

MP's REPORT: What Does Your Member of Parliament Do?

By Leona Alleslev, MP

Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

I wanted to take this opportunity to give you a sense of my responsibilities as your Member of Parliament.

Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

The most important role of a Member of Parliament is to represent their constituents in Ottawa, and to discuss proposed policies and legislation with our community. To have these conversations, I host town halls, with our next one less than two weeks away. I look forward to seeing you at "Exchanging Ideas with Your Member of Parliament" on Saturday, April 7 at Richmond Green Secondary School (1 William F. Bell Pkwy, Richmond Hill, Ontario) from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to listen, engage, and envision what our country can become!

I also work in the constituency to help individuals in our community with specific issues or inquiries they have with federal government services such as old age security, passports, visas, or government funding, as examples.

Ottawa

When I'm in Ottawa, in addition to sitting in the House of Commons and participating as we debate proposed legislation I also sit on two House of Commons Standing Committees: the Citizenship and Immigration Committee, and National Defence Committee.

House of Commons Committees are important because they allow smaller groups of Parliamentarians to examine various topics in depth and with more resources and provide advice to Government through reports.

Citizenship and Immigration Committee:

At the end of February, I was appointed as a member of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. The Committee is currently examining the Immigration and Refugee Board's Appointment, Training and Complaint process and we have heard from private and public sector experts, as well as academics throughout the study. Our next study will involve settlement services, including how the government is funding employment services and language training for newcomers to Canada.

National Defence Committee

I am honoured to serve as a member of the National Defence committee, particularly because of my background and experience serving in the Royal Canadian Air force, and working in the defence and security industry.

This Committee has undertaken studies on Canada's Aerial Readiness, Canada's Naval Readiness, and we are currently studying Canada's involvement in NATO. As we face times of unprecedented global instability, this study is shining light on the importance of this alliance to our country, and of Canada to the alliance. One aspect of this study is Canada's involvement in Cyber Security with NATO, and it is particularly relevant at this point in time given what's happening in our world today. Because of this expertise, I was asked to give a keynote presentation at the Canadian Conference on IT Audit and Governance titled "War is Waged Without Firing a Shot? The New Battleground of Cyber Warfare." Stay tuned as I will post the presentation on my website to provide you with more details!

What is a Caucus?

Members of Parliament are also members of Caucuses. A caucus is a group of MPs who get together with colleagues who have similar interests and expertise to explore areas more in depth, meet with industry and other public sector groups, and advise government on particular courses of action. Caucuses can be based upon geographical regions, interest based topics, or political parties. I am a member of the National Liberal Caucus, Ontario Caucus, York Region Caucus, Rural Caucus, Pension Caucus, Seniors Caucus, Digital Innovation Caucus, and I am Chair of the Aerospace Caucus which I initiated, to explore critical issues facing aviation and the aerospace industry in Canada.

NATO

Parliamentary Association

Another key element of Parliament is our relationship with other parliamentarians around the world through International

Parliamentary Associations. These allow parliamentarians from different countries to discuss and share ideas around issues facing each of our countries. I am proud to be the Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association where I meet with parliamentarians from other 29 NATO member countries including the US, Germany, France, UK, and discuss defence and security matter facing our countries today. We meet regularly and together as the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, we submit declarations to our governments and to NATO itself.

This briefing on the many roles of your Member of Parliament is just that? brief! If you want to know more about what I do in Ottawa, in our community, or around the world, please contact me!

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