



VETERANS

Standing Behind the
Men and Women Who
Sacrificed For Our Country

Issue

The Canadian Armed Forces has a proud history and is one of the most capable and respected military forces in the world.

Unfortunately, successive Liberal and Conservative governments have largely chosen to forget this proud history. They have starved our military forces of funds, equipment and support, and broken their trust with those who made an exceptional personal commitment to put life and limb at risk in the interests of the nation.

The backbone of any military is the character of the men and women who serve. The fastest way to demoralize and undermine a country's military is to fail to look after injured soldiers when they return home or to provide for the families of those who did not make it back.

Facts

Until 2006, veterans injured or disabled during military service received a tax-free lifetime disability pension under the *Pension Act*, as determined by a veteran's disability assessment, including support and survivor benefits for spouses and dependent children.

On April 1, 2006, the New Veterans Charter replaced those pensions with a one-time lump sum disability payout that is wholly inadequate, leaving many injured and disabled veterans in dire financial straits. It created two classes of veterans.

The Trudeau government campaigned on the re-establishment of a lifelong disability pension, a "Pension For Life", which actually amounts to a hodgepodge of existing benefits recycled and repackaged as something new. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has calculated that the Pension for Life provides the average veteran lifetime payments less than one third of what would have been provided under the *Pension Act*. Moreover, it has become increasingly difficult for veterans to navigate all the programs and obtain the benefits they are entitled to.

When a veteran who had lost a leg asked Justin Trudeau at a Town Hall why his government was still fighting veterans groups attempting to get the support they were promised, Trudeau said: "Because they're asking for more than we are able to give right now."

Our Plan

The government of Canada has an obligation to honour the nation's sacred commitment to our military men and women, and ensure veterans and their families receive adequate recognition and benefits for the sacrifices they make, including care, treatment and fair compensation for injury or death and return to civilian life.



A People's Party government will:

- Recognize and respect the unique sacrifices of those who serve and have served in Canada's Armed Forces.
- Enshrine in legislation the country's obligations to our veterans in a Military Covenant between the government and those who serve in the Armed Forces.
- Reinstate the fair disability pension as previously provided for by the *Pension Act*. The pension will apply retroactively to 2006 and lump sum payments received since then will be treated as advance payments.
- Instigate a line-by-line review of the New Veterans Charter (including the *Enhanced New Veterans Charter Act* of 2011), to determine which policies and programs should be retained, simplify the system and make it easier to navigate.
- Reemphasize the legislative guarantee of the "Benefit of doubt" standard under the *Pension Act*.

(Updated August 2023)