

CHRISTINE'S CHRONICLES: 2019: A New Year For The People

By Christine Elliott, MPP
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I hope that everyone had a restful holiday season and that 2019 is off to a great start for you and your families. We are hard at work at Queen's Park and at the constituency office, making sure that we continue to serve the great people of Newmarket and Aurora, and delivering on our promises in 2019.

This January, we held two great community skate events in Newmarket and Aurora, and I participated in a roundtable on Autism, toured Southlake Care Path Clinic and met with Venture Lab at our constituency. I also had the pleasure of meeting with York Catholic District School Board and Epilepsy York Region.

Currently featured in our office is Aurora based fine artist Bill Lunshof. He grew up in a Dutch immigrant family and since 2016 has focused on painting old cars, trucks and buildings found in their natural state of decay. Each oil painting in the series has a unique story to tell and his paintings really resonate with people.

As of January 28, current artwork will be rotated out with new artwork coming in for the next four months, provided by SOYRA (Society of York Region Artists). We encourage you to come to our office to seek assistance or to admire the artwork on display.

As Minister of Health and Long-Term care, I have been busy working on our commitments to end hallway health care and make mental health and addictions a priority. I have been:

Prioritizing the health and safety of patients by taking immediate action and providing 128 hospitals across the province with funding to upgrade, repair and maintain their facilities.

Hosting engagement session across the province with health care leaders, front line staff and people with lived experiences to address the critical gaps in the province's mental health care system. These discussions will help inform decisions as we move forward with finally building a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system in Ontario.

We are making mental health a priority and working toward creating an Ontario where everyone is fully supported in their journey toward mental wellness. Our government is committed to ensuring that each dollar goes directly to services that will make a significant difference to patients.

We are committed to an Ontario where patients don't need to be in crisis to get the mental health and addictions treatment they need, when they need it. Our government will continue to listen to the people who plan and work on the front lines of our health care system. Together, we will create a sustainable health care system that works for the people of Ontario.

Our government has already made several announcements to kick off the New Year, including:

Taking steps to make life more affordable for taxpayers and businesses by putting a stop to driver and vehicle fees that were set to increase.

Delivering on our promise so all veterans and active Canadian Armed Forces members residing in Ontario can enjoy recreational fishing across the province without having to purchase a fishing licence.

Making our province more competitive and signal that Ontario is open for business with labour reforms.

Announcing that the Ontario government is helping 107 municipalities across the province expand or improve their public transit systems with Ontario's gas tax program.

Inviting drivers and consumers to share their views on how to lower the province's auto insurance rates as part of its commitment to making life more affordable.

I look forward to sharing more exciting news and announcements with you as the year progresses!