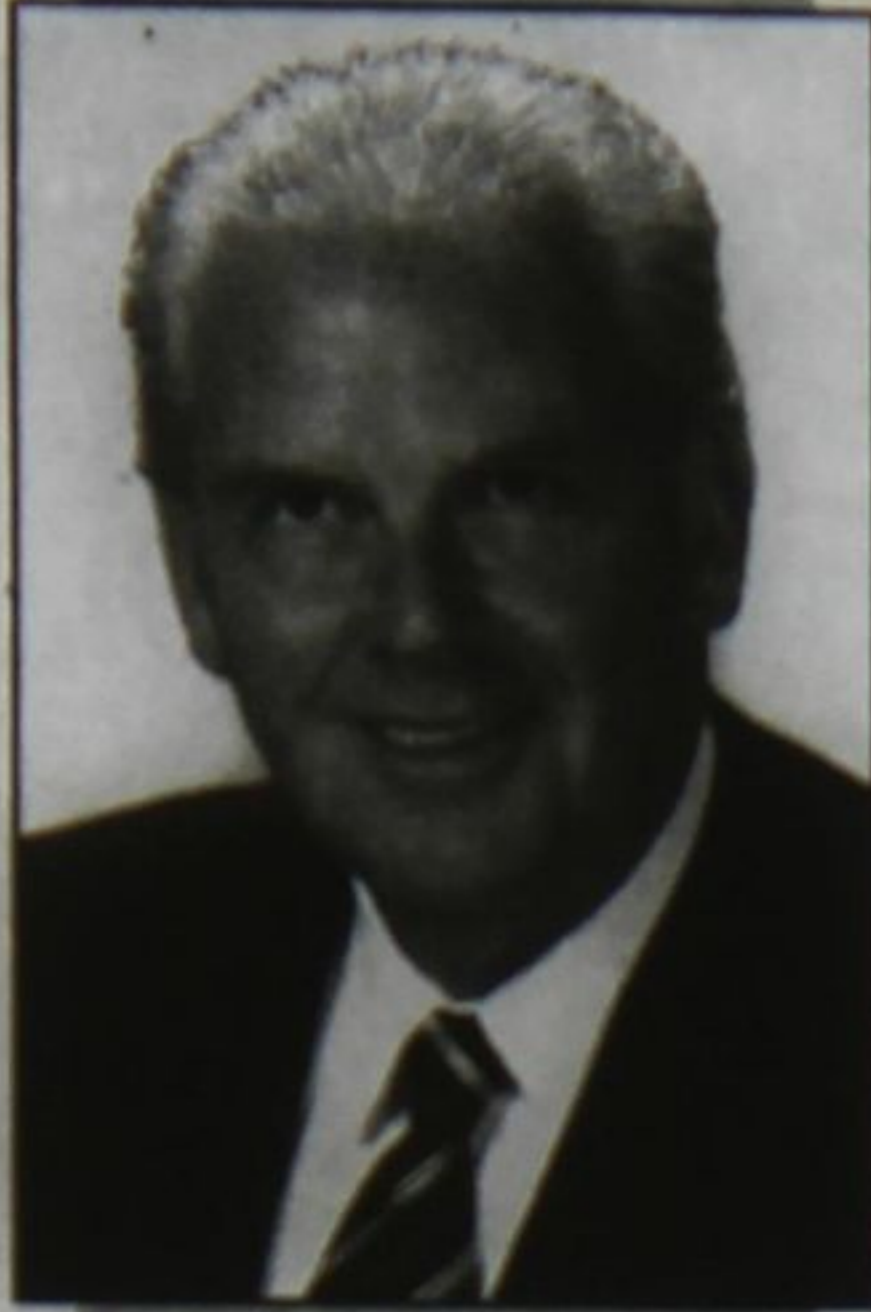


Free Press

ELECTION CANDIDATES PLATFORM



**PHIL BANNON
PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE**

I am running as the John Tory/Ontario PC candidate in Oak Ridges-Markham, which includes my hometown of Stouffville, because I believe that with strong leadership, we can build a better Ontario.

The issue I am hearing the most about across our riding is health care. Waiting lists are too long, there is a lack of family doctors, funding in York Region lags behind the rest of the province, and people are unable to access essential medical services.

Our party is committed to universal, publicly funded health care -- with predictable funding that is guaranteed to grow. We will ensure that families have access to a family doctor by increasing the number of doctors, supporting retention and repatriation efforts, expanding capacity in medical schools,

and giving doctors flexible alternatives to retirement. Our government would also provide catch-up funding for York Region and implement electronic health records to help protect patients and improve care.

With regards to education, instead of fixing fundamental problems, the McGuinty government has ignored them. Schools are run down, students are being left behind, and instead of raising standards for student achievement, the Liberals have lowered them. We will expand public education and increase funding by at least \$2.4 billion in the first term of an Ontario PC Government.

Our party also believes that we must move to a more sensible way to reduce class sizes. The key is allowing local flexibility so that school boards can decide the best way to use their resources. The current government's "hard cap" on class sizes resulted in more

split grades and greater use of portables, which is hurting students instead of helping them.

It is also important that we fight congestion in our area, while protecting the environment. John Tory and I have committed to investing \$1.1 billion dollars in transit and transportation infrastructure. Additionally, we will work to conserve green spaces, including the greenbelt in our area, which we will preserve with its present boundaries.

We will create a Land Conservation Challenge Fund to help people near the greenbelt deal with its impact, and to fund projects across the province that protect ecological features. We will also extend tax incentives for conservation easements and treat all types of conservation land equally.



**JANICE HAGAN
NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

I am Janice Hagan, your NDP Candidate. I'm 43, married, the mother of three and a Markham resident for 17 years. I work as a service coordinator and natural science teacher at Seneca College (20 years), and have been a local and provincial union leader in the education sector since the early 90's, specializing in complaint resolution, health benefits and accommodation issues. I have degrees in Education and the Study of World Religions, and just weeks ago completed a master's degree in environmental studies at York University.

The most critical issue in this election is our ecological crisis. Decisions we make as a community and a species over the next five years will either contribute to global efforts to mend and adapt to our shared (only) habitat, or result in further damage, lost opportunities and a toxic legacy. There is hope only if we act quickly. The business as usual policies of the

Liberals and Conservatives will not be enough.

The NDP will shut down coal furnaces and nuclear reactors, and ALL development on the Oak Ridges Moraine. We will fight to preserve greenbelts and farmland, including the Pickering Airport lands. Housing for York Region's exploding population needs to be intensified around southern, community centres, so public transit and other infrastructure can remain affordable and efficient. The NDP will assist communities improve green transportation and conservation efforts by providing more transit operating funds and loans for housing retrofits. The NDP will also support legislation to make producers responsible for wasteful packaging and force the identification of toxins in products and our community.

Eliminating toxins that cause cancer and other serious illnesses will reduce long term health care costs as well. So will returning public funding for preventative eye exams, chiropractic care and physiotherapy. The NDP will add public dental care to the mix for more, long term savings. We will also stop all private hospitals and expansions to ensure our tax dollars are spent on patient care, not profits.

The NDP is strongly committed to supporting both of our publicly funded school systems. We need to fix the funding formula, not stretch limited tax dollars thinner over several hundred new, faith based schools. We will lower tuition for college and university students and fund treatment for children with autism

HELENA JACZEK • LIBERAL

Major election issues locally and provincially

We live in one of the fastest growing areas in Ontario. We need to make sure that growth does not compromise the quality of life. Our services and infrastructure need to keep pace, and health and education are the top priority. It's vital that we continue to make large-scale investments in public transit to alleviate gridlock and improve our environment. We also need to expand our green space.

Future and funding of education

The Conservatives cut \$2B from our schools, teacher morale was low, and labour unrest cost our kids 26 million learning days. Under the Liberals test scores are up, class sizes are down and no school days were lost due to teachers' strikes. These improvements were possible due to a \$3.7 billion investment in our schools. In York Region, that's meant a 30 per cent increase to school board budgets, 695 new teachers and 18 new schools.

The Liberals are committed to making further improvements to our publicly funded schools. In contrast, the Conservatives want to divert half a billion dollars each year to private religious schools.

Future and funding of health care

Under the Tories, Ontario's health care was in crisis. Now Ontarians have faster access to health care; 500,000 more Ontarians have access to a family doctor; 8,000 new nursing positions have been created. John Tory says he can cut \$3 billion a year in health care funding without harming health care, but that doesn't make sense.

We need to continue fixing Ontario's health care system. The Liberals will continue to invest in public health care, expand our progress on emergency room wait times and surgery, and ensure that 500,000 more Ontarians have access to a family doctor.

Funding and implementation of infrastructure in the 905 area

The Liberals have made unprecedented investments in infrastructure. A five-year \$30 billion infrastructure plan has already funded the construction of hospitals, schools, roads and public transit. We'll invest \$60 billion over 10 years to ensure Ontario's immense infrastructure needs are met, and the McGuinty government recently announced a \$17.5 billion public transit plan in the GTA which includes expanding the capacity of Stouffville's GO line.

Preservation of the Oak Ridges Moraine

Under the Conservatives, rapid suburban expansion threatened the Oak Ridges Moraine. The Liberals have protected 1,000 acres of parkland in the moraine. We've also created a 1.8 million acre Green Belt that safeguards environmentally sensitive areas and agricultural land.

Helena Jaczek served as York Region's medical officer of health and commissioner of health services for 18 years. She has two adult children and lives with her husband, Hershel Weinberg.



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Stouffville Free Press asked Oak Ridges-Markham candidates to supply their views on the major election issues including education, health care, infrastructure and the preservation of the Oak Ridges Moraine.