

_____, MP
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
K1A 0A6

___ October 2013

Dear _____,

I am [the survivor of] a pensioner-veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces and I am writing to protest the rumoured increase in health care premiums for veterans.

Usually reliable sources have reported that the Harper Government is planning to double the premiums paid by pensioned veterans for Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP) coverage. There are currently over 110,000 veterans and their survivors who receive an average annual pension of just over \$24,400 – an amount that is barely above the accepted “poverty line” in Canada. If the rumour becomes fact, the increase will cost me more than I can afford.

Surviving spouses and we veterans depend heavily on the health care benefits provided through the PSHCP to supplement provincial programs. In our working years, we were denied the collective bargaining rights granted to other Canadian workers and had to accept terms and conditions of work and compensation that were dictated by Treasury Board as our employer. We believed that our government would respect its promise of affordable health care in our retirement years. There have been recent reports in the media that the Honourable Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board, is considering non-negotiable changes to the PSHCP that would effectively double health insurance costs for all federal retirees – including us veterans. This is a daunting and critical concern for seniors with fixed incomes who have a vital need for health care coverage. The most significant and negative impact of this would be felt by the most vulnerable retirees: those with limited financial means and serious health care concerns and needs. Some veterans may be forced to choose between health insurance and daily necessities, such as food, heat and rent.

The Government of Canada made a promise to its employees to provide retirement pensions and health care insurance as compensation for their services. We veterans have held up our part of this agreement during our careers, serving Canada with honour and dedication at home and abroad. Now the government, after benefitting from the services provided by us, is reportedly considering renegeing on its promises.

As one of your constituents and as a veteran who will be adversely affected if these changes proceed, I ask that you contact the Honourable Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board of Canada, and request that the Government of Canada and Treasury Board do the right thing: honour the promises made to members of the Canadian Armed Forces, both past and present; and abandon any plans that would be detrimental to the retirement and health care security of veterans, including the changes reportedly being considered for the Public Service Health Care Plan. The Government of Canada and the Treasury Board must honour and respect the dedicated service that was provided by more than one hundred thousand retired military personnel.

I thank you in advance and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY PROV. POSTAL CODE

CC The Hon. Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada and Member of Parliament, Parry Sound-Muskoka

Name of Your Member of Parliament

House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario

Canada

K1A 0A6

The Hon. Tony Clement, MP

House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario

Canada

K1A 0A6