

Ottawa Branch Current Advocacy Activities

In the lead-up to the 2015 Canadian General Election, federal public service pensions became a hot-button item for the federal public service retiree population. Under the slogan, "Honour Your Promise," your National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR) launched a pro-active advocacy campaign to protect our hard-earned pensions. The Ottawa Branch of NAFR played an important role in this campaign to influence the three major political parties and their platforms on this subject.

For 2017, the Ottawa Branch has added a permanent Advocacy Committee to its governance structure, given the strategic importance this activity carries for our membership. Keith Fernandez, who is assisted by members of the Branch Executive, National Office and volunteers at large, chairs the Committee.

Advocacy priorities for 2017-18 continue to focus on 1) the Bill C-27 Campaign, which would push employees of federal crown corporations and federally regulated corporations to give up pensions based on defined benefit plans in favour of target benefit plans; as well as 2) the need for a National Seniors Strategy within a Federal Health Care Accord. Ottawa Branch is also working to support a National Office initiative to ensure Canada's veterans (Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and RCMP) have the support and dignity they deserve.

Among the activities undertaken or supported by the Branch in 2017:

- Attendance at Town Hall meetings organized by local MP's to raise members concerns on Bill C-27;
- Attended joint meeting with Outaouais Branch and MP for Hull-Aylmer;
- Attended City of Ottawa celebration to mark National Seniors Day;
- Assisted National Office in organizing and undertaking a consultation initiative with Ottawa resident CAF and RCMP veterans; and,
- Meetings with other like-minded organizations (CARP and unions) to develop links that could be useful in raising awareness of NAFR and its positions.

Other foundational activities that are being undertaken by the Branch in anticipation of election year 2019:

- Working with National Office and the Ontario Advocacy Program Officer on NAFR position and information packages;
- Working with National Office to hold introductory meetings with local MPs; and,
- Template advocacy approaches that could assist smaller NAFR branches model similar approaches.

NAFR members have consistently identified pensions and health/dental benefits as top priorities. If you would like to participate in the Committee's activities, either on a regular or event-by-event

basis, please contact the Ottawa Branch office and provide your email and contact information. You can reach the Branch office at info@nafrottawa.com or by telephone at: (613) 737-2199.