BCRPVPA is a member of the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC or COSCO for short – **not** Costco the outlet store. BCRPVPA members are welcome to take part in any of the activities and are encouraged to volunteer to attend virtual/onsite meetings as a rep. Volunteer at info@bcrpvpa.ca

September 2026 Issue of COSCO News

The latest issue of the COSCO News is chock full of information about the upcoming **municipal elections, to be held on Saturday, October 17th.**



COSCO BC

COSCO News

Municipal Election P. 7-10

Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of B.C.

www.coscobc.org

Number 137 https://www.facebook.com/COSCOBC/ Sept. 2026

https://ca.linkedin.com/company/council-of-senior-citizens-of-bc-cosco

Update from the President

On May 26, it was my honour to experience the culmination of connections made at the COSCO BC conference in October 2025 and join together at the Senate of Canada with Canadian Senators, MPs and leaders of major Canadian seniors' organizations at a Forum **Leadership in Uncertainty:** *A Discussion on Human Rights and the Role of the United Nations in Old Age.* Compelling speeches from BC Senator Margo Greenwood, Secretary of State for Seniors, Stephanie MacLean, former Canadian Ambassador to the UN, Bob Rae, ILC President Margaret Gillis, HelpAge CEO Kahir Laiji, and international experts led directly to a crucial shift in Canada's position to support work on the UN Convention which is currently underway at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva through the Intergovernmental Working Group (IBWG) on older persons – *see Canada's statement later in this newsletter.* Through the work of COSCO's Human Rights Working Group led by Kathleen Jamieson, COSCO BC is coordinating activities with GAROP, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons, and the Canadian Coalition Against Ageism, and will be participating in the October meeting of the IGWG in Geneva.

COSCO BC is calling on the provincial government to reverse the increases in interest rates for Property Tax Deferment. This has put us in the news including an OpEd which appeared in the Vancouver Sun *(see reprint elsewhere in this issue)*. Thanks to all of you who've phoned and emailed your concerns and for the support of the BC Retired Teachers' Association for sending letters to the provincial government.

We continue to promote intergenerational collaboration and are grateful to John Stapleton for his thoughtful blog posts. In this issue he points that inequality revolves more around assets and wealth, rather than income. COSCO Executive members continue to meet with MPs and MLAs at various events throughout the summer and with BC Seniors Advocate Dan Levitt. We've submitted our requests to both the federal and provincial government budget consultations and have seen some movement on the issues of home support and property tax deferment. Events are moving quickly on many fronts, so please keep up to date by visiting our website and following our Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

Finally, please prepare yourself to meet with municipal candidates during the October elections and ensure the needs of seniors are met in our communities. Information and potential questions are included.

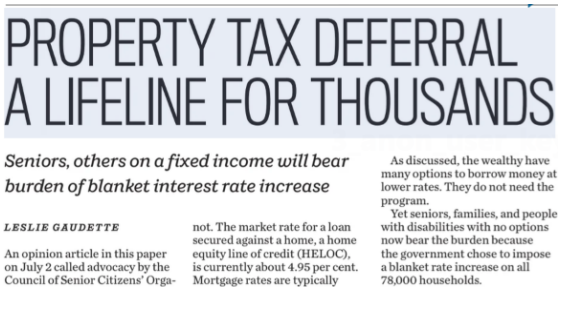
Submitted by Leslie Gaudette, COSCO president

View September 2026 COSCO News

Property Tax Deferment

COSCO BC has continued to be active in pressing the BC government to reverse the interest rates changes to the property tax deferment program.

We published an **opinion piece in the *Vancouver Sun*** and did an **interview on CKNW**. Visit our **website** for more info, as we work for changes to the program.



PROPERTY TAX DEFERRAL A LIFELINE FOR THOUSANDS

Seniors, others on a fixed income will bear burden of blanket interest rate increase

LESLIE GAUDETTE

An opinion article in this paper on July 2 called advocacy by the Council of Senior Citizens' Organ-

not. The market rate for a loan secured against a home, a home equity line of credit (HELOC), is currently about 4.95 per cent. Mortgage rates are typically

As discussed, the wealthy have many options to borrow money at lower rates. They do not need the program.

Yet seniors, families, and people with disabilities with no options now bear the burden because the government chose to impose a blanket rate increase on all 78,000 households.

Health Care Needs Home Care Campaign

After a successful launch on June 2, the Health Care Needs Home Care Campaign is evolving. Across BC, families are struggling to access affordable home support. Seniors are entering long-term care too early and hospitals are overloaded. We are asking for the co-payments on home support to be removed, and we need your voice!



The need for change was acknowledged in the province's budget consultation report, and the campaign has enjoyed some good media attention:

- **The Early Edition with Stephen Quinn**
- **Global News**

To learn more about the campaign and to email your MLA, visit **healthcareneedshomecare.ca**. If your group wishes to sign up as an affiliate supporter, please use the contact form on the website.

BC budget consultation

COSCO BC made a **submission** to the BC budget consultation, recommending the appointment of a Minister of Seniors, programs to improve the economic security of low-income seniors, and improvements to publicly funded community health care so seniors can live independently.

We were pleased that the **budget consultation report** mentioned home support, property tax deferment, public transit connections, long-term needs, and other issues raised by us and our partners. We still await the recognition of seniors' centres as core community infrastructure needing sustained funding models.

National Housing Council consultation



COSCO BC also provided a submission to the National Housing Council concerning the lack of accessible housing in Canada.

Our recommendations included building non-market homes with accessible units and meeting the needs of low-income seniors for home adaptations and repairs, so they may continue to age in place. Read **our submission** for more information.

UN convention on the rights of older persons

COSCO BC continues to coordinate with national partners as the UN convention on the rights of older persons is drafted. We've met with a number of MPs to promote this work, and we were particularly happy to see that the Canadian government supports it (see article in the **COSCO News**).

Watch for more information as we approach the International Day of Older Persons on October 1, and the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Human Rights of Older Persons from October 26 to 30 in Geneva.

Social media

For up-to-the-minute information, please follow COSCO BC on **Facebook** and **LinkedIn**.

Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO BC) P.O. Box 228 - Mountain View Plaza Unit 505 - 8840 210 Street, Langley, BC V1M 2Y2 CA