

Canada needs 'steady hands at the wheel' amid uncertainty, says Menegakis



Canada needs 'steady hands at the wheel' amid uncertainty on multiple fronts, and Costas Menegakis believes he has the experience to be part of that as Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill's next Member of Parliament.

Menegakis, who previously served as Member of Parliament for Richmond Hill in the government of Stephen Harper, is the Conservative candidate for Aurora's southern riding.

Over the last nine-and-a-half years, he says he's been 'very, very unhappy with what has happened in this country?' a sentiment he says he shares with 'a lot of Canadians?' and community needs a 'fighter' like him.

'We need to someone that can stand up to the community, that can fight for the community, that can deliver results to the community because, at the end of the day, it's all about service and certainly at the Federal level that is something that has been lacking in this riding,' he claims.

He points to a growing national debt and the rise of crime at the community level as symptoms of a greater issue.

'No matter what we say on a partisan political level, the fact of the matter is cars are being stolen out of people's driveways in Aurora and Richmond Hill on a daily basis. Just in the last two weeks we've had a home invasion in Aurora. We need to clamp down on these things and these criminals need to pay a price for their crime. You can't commit the crime in the morning and be out in the afternoon or the next day,' he says.

Having last served in Parliament nearly a decade and three Conservative leaders ago, he says he remains a Conservative 'because I believe in smaller government.'

'I believe in working for people,' he continues. 'I believe in focusing on issues that are important and delivering results for people. I want everyone to have a family doctor. I want everyone to feel safe in their home. I want young people to be able to save up and buy a home in the community in which they live. Everyone can see what has transpired over the last nine-and-a-half years has taken hope away from young families.'

He also says he believes Pierre Poilievre is the right man at the right time to lead the country.

The two men served together in the House of Commons and, in the process, Menegakis says he was 'always been impressed with him' as he was well-informed and asked important questions.

'He's been the most effective, in my humble opinion, Leader of His Majesty's Official Opposition in Parliament,' he says, rejecting

claims that some might find the Leader's line of questioning ?abrasive.?

?Governments should be held to account,? he says. ?We live in a democracy.?

Despite polls showing the Liberals pulling ahead of the Conservatives nationally, this apparent trend is something Menegakis says is not reflected at the door.

?People are fed up,? he says. ?It comes down to change, real change, meaningful change. It comes down to putting our country first. As Pierre has said? Canada First for a change. We need it. We need to think Canadian. We're a sovereign nation. We're never going to be the 51st state. That's just comical to assume. We need somebody who is strong, who is going to stand up and say, ?We have a country, it's called Canada, we're damned proud of our country, and we're going to defend our country in our negotiations?with our best friends, the Americans, and everybody around the world, by negotiating mutually beneficial contracts and agreements that will benefit both countries. This is not a one-way deal.?

Among Menegakis' top priorities should he be elected to Ottawa on April 28 is affordability. He says he will not vote for budgets ?that come in with \$40-, \$60-, \$80-billion deficits, especially when I don't see service or delivery of Canadians,? and part of that approach to affordability includes the Conservatives' plan to take GST off the sale of new homes of up to \$1.3 million for first-time buyers.

He also wants to ?clamp down? on crime with legislation that ?will keep criminals behind bars,? with tighter immigration policies coming in as a third priority.

?I would be a very strong advocate to ensure we have a responsible immigration policy where we welcome people, people that can contribute to Canada, and to their families, based on a similar formula to what we have had in the past ? quite simply that 65 per cent of new immigrants coming to the country have to come through what we call economic streams, someone who will have a working knowledge of either of the two official languages, and have a profession that is needed in Canada.?

?I want people to make a decision based whether they think they're better off today than they were 10 years ago and whether they want change to that or not, whether they want more of the same or they want some different action to make their lives and their families better,? he says. ?Vote for your family, vote for your community, vote for your community, vote for you ? what makes life better for you, irrespective of what Menegakis or Taylor Roy say? At the end of the day, look at your family and make a decision based on what's best for you and best for your community that you live in.?

By Brock Weir