



# Jonathan Wilkinson

NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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## A Difficult Decision: Why I Support It

That so many of you have been vigorously connected to the TransMountain pipeline issue over these past months speaks well of our collective sense of duty as citizens to be engaged in decisions that affect our future.

I too have been vigorously engaged. No single issue has commanded more of my time and attention since being elected as your MP.

In August, I wrote in this column:

“Legitimate questions and concerns have been raised by people in North Vancouver – the most significant being:

- How the proposed pipeline expansion fits with Canada’s pledge to combat climate change
- The potential for spills in our harbour and questions about whether spills of diluted bitumen can be effectively contained or cleaned up
- The potential for increased tanker traffic that may have an adverse impact on marine life and, in particular, on the Southern Resident Killer Whale population”

My position, then and now, is that if those concerns could not be effectively addressed, the project should not proceed. If they could be, it should.

I believe they have been.

### Actions taken

The recently announced Ocean Protection Plan addresses concerns relating to spill prevention and response - including providing for a much enhanced Coast Guard role.

The government has committed to a comprehensive recovery strategy for the South Resident Killer Whales – something that is required irrespective of any decision relating to the TransMountain pipeline expansion.

The government undertook significant consultations with Indigenous communities and invested much effort to address concerns raised during these consultations.

Greenhouse gas emissions associated with upstream oil development are accounted for and fit within the government’s climate action plan - the “Pan-Canadian Framework on Climate Change and Clean Growth” - which is a significant step forward in the battle against climate change.

Our community’s concerns and long term interests were addressed and the risks were weighed appropriately against the economic benefits the project will provide and the national interest.

### Balancing risk and benefit

I would be the last to say that the risk of a spill is zero or that the recovery of the South Resident Killer Whales is simple. However, the measures the government has committed to taking, make these risks reasonable when measured against project benefits - benefits that include \$4.5 billion in government revenues (which will support investments required for the Canadian economy to transition to a lower carbon future and to fund services such as health care and education) and the creation of a transportation mechanism for oil that is far safer than rail.

In my role as your MP I did more than loudly articulate our community’s concerns – I worked very hard on contributing solutions to address these concerns:

- I was actively involved in the development of the Oceans Protection Plan and in the development of an appropriate recovery strategy for the South Resident Killer Whale population.
- I strongly raised the concerns of the two First Nations on the North Shore and worked to facilitate their engagement with relevant Ministers.
- I was closely involved in the development of the Pan Canadian Framework. Addressing climate change is something to which I have dedicated the past 20 years of my life as an executive in the Cleantech industry and now as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

At the end of the day, the federal government made a difficult decision – but a decision that is grounded in evidence and an appropriate consideration of the national interest.

When I was elected, I promised to be transparent and accountable for the positions I take as your MP. That’s why I’ve posted on my website a thorough and detailed 9-page “Open Letter to the Constituents of North Vancouver” outlining my journey to this decision. You can find the letter at <http://jwilkinson.liberal.ca/news-nouvelles/transmountainexpansion/>.

I encourage you to take a few moments to read it, consider it and continue to provide me with your input as we move forward.

*Sponsored by the North Vancouver Federal Liberal Association,  
Liberal Party of Canada  
PO Box 38585 Metropolitan PO,  
N. Van. V7M 3N1*

### CONTACT INFO:

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE: 102 West 3rd Street, North Vancouver  
EMAIL: [Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca) | TEL: 604-775-6333