



CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING
FEDERATION OF BC



Provincial Election 2013

Tell candidates in your riding

YOU HOLD THE KEY!





You hold the key!

As we head into the 2013 Provincial Election we have to remind parties and candidates that they hold the key to an affordable, sustainable future for thousands of British Columbians.

Make your candidates understand they can unlock the solution to keeping thousands of low-income seniors, people with disabilities and other members in their homes. By working together, we can build partnerships that also build homes. Co-op communities, government and business can find solutions to the huge challenges facing BC families who need a little help putting a roof over their heads.

1 Maintain long-term rent assistance for low-income co-op members when federal housing agreements end.

The background

- Between now and 2017, one quarter of housing co-ops in BC will lose rent-geared-to-income subsidies for low-income members as their federal housing agreements end.
- Over 1500 households will face a crisis as their homes become unaffordable.
- By 2020, this number will climb to 3000 households.
- This will affect seniors, people with disabilities, new Canadians and others on limited or fixed incomes.
- Housing co-ops support diverse, mixed-income communities; but without ongoing rent assistance, their low-income members will be at risk.
- If these members have to leave their co-op homes they will be facing the most expensive rental market in the country.
- As federal housing agreements end and buildings age, we must work together to preserve these valuable homes and vibrant communities.
- From 2011–14, the federal government is contributing \$90 million to British Columbia to spend on housing. The Province must use a share of these federal funds to support low-income co-op members.

Key commitments needed

The next provincial government must:

- Maintain long-term rent assistance for low-income co-op members as federal housing agreements end.



2 Build more non-profit co-operative housing.

The background

Why build more?

- Co-operative housing is essential to the province's economic and social wellbeing.
- Co-op housing creates:
 - » **Community**—in a co-op home you know your neighbours, you feel safer and you are more connected to your neighbourhood.
 - » **Affordability**—housing co-ops provide housing that is at or below market rental rates.
 - » **Sustainability**—people can live closer to their work and avoid long commutes.
 - » **A Canadian Rental Housing Coalition report** shows that Metro Vancouver needs 6,500 new rental units per year to meet the region's demand. But the market delivers less than 10% of that total every year. It's a similar story for affordable rental housing across the province.
- Middle-income earners are getting missed in recent provincial housing investments.

Key commitments needed

The next provincial government must:

- Partner with the co-op housing sector to support the development of new, non-profit housing co-ops for low and moderate-income households.

It makes sense because:

- Housing co-ops offer an ideal partnership opportunity for governments who want to address the challenges of today's housing markets.
- Co-op housing is the most cost-effective investment government can make to develop and maintain affordable, community-based housing.
- Co-op communities are financially responsible, experienced stewards of government investment and deliver affordable housing options cost-effectively.

3 Use the co-op model to create affordable home ownership opportunities for British Columbians.

The background

- It is difficult, if not impossible, for working families to pursue the goal of home ownership.
- The co-op model offers the possibility of another form of home ownership.

Key commitments needed

- Partner with the co-op housing sector to explore the potential for co-operative forms of home ownership.

**YOU
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What you can do

Speak up during the election campaign and let candidates know about the many benefits of co-operative housing, including:

- Safe, secure housing in diverse, mixed-income communities.
- Civic engagement: co-op members get involved in the broader community.

Get involved

1. **Talk!** To your candidates—find out where they stand.
2. **Text, tweet, write!** Your candidates, media outlets, your friends on social media. Let them know what's at stake.
3. **Attend!** Go to all candidates meetings and ask questions.
4. **Tell us what you learn!** Start a conversation on our Facebook page or BC Talk, or send us an email.
5. **Sign on the line!** Get your candidate and other co-op allies to sign the pledge to support our goals.

Ask your candidates if their party will promise to:

1. Maintain long-term rent assistance for low-income co-op members when federal operating agreements end.
2. Support the development of new, non-profit housing co-ops for low and moderate-income households.
3. Partner with us to use the co-op model to create affordable home ownership opportunities for British Columbians.

Be in touch

Contact CHF BC at **604-879-5111 (1-866-879-5111)** and ask for Don Hauka, election campaign coordinator (ext. 134) or Darren Kitchen, government relations director (ext. 144). Check our website for election campaign updates and backgrounders at **www.chf.bc.ca**. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

