



News Release

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LEADERSHIP CANDIDATES AGREE ON NEED FOR ACCESSIBILITY LEGISLATION

Momentum Builds to Address Pervasive Human Rights Issue

Winnipeg – Both candidates in the NDP leadership race have promised, if elected, to enact accessibility-rights legislation. Greg Selinger announced that if he's elected, he will bring in legislation that would impose a deadline for Manitoba to become fully accessible to the Manitobans with disabilities. "One of the keys to achieving equality," Mr. Selinger said, "is ensuring all Manitobans can be equal participants."

Steve Ashton has also advised Barrier-Free Manitoba that he supports moving on legislation that will establish and enforce a time-limited framework for the removal of the barriers to accessibility faced by persons with disabilities and which puts a stop to the creation of new barriers.

These announcements were made mere days after the launch of *Fair Access for ALL*, Barrier-Free Manitoba's campaign to secure a government commitment to enact provincial accessibility-rights legislation during the next legislative session. "We are delighted by these expressions of support in the midst of an important leadership race," said Dale Kendel, a Barrier-Free Manitoba Steering Committee member "but we are also calling for a commitment to firm timelines for legislative action and we are seeking broad non-partisan support."

Ontario enacted barrier-free legislation in 2005. This historic legislation received all-party support and was passed unanimously by all members of the legislative assembly. "People with disabilities in Manitoba and all Manitobans deserve no less," says Patrick Falconer, consultant to Barrier-Free Manitoba.

To build on the *Fair Access for All* campaign's growing momentum, Barrier-Free Manitoba is holding a special Pen-to-Paper Kick-Off Concert tonight. The event will combine a celebration of Manitoba music and with the opportunity for concerned citizens to request the support of their MLAs for the timely introduction of this much needed legislation.

Barrier-Free Manitoba (www.barrierfreemb.com) is a non-partisan, non-profit, cross-disability initiative that was formed in 2008.

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