



Coalition launches to bring good governance back to the Law Society of Ontario

Toronto—An unprecedented Coalition of experienced leaders in the legal profession launched today to contest the 2023 Benchers elections—and return good governance to the Law Society.

“The Law Society needs competent, representative leadership so it can regulate in the public interest. That’s why we formed the Coalition – to offer voters a clear choice to elect Benchers who reflect the profession and bring unparalleled experience,” said Atrisha Lewis, an incumbent Benchers from Toronto. “Coalition candidates reflect the profession’s diversity—where we live, what we practice, and who we are.”

The Coalition launched with 28 candidates. Lawyers and paralegals who want to join can visit its website—www.goodgovernancecoalition.ca—to express interest as it gathers a full complement of candidates.

“One of the most important responsibilities of the LSO is self-regulation - but this is at risk if we don’t elect proven leaders of the profession committed to governing in the public interest” said Greg Monforton, a Coalition candidate from Windsor. “We can’t split the vote this time and allow the FullStop slate to take over the LSO as they have threatened. Coalition candidates don’t agree on everything, but we do agree this election really matters and that good governance has never been so important.”

He said that’s at risk if the vote is split as it was in 2019, when the StopSOP slate (which now calls itself the “FullStop”) ran 22 candidates. While the slate only received about one third of the votes, it prevailed because the remaining two-thirds of the vote was split among the 95 other candidates. Monforton expects the FullStop will have a full roster in 2023.

He also pointed to divisive rhetoric of the FullStop that often side-tracks the LSO from its important responsibilities. As one example, last April the FullStop baselessly claimed that Critical Race Theory “reaches into every aspect of law society governance”, and that the LSO was captive to “woke ideology”. That same statement invited its members to form a majority of benchers to govern the LSO, and stipulated that its candidates “must be committed to advancing the broad platform outlined below.”

The Coalition does not believe the public interest is well served by the FullStop’s divisive politics. If elected, Coalition candidates will not be required to advance any platform, nor will they vote as a bloc. They will be free to vote as they see fit. The Coalition is not a political party. Rather, its candidates value different points of view, respectful debate and a return of decorum to Convocation. The Coalition is united in the belief that to fulfill the fiduciary duty of self-regulation, Convocation should be representative of the entire profession and must demonstrate leadership, professionalism and competency.

“We need to elect Benchers who understand their fiduciary duty and will execute it,” said Lewis. “Over the next six months, that’s the case the Coalition will be making. Because in this election,



lawyers and paralegals have a clear choice. Electing Coalition candidates will deliver an LSO that reflects their values, exercises good governance, and cherishes self-regulation.”

She said the Coalition will be attending and hosting events across the province, with a full complement of candidates released early next year.

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