

MP's REPORT: Welcome to Ottawa!

By Leona Alleslev, MP
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

I may be the person physically sitting in the House of Commons, but it is you who I represent and, therefore, you who should be welcomed to this new government.

I will be using this column to update you on what is happening in Ottawa, to highlight key issues in our country as well as our community, and to ask for your input on upcoming projects.

Speech From the Throne

The start of the 42nd Parliament was marked by the Governor General's Speech from the Throne. The speech united Canada's traditions with this government's vision for the future. It discussed the priorities of this government and provided me with my marching orders. The speech emphasized that we are committed to making Parliament more open and transparent. We will also work collaboratively with all levels of government to ensure that we create a strong economy without neglecting our duty to protect Canada's natural environment. One of the first orders of business is to introduce a middle-class tax cut as an immediate priority, which will benefit anyone earning less than \$200,000 annually.

Canada Summer Jobs Program

Our Government will be making investments in programs that foster and promote Canada's diversity and create opportunities for youth. One way we are committing to doing this is by doubling the number of work placements offered each year through the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) Program. This program provides wage subsidies to employers who hire full-time students between the ages of 15 and 30.

Not-for-profit employers are eligible for a 100 per cent reimbursement of students' wages (calculated at minimum wage) plus all Mandatory Employment Related Costs while public- and private-sector employers are eligible for a 50 per cent wage subsidy. For employers interested in the CSJ Program, please submit your application between January 4, 2016, and February 26, 2016. For more information, visit: www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/epb/yi/yep/programs/scpp.shtml.

Welcoming Syrian Refugees

Many residents have inquired about our Government's plan to welcome 25,000 new refugees from Syria by the end of February 2016. Rest assured that our Government is doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our citizens while also staying committed to our promises. All processing is done overseas, meaning all refugees have undergone health and security assessments before entering Canada. There will be 10,000 refugees landing in Canada by the end of December which will include a mix of government-assisted and privately sponsored refugees.

Over the next weeks, I will be working closely with provincial, municipal and community-level partners to help coordinate the resettlement and integration processes within Aurora and Richmond Hill. I hope to hold a Town Hall on this most pressing issue in January. Should anyone have further questions or concerns, or if you would like more information on how to sponsor a refugee and help with resettlement, please visit www.cic.gc.ca. The site is updated daily as new information becomes available.

Constituency Office

My staff and I are making every effort to open a Constituency Office in Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill in the early New Year. Please stay tuned for further announcements in the coming weeks. I thank you for your patience as we complete the transition process.

New Responsibility as Parliamentary Secretary

I received some exciting news last week which I am honored to share with you. Not only will I represent you as the Member of Parliament for Aurora-Oak Ridges- Richmond Hill but also as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement. I am humbled to be given this new responsibility and look forward to the positive changes I can make to this sector. I know my new duties will be challenging but I assure you that this new role will not take away from my commitment to serve you and our community.

Please Contact Me!

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me via email at Leona.Alleslev@parl.gc.ca should you have any questions or concerns about federal programs and services. I hope to hear from you and I look forward to serving you.