

Liberals need communicator for next leader, says MP Taylor Roy

The race is on to replace Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, and Aurora MP Leah Taylor Roy says whoever is chosen to take the helm in March needs to be able to communicate and connect strongly with Canadians.

On Monday, Trudeau announced his intention to step down as party leader and, thereby Prime Minister following an open leadership race that culminates in March. While local Liberal MPs have welcomed his decision as a positive step, Federal Conservative candidates have condemned the move to prorogue Parliament until the new leader is selected instead of calling for a Federal election.

'It's a day of mixed emotions,' said Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen in a media statement. 'I called for the Prime Minister to resign and did so reluctantly, but I do believe he made the right decision. I also believe he will go down in history as a very transformative leader who improved the lives of Canadians, particularly families and seniors.'

'He led our nation through the pandemic and I have always felt he provided great leadership at the time. We also need to acknowledge the leadership on climate change and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. Let there be no doubt that the Canada Child Benefit, \$10-A-Day Childcare, and the Canada Dental Care Plan are programs that have improved the lives of millions of Canadians. We owe a great deal to his leadership, but it was time for a change and a renewal of our party.'

While Van Bynen announced last year he would not seek re-election in the next Federal election, his counterpart in Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, MP Leah Taylor Roy, is committed to running once again. She said that while Trudeau's decision came with 'certain sadness as our Prime Minister has done a good job in many respects' there was 'a certain sense of relief that it is decided.'

The next leader, she says, needs to be someone who is a 'good messenger and really connects with people' at a different level.

'It is one thing to really be thoughtful about policies, the best programs to put in place, and the best path forward, and I think the Liberal Party has done a good job on that, quite frankly, [but] what we missed is how do we communicate that well to Canadians so that there is an understanding of what the program means, how it is working, and what it means for individuals.'

'I think we need somebody who has the ability to really communicate well and connect with Canadians so that the voter, that constituents, feel we're on their side, we're on the same team and I think that is really important. I don't want the leader to engage in the kind of behaviour we have seen from Poilievre, but I think we need someone who will stand up to him, just call it out and say when they are lying, 'Hey, that's a lie.' I think we have let too many things go because we don't want to engage in that conversation because we don't challenge or demand the truth from Parliamentarians, quite frankly, on the Conservative side; people are believing what they're hearing and we're not saying, 'That's not true' and trying to set the record straight.'

'It is going to be really important to have someone who will be respectful not only respectful of people, but of the institutions, and also be able to stand up and say, 'this is what's really going on, this is the truth,' and not stand for the B.S. that has been coming at us.'

MP Taylor Roy rules herself out as a leadership contender, but says she's looking forward to hearing the visions candidates put forward which will, she says, give Canadians a chance to vote for rather than against something.

'I am hopeful people will start to look carefully at what both parties are saying and offering and think about the impact of that not only in the short term, but on our country,' she says.

Set to challenge MP Taylor Roy in the next Federal election, whenever that comes, is former Conservative MP Costas Menegakis who has previously represented Richmond Hill. He says Trudeau led an 'out-of-control' government for the last nine years and Liberals are now focused on 'saving their jobs and fighting each other for power as the country spirals out of control.'

'The bottom line is these same Liberals want Canadians to believe that by taking out one of their own somehow absolves them of their unwavering support of numerous scandals, excessive government waste, and disastrous policies,' he said. 'Canadians have had enough and they want change. An election can't come soon enough

'This is the message I have received repeatedly from residents at the thousands of doors I have knocked on in Aurora and Richmond Hill. A common-sense Conservative government will get to work on day one to restore Canada's promise that hard work produces good paycheques that buy affordable food, gas and homes in safe neighbourhoods. Canadians need and deserve an election as soon as possible!'

Similar sentiments were offered by Newmarket-Aurora Conservative candidate Sandra Cobena who said 'nothing has changed' with Trudeau's decision to resign.

'Every Liberal MP and leadership contender supported everything Trudeau did for nine years, and now they want to trick voters by swapping in another Liberal face to keep ripping off Canadians for another four years, just like Justin. The only way to fix what Liberals broke is a carbon tax election to elect common sense Conservatives who will bring home Canada's promise.'

PROVINCIAL REACTION

Reaction to Trudeau's decision has come in from the Provincial level as well.

Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill Ontario Liberal candidate Jason Cherniak has called on Premier Doug Ford to nix any idea of an early Provincial election in light of the uncertainty in Ottawa and the upcoming inauguration of US President-elect Donald Trump and his proposed tariffs.

'I want to replace Doug Ford with Bonnie Crombie as premier, but right now he is in the middle of a majority mandate and we need him to show leadership,' said Cherniak in a statement. 'Doug Ford needs to end the rumours and threats of an early Ontario election and a second caretaker government that would put us at even greater risk following the imposition of tariffs. Instead, Ford should focus all the efforts of his government and the Ontario PCs on governing this province.'

Cherniak was acclaimed the Liberal candidate in Aurora's south riding last fall, and former Aurora Councillor and Ontario Cabinet Minister Chris Ballard is expected to be acclaimed the Ontario Liberals' candidate in Newmarket-Aurora this weekend.

By Brock Weir