



# Jonathan Wilkinson

NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

## Our Community's Response

Of late, we have all been preoccupied by the challenges posed by COVID-19. North Vancouverites (and Canadians more generally) are, of course, worried about the well-being of loved ones and our communities.

Over these past weeks, the federal government, working in close collaboration with all provinces and territories, has taken steps to address the spread of the virus and to support Canadians who have been impacted.

### Containing the Spread

Public health initiatives at all levels have been guided by the advice of health professionals. Canada's Chief Health Officer, Dr. Teresa Tam, and her team have been working diligently to minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on the health of Canadians and the economy. BC's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, has emerged as one of our local heroes, providing thoughtful guidance based on science and data.

To date, the measures taken – and the widespread respect for these measures on the part of Canadians – have kept infection numbers from overwhelming the capacity of our health system to care for those infected.

We are not, however, out of the woods. Continued vigilance is required and measures to avoid transmission – such as physical distancing – will remain important even once certain restrictions may start to be relaxed.

Beyond handwashing and physical distancing that we do as individuals, other important actions have been taken to prevent virus spread, including curtailing non-essential travel and the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment for front line workers. All countries have struggled somewhat to ensure that sufficient supplies of masks, gowns, ventilators and other equipment are available. Canada is no exception. However, through intensive work – again with collaboration between the federal and provincial governments – we have been able to secure significant supplies internationally.

Concurrently, we have worked with domestic industry to repurpose manufacturing operations to produce needed supplies. A good example in North Vancouver is Arcteryx, which has repurposed a portion of its manufacturing to produce gowns.

### The Power of Community

There are many stories to be told of our community coming together during this difficult period:

- Every evening at 7 p.m. our community rings with clanging pots and pans, bells and horns, recognizing the dedication and courage of those on the front lines – medical personnel, first responders, caregivers, cleaners, food services workers, mental health providers and more;
- Cargill, whose grain terminal stands on the North Vancouver waterfront, has committed to match donations to the Heritage Project up to \$20,000. These funds will provide food and support for the most vulnerable in our community;
- Two local businesses, Stealth Distillery and Sons of Vancouver Distillery, have converted production lines to produce hand sanitizer to support community health;
- The on-line group, Connect North Shore, has been launched by North Shore Emergency Management to link residents to community resources including information for those in need and volunteer opportunities for those who want to help;
- North Vancouver libraries have launched a campaign for donations of books and tablets to provide reading materials for those who may not have access to the internet. Telus has already made a commitment to donate 400 tablets.

These are but a few of many examples of community members supporting each other- of this community coming together to meet a common challenge.

### Some Things To Be Thankful For

I certainly feel myself to be very fortunate. My daughters are both now at home and they, my wife Tara and I are all healthy. We are lucky to live in this country, where medical care is available to all – irrespective of ability to pay - and where civic spirit and civic responsibility are so strong.

Canada, BC and North Vancouver have made significant strides in addressing COVID-19 because of the willingness of most Canadians to take appropriate precautions. We still have some way to go. It is vital that we continue to follow public health directives and do our part as members of this community to limit the virus. In doing so, we will collectively ensure that we get through this together.

## CONTACT INFO:

EMAIL: [Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca) | TEL: 604-775-6333