

Senior fights on for his 'old' rights

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Gerol Alexander

An appeal by 71-year-old Alexander Gerol of Mississauga, who is fighting federal legislation on Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs), is scheduled for March 25 in Toronto.

Gerol said this week he takes the court date as a "good omen" since the day is the anniversary of "the Greek liberation from the Turkish yolk." Gerol was born in Greece.

The Orchard Heights resident is challenging a federal law which requires that anyone who turns 71 must either purchase an annuity or put their money in a Registered Retirement Income Fund. The court challenge is on the basis that the current provision is age discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights and should be eliminated.

In an earlier court hearing, a judge rejected Gerol's arguments and forced him to pay court costs, even

though the federal government hadn't sought payment for its costs.

That decision is now being appealed and Gerol's lawyer, Timothy Danson, is confident the ruling may be struck down.

Since Gerol turned 71 last November 11, about \$95,000 he has in RRSPs has been frozen. He has recently been told by the federal government that the funds will remain frozen until the court case is ultimately settled.

Gerol hopes that will mean that once he has won his case he will be able to use the money as he wishes which is the freedom of choice he has been seeking all along in the dispute.

Gerol's fight has garnered national publicity. He has won support, both moral and financial, from senior citizens across the country.