

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACTION ON HOMELESS VETERANS NEEDED NOW: NDP

OTTAWA – NDP Veterans Affairs Critic Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore) is calling for immediate action on the growing number of homeless veterans in Toronto and across the country.

A preliminary report from the City of Toronto cites new figures indicating that 15.6% of homeless individuals may have prior military service.

“This is an astonishing figure,” said Stoffer. “No one leaves the military homeless. It speaks to the very real gaps in federal government programs and services for veterans’ and their families.”

"The Conservatives obviously haven't lived up to their claims," added Deputy Critic for Veterans Affairs Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant). "They say they are adequately providing services and programs for our veterans—but these figures tell a different story."

According to the report, it is the first time that Toronto’s annual Street Needs Assessment survey has included a question on military service. Across the country the federal government has only put in place a patchwork of programs to identify and assist homeless veterans, but New Democrats believe a more substantial and nationally coordinated effort is needed.

“We encourage Minister Fantino to put the resources and personnel in place to coordinate a national response to homeless veterans,” said Stoffer.