

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 26 July 2010



AGE-FRIENDLY VICTORIA ON SENIORS' AGENDA THIS ELECTION

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria calls on all political parties in the lead up to the 2011 election to make ageing a priority and commit to making Victoria age friendly.

An ageing population is the biggest unprecedented demographic and societal change in Victoria this century. By next year, one in five Victorians will be aged 60 or over; a ratio set to grow to 1 in 4 by 2021.

“Ageing is going to affect every facet of society, from transportation to housing to workplace laws; yet catering for ageing Victorians is seen as a health and aged care issue,” said Sue Hendy, Chief Executive Officer, COTA Victoria.

“Victoria has the opportunity to be Australia’s most age-friendly state through a collaborative interdepartmental approach to coordinating policies on issues of ageing; we can be at the forefront in addressing the biggest demographic opportunity in decades.”

COTA Victoria urges policy and decision-makers to put in place strategies and policies that consider the needs of older Victorians in every aspect, and ensure that they will be able to experience an active, equitable, inclusive and sustainable ageing.

“Now is the time for our politicians and governments to recognise the urgent need to address the challenges the ageing of our population brings with it. But we want a government that embraces our ageing population as an opportunity, not a burden, with a positive and whole of government approach.”

COTA Victoria priorities for action over the next term of government are built on three pillars for achieving an age friendly Victoria.

1) Ensure equity and social inclusiveness through:

- Addressing age discrimination
- Improving access to information and technology

2) Deliver sustainable whole-of-government planning and community development in:

- Housing
- Transport
- Climate change

3) Improve health and well-being with focus on:

- Positive ageing
- Diversity of the ageing population

“Over 50% of seniors we surveyed say they will cast their vote after considering parties commitment to a range of societal issues including issues that affect older people,” said Ms Hendy.

“With 20% of the Victorian population above the age of 60, their votes and voices should not be ignored.”

For more information and resources on developing and assessing age-friendly policy initiatives, log on to www.cotavic.org.au or call 9655 2127.

The voice of Victoria’s seniors, COTA Victoria is the peak representative body of older individuals and organisations representing seniors. COTA is a non-profit organisation committed to human rights, social justice and the eradication of ageism – our mission is to mobilise older people and those who work with them, to age well in a just society.

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