

To: Community and Protective Service Committee
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2016

My name is Len Fluhrer, Current Chair of Independent Living Centre of London, Past ACCAC Member and ACCAC Conference Chair, City London and former President of the London Chapter, Canadian Council of the Blind and former LTC Blind Transit User and a brain cyst and stroke survivor. It is my understanding, that here tonight, the City of London is about to make changes to the transit program that is not only in violation of the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act** and the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, but also highly unsafe and dangerous to the well being of the current users of the CNIB/ LTC Blind Bus Pass Program.

I would also like to address false information repeatedly released to and by the various Press organizations by unknown parties of the City of London. That is that the Blind in London are allowed free use, no charge access to LTC. Not all blind and low vision individuals are allowed on their CNIB Cards to be permitted access to "free" LTC Transit by CNIB.

In order to do so one must first have valid CNIB Membership which carries a charge of \$25 every 5 years and then they must qualify via CNIB screening for the bus program which carries an additional yearly charge of \$10 annually. On every valid transit user CNIB Card is stamped Transit YES or NO. In addition to this in order to qualify for additional support of Para Transit, I and other users wishing to use para are required to submit to a mandatory physical at LTC Headquarters despite having already submitted a multipage form signed by my qualifying Medical Physician and eye care professionals clearly outline medical conditions. These medical exams are an addition expense for paper work every time agencies asks for them out of our pocket. No such qualifications are required in Europe in similar programs.

As our CNIB cards are not considered official ID, we are all now required to purchase and carry our Ontario Photo ID Card an additional expense of \$35 for 5 years and as two pieces of valid ID are required we are also required to purchase Passports formerly \$89 a year going up to \$120 for 5 years at the beginning of January. The expense of both IDs is not covered by ODSP. This photo ID card has been purchased by nearly 1.5 million Ontario residence 16 years of age and older who do not drive and is fully inclusive of all disabilities and persons without valid drivers licenses without their need for full disclosure to any outside 3rd party in regards to what ~~there~~ ^{there} disability or financial means ~~testing~~. ^{there}

The money collected by the Province for this program is in excess of \$52.5 million dollars. Nor does this card require submission to a physical exam, ~~means test~~ and personal medical history to a service provider ~~such as LTC~~. In addition the new carbon tax starting January as well will generate for the Province of Ontario some \$2 billion dollars in revenue transportation tax yet this money collected for transportation not headed towards LTC in funding of current LTC operations. Why not?

I feel the means testing proposed by LTC who claim they have a right to know is a violation of the **Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004** and provides a dangerous downhill presence that is currently eroding our health care system by providing providers vs actual medical definition of disability for the purpose of excluding groups the right of access to essential services. As a holder Ontario Photo ID card I feel I have the same right as a driver who, if they have a license must surrender it in order to be in possession of an Ontario Photo ID Card.

The need of additional means test for proof of qualification for programs to allow those of us marginalized by lack of drivers permit to me is demeaning to my my disability and clear act of this city to promote multi-tier double taxation on the Ontario Public with persons of disabilities and also to lump all disabilities into one category and fee structure which has far more dangerous overtones. This is contrary to the entire section of the Accessibility Standards **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005** section III. of the Act which recognizes clearly that there are different sometimes individualist needs for accessibility to already public funded services.

The current passes issued by CNIB are not capped, there is no restriction on the number of qualified individuals who are allowed access which is in compliance with the AODA 2005 and the UN Convention of Persons with Disability. Secondly, the CNIB Cards and Specialized Transit ID LTC do not openly segregate the users by financial need. It is my understanding that the new cards will carry a B for Blind and several other marking publicly disclosing an individuals type of disability in contrast to **Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004**.

The User Fee Act, S.C. 2004, a Federal Act does give this Council the right to apply a fee for service. This Act requires a regulatory body meet with the standards of other Countries in the regulation of said fees Article 4.1. f.

In Europe these standards are outlined under a single regulatory body information of which is available on Your Europe on their page of passenger rights. http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/passenger-rights/reduced-mobility/index_en.htm. And the UK Disabled Railcar Act. <http://www.disabledtraveladvice.co.uk/reduced-rail-fares-for-disabled-passengers.html>

This last act establishes equally of all disabilities (without means test) the rate of 1/3rd on: off-peak day singles and returns ticket price. The UK and Europe acts all allow for the present of an assistant of the users choice to ride free without registration which LTC currently required by their current regulations.

I believe the solution to this problem is one of compliance to our current rules and regulations both locally and international.

1. That LTC accept the Photo ID card as proof of compliance that I am not in possession of a valid drivers license and therefore by necessity require access to their public

service without the need to demand a means or additional medical testings which to me violate my human rights as a Canadian Citizen.

2. That the LTC comply with European rates inline with the User Fee Act 2004 and offer all Ontarian's in possession of a photo id card a 1/3 reduction fee cost the remaining cost to be extracted from the Province Ontario soon to be in possession of an excess of \$2 billion dollars of public funds from the emissions tax.
3. That for the 1/3 charge I and ~~the rest and hopefully~~ the rest of the members of the Canadian Council of the Blind, CNIB do openly recognize the danger to our membership. Therefore, as CNIB being the National Body for the Blind that we petition that sales and fundraising efforts of CNIB currently being put into research on the elimination of blindness be in part diverted form such efforts to provide a Canada wide fund payable once yearly to any and all transportation agencies so requesting payment for transport covering the 1/3 cost or costs currently requested by LTC and other transportation agencies. That that money being used to purchase by our membership at anytime a yearly pass made available by CNIB our National body. As a member of Independent Living Centre I urge other National groups supporting other disabilities to do the same providing full and equal inclusion to any and all Canadians without valid drivers licenses to public transit.

Thank you, Council.