sen.parl.gc.ca

613-995-9220