



## Seniors' Advocate: Addressing the Complex Interconnected Needs of Seniors in Saskatchewan

### Executive Summary

The government of Saskatchewan is not addressing the needs of 20% of our population; the 200,000 seniors whose hard work and commitment to their fellow citizens and communities made this province a great place to live and work. Now, in their time of need, the Saskatchewan government is not providing them with the support they need.

While the government may have some information on some specific needs, it does not have an understanding of these needs and how they are interrelated because there is no one specific ministry to identify and articulate them. Consequently, the government is not able to develop the cross-ministry strategies to address these needs.

The first step towards developing the capacity to address these needs is to establish an office that can:

- Research and articulate the full range of the needs of our seniors,
- Identify the steps needed to address these needs, and
- Assist seniors to connect with the services they need.

Specifically, we must have a **Seniors Advocate Office** in Saskatchewan.

### The Solution

The establishment of a **Seniors Advocate Office** that can conduct the research necessary to build a co-ordinated action plan that addresses the interconnected current and projected needs of Saskatchewan seniors is vital.

The Seniors Advocate Office must:

- Be enshrined in legislation through an *Office of Seniors Advocate Act*.
- Be an **Independent Officer of the Legislature** reporting to the legislative assembly rather than the government. This would be similar to the role of the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth.
- Have a terms of reference, developed in consultation with community-based groups, that includes a mandate for individual and family advocacy and system navigation, policy advocacy, research, community outreach, and public education.
- Be accountable to the legislature and Saskatchewan people through the annual monitoring and reporting of actions taken and services provided for older adults in our province.