

MP Kyle Peterson won't seek re-election

By Brock Weir

Kyle Peterson will not seek re-election this fall, the MP for Newmarket-Aurora announced Thursday.

Mr. Peterson, who was first elected to Parliament in 2015, said he was finding it "increasingly difficult" to find the work-life balance.

"It is the greatest honour to serve the best community in the House of Commons. I am truly blessed. However, after much thought and consideration, I have decided not to run for re-election in October. Of course, I will continue to serve as your Member of Parliament until the election.

"This has been the most difficult decision to make. As much as I enjoy being your MP, I am finding it increasingly difficult to find a balance between that role and being around for my sons, Kolton and Kash, who are now nine and seven, and are growing up fast, as kids tend to do. I want to be more than a FaceTime father. After spending much time with them over Christmas, and more recently over March Break, I know in my heart this is the right decision at this time."

In his letter to constituents, Mr. Peterson said he was "proud" to have served with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the entire Liberal caucus, noting, "I want to thank him for his support."

He also said he "looked forward to supporting the Party and the Prime Minister in the upcoming Federal election."

"I have made many friendships that will last a long time," he said. "There were many accomplishments, both on a national and local level that I take pride in. The Canada Child Benefit has lifted 275,000 children out of poverty. Our economy has created more than 900,000 new jobs. We have diversified global trade with CETA and CPTPP, and stood up for Canadians with NAFTA negotiations. We have lowered small business and middle-class tax rates. We increased support for veterans. We are taking steps to address climate change and have improved conditions in Indigenous communities. Locally, I was pleased to attract funding for students, for infrastructure, for innovation, for culture and for seniors. I was happy to attend hundreds of events, showcasing the vibrant and dynamic place we call home.

"I have been a Liberal since my early days at Western University in 1990, and involved in politics as early as high school at [Newmarket's] Huron Heights. I never thought politics should be overly partisan and I tried not to be. I have made many friends in all parties in Ottawa. To me, politics is about the people we represent. Every MP is there for the people that elected them. I tried to respect that regardless of which party they may be in. We

didn't always agree, but I always tried to get along.

?I was proud to have support from both sides of my Private Member's motion which will help promote the physical activity of youth. I do think we accomplish more working together.?

Closing out his statement, Mr. Peterson thanked his office staff and riding volunteers who worked on his behalf, as well as his family.

?I want to especially thank Andrea, whose support I could always count on, and who had to double-duty in the past four years as a parent,? he said. ?I know the boys thank you, too. They are lucky to have you. I will continue to work hard, and I remain dedicated to the people of Newmarket-Aurora.?

Following Mr. Peterson's announcement, social media pundits pointed to his decision to not seek re-election as another blow to the Liberal Government, which is still dealing with fallout from the SNC-Lavalin affair. But, speaking to The Auroran at the start of the week, Mr. Peterson reiterated his support for both the Prime Minister and the Party.

?I am still going to be supporting the Liberal Party, the Prime Minister, and I will work hard in the election on whoever the Liberal candidate is going to be,? he said, noting he will also continue to work hard for the community for the rest of his time in office, addressing constituents' issues, getting the recently introduced Federal Budget through the House of Commons, and supporting the government's legislative agenda.

?I thoroughly enjoyed being the Member of Parliament,? he said. ?I think I did my best to serve our community, to profile and highlight some of the positive stories that are happening in our community, and just do what I could for the people of Newmarket-Aurora. I never tried to be really partisan, always trying to be objective and consider all points of view to the best of my ability, but it was a great honour and it certainly was something I will remember fondly.

?What I have learned the most [during my time in office] is the diversity of our country, both in regional diversity, personal diversity and the diversity of perspectives and how there is always two sides to every issue and how you need to listen to both sides, I think, to make a good decision. There's not ever going to be unanimity on things, but you want to get to the best conclusion possible by listening to as many voices as possible. It was a fantastic experience for me. I gained so much from it and that's what made this a tough decision.?