

Honourable Elaine Ziemba

(b. 1942)

Former Ontario Minister of Citizenship



Elaine Ziemba, the first Polish Canadian woman in the Ontario Government, was a New Democratic Party member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from 1990 to 1995, and served as Minister of Citizenship with responsibilities for seniors' issues, disability issues, and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Elaine Ziemba was born in Toronto of Polish parents. She studied social work at York University, and was first elected to the Ontario Provincial Assembly in 1990. The same year, she was sworn in as cabinet minister in the first NDP government in Ontario. Her department implemented several significant pieces of legislation, such as the Advocacy Act, Employment Equity, Long Term Care, and reformed Ontario Human Rights Commission. Her other responsibilities included Eastern European trade relations, race relations, and justice issues. She served on several cabinet committees, including health care, social and justice, women's issues, and aboriginal issues. Ziemba represented the Ontario government in discussing trade and democracy issues with foreign dignitaries, especially from Eastern Europe. Under her advisement, a Trade Office was set up for promoting Ontario's trade with Eastern European countries.

Elaine Ziemba has been actively involved in the Ontario New Democratic Party, both as candidate and party member. During this time, she served as vice president of the party and helped write party policy. She also served as campaign manager in several federal and provincial elections.

Before being elected, Ziemba was the Executive Director of St. Clair West Services for Seniors, a nonprofit agency that provides home care services. She was also the President of Agencies Serving Seniors Association, and was strongly engaged in the activities of Toronto's Polish community.

Recently retired, she now lives in Kleinburg, Ontario.

Photos from top left clockwise:
• Elaine Ziemba, Minister of Citizenship / Photo: Tessa Buchan • With Lincoln Alexander, Lieutenant Governor • Having a good time with Ontario Provincial Police • Leaving the church
Other photos – Ms. Ziemba's archives



POLISH SPIRIT