

**Do you identify as a member of a 2SLGBTQI+ community?** No

**What party are you running with?** Ontario NDP

**What riding are you seeking election in?** Kitchener Conestoga

**What do you believe are the most critical issues for the local 2SLGBTQI+ community? If elected, how would you work with the local community to address these issues?**

Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are the root cause of all issues faced by 2SLGBTQ+ people. Housing and homelessness are significant issues in Kitchener-Conestoga. Additionally, many young 2SLGBTQIA+ people face barriers within the education system which impact their future successes. This is deep rooted and will require more than training to address. It requires a culture of celebrating and honouring the social identity of all students in a way that makes them feel welcome. Culture change does not come easy and requires a lot of advocacy and partnership with those in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community to address.

**Have you and your staff team ever participated in 2SLGBTQI+ Cultural Competency Training?**

No

**Systemic homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are still prevalent in Ontario, resulting in significant socioeconomic disparities within 2SLGBTQI+ communities. If elected, how will you combat homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia?**

Combating homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia requires a culture change. It will require hate and discrimination to become unacceptable. Empowering allies to speak up when seeing or hearing instances of hate towards members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is necessary. While I don't believe that training is the answer to most systemic oppression, many allies don't have the tools to speak up when they witness behaviour which devalues 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Combatting homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia also requires leaders to stand up against this kind of behaviour and stand with 2SLGBTQIA people by listening to their recommendations and experiences. While I have family members that identify as 2SLGBTQ+, I cannot possibly 'know' that experience. I cannot make assumptions about what is needed. I will always take a 'nothing for us without us' approach.

**If elected, how would you address the ongoing issues of homelessness and mental health, especially as they disproportionately affect members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community?**

The root cause of both these issues is homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. These forms of hate, specifically, limit housing and employment opportunities for 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The results are that homelessness is a common pathway. The shelter system does not often provide safe, affirming spaces, so living rough is often the only option. Providing funding and resources to the service providers that support people experiencing homelessness is one way to empower 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The NDP are committed to funding and increasing shelter spaces and wraparound services for queer, trans and gender diverse youth in need. While necessary, that funding is a band aid solution if we don't address the systemic barriers in housing and employment as a root cause of homelessness. Trans people are more likely to experience marginalization by those systems.

If you didn't have a mental health issue before you experience precarious housing or homelessness, this would most certainly cause mental health issues. The NDP wants to ensure that primary healthcare providers are representative of the broader community by recruiting 2SLGBTQIA+ providers are available, paid well, and available.

**Do you agree with the statement that “trans rights are human rights, and must be protected as such?”**

Yes

**If elected, do you commit to supporting the creation of a Provincial 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat and the appointment of a Parliamentary Special Advisor on 2SLGBTQI+ Issues?**

Yes

**If elected, do you commit to supporting the expansion of current Ontario public health insurance to include all medically necessary gender-affirming care procedures?**

Yes

**If elected, do you commit to supporting the creation of a dedicated funding program of no less than \$25 million a year, for 2SLGBTQI+ social and community services?**

Yes