

OTTAWA REPORT

By Lois Brown, MP
Newmarket-Aurora

2014 Reflections

The New Year has arrived, making this a good time to reflect on the successes of the past and think of resolutions for the future. It is also a time to take stock of all we have to be thankful for - the importance of our family and the benefits of living in the greatest country in the world. So many of us have much for which to be thankful, and while we are grateful, we should also consider the circumstances of those less fortunate.

In Newmarket-Aurora, and across our great country, we have had a tremendous year. We continue to enjoy economic strength in a time when many world economies continue to struggle.

The overall federal tax burden is at its lowest level in over 50 years and the average family of four now saves \$3,400 a year in federal taxes. The work of our government to cut taxes and keep them low is helping Canadians to make ends meet. A recent New York Times analysis found that after-tax middle-class incomes in Canada?substantially behind in 2000?are now higher than in the United States.

Recently, we announced we will build on the measures that help Canadian families save.

We're doubling the Children's Fitness Tax Credit amount to \$1,000 (effective for 2014) and making it refundable. We're enhancing the Universal Child Care Benefit; delivering new support of \$720 per year for each child aged 6 to 17 and increasing support to \$1,920 for each child under 6. We're enhancing the Child Care Expense Deduction and we are introducing the Family Tax Cut, allowing couples with minor children to save up to \$2,000 through income splitting.

We've done all that while keeping Canada on track to return to balanced budgets in 2015. As we continue to take steps to control spending and deliver programs more efficiently, our efforts are paying off. We have the best debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, which is expected to fall to below its pre-recession level by 2017.

Since coming to office, our Government has also had the best job creation record in the G7 with over 1.2 million net new jobs created since the recession. These are overwhelmingly full-time, private sector jobs in high-wage industries.

A key part of supporting job creators, including the many manufacturing businesses in Newmarket and Aurora, is ensuring that they have global markets for the goods they produce. Since 2006, Canada has gone from having free trade agreements with only 5 countries to now having free trade agreements with 43 countries around the world.

2014 also saw Canada stand with our allies to confront the threat posed by ISIL in the Middle East, as well as respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Problems in one part of the world must be addressed, because their repercussions can be broad. We saw this by events in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Ottawa. As a result, a number of measures took place to promote the safety and security of Canadians at home and abroad.

Looking ahead, we cannot take these achievements for granted. We have a lot to be optimistic about, as we look forward to a new and fresh year for Canada. We will remain focused and on the right track for long-term prosperity and economic growth here in Newmarket-Aurora and all of Canada.

I look forward to continuing to represent your interests and priorities in the coming year. From my family to yours, I wish peace, health and happiness in 2015.

Canada 150 Logo Design Contest

Newmarket-Aurora post-secondary students over the age of 18 are invited to take part in the Canada 150 Logo Design Contest. The logo will become a key element in Canada's celebration of 150 years of Confederation in 2017 and help create a national, recognizable brand to encourage participation in this significant milestone.

The logo should evoke feelings of pride, unity and celebration, and reflect Canada as a diverse nation with a rich past and promising future. The winner will also receive \$5,000 and their work displayed in one of Canada's national institutions. Submissions for the Canada 150 Logo Design Contest will be accepted until January 23, 2015. For details on how to apply, visit www.Canada.ca/150.

If you would like to contact me on any issue, please call 905-953-7515 or visit my website at www.loisbrown.ca. I look forward to

hearing from you.