

North Vancouver youth practice democratic participation

I have been privileged to have an active and engaged group of young people who come together regularly as part of our Constituency Youth Council (CYC). This group helps to develop policy around youth perspectives on issues of concern and importance to a young demographic. They do research, hold public discussions and conduct instructional workshops on democratic practice.

The CYC engages in a range of outreach activities in some of our local schools. In June, our CYC visited two grade 6 classes at Canyon Heights Elementary School to workshop a topic the students had chosen – keeping marine mammals in aquaria. The Canyon Heights students spent significant time researching various perspectives on the issue. They then held a debate, arguing their positions on the topic.

Once the debate had concluded, they held a referendum, which resulted in a decision that these students would only allow marine mammals – particularly whales and dolphins – to be kept in captivity if they were rescued or injured. This decision closely mirrors the recent determination of our federal government regarding this very issue. As an exercise in democratic debate and participation, it was rewarding for all involved.



Separate and apart from my CYC, dozens of students from across the region gathered at North Vancouver's Civic Plaza for a Friday afternoon "climate strike," a peaceful protest to demonstrate their concern regarding the impacts of climate change. This action was led by a group of secondary students from several schools in North Vancouver, who invited me, and other elected officials, to speak about climate change and how governments are working hard to address it.

As most Canadians are aware, we are already seeing significant and costly impacts associated with a changing climate. Without thoughtful, near-term action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, our children's future will be a difficult one, indeed. The climate strike provided an opportunity for youth in North Vancouver to express their very deep concerns about climate change. With a topic so very important to all our futures, we should be listening very closely to what these generations are saying to us regarding the need for urgent action.

Are you interested in joining the Constituency Youth Council?
If so, contact Kelly at jonathan.wilkinson.C1A@parl.gc.ca

JONATHAN WILKINSON

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, NORTH VANCOUVER

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North Vancouver Constituent Update



Looking back... looking ahead

Serving as your Member of Parliament for almost four years has been the greatest honour of my life.

Like so many men and women who enter public life, I did so to make a difference – to my community and my country. That statement still generates some eye-rolling, given the cynicism of our times, but the last four years have only strengthened my conviction that individual politicians can make an impact in our system of democracy.

I am now even more optimistic about our ability as Canadians to have a say in the kind of country in which we live. It requires persistence, diligence, an ability to look beyond partisan lines to the common good, and a capacity to understand the concerns of those with whom you may disagree. I've learned that the ability to listen deeply is the most useful skill a politician can possess.



I am grateful that those insights have served me well and enabled me to work with others to make a difference in public policy areas that drove me to enter politics: the urgency of the climate change crisis, the decline of natural biodiversity, income inequality, the need for Canada to adopt a more forward-thinking economic strategy embracing economic development and environmental protection, and the opportunity for Canada to play a constructive role on the international stage on important issues such as climate change.

As the current Parliamentary session comes to a close, it's a good time to reflect, assess and review the past four years with an eye to the future. I have been fortunate to have a number of platforms from which to make a contribution – MP for North Vancouver, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and, for the past year, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard. As I look back, I believe that progress has been made in many areas.

AS MP FOR NORTH VANCOUVER

Transportation:

- \$20M in additional federal funding to address the Lynn Creek Bridge bottleneck and Highway #1 improvements to reduce traffic congestion;
- Funding for an additional Seabus and upgrades to the terminal, to reduce times between sailings;
- Funding to improve Lonsdale Quay and Phibbs Exchange bus terminals;
- Funding for the "B-line" as part of the overall North Shore Transportation plan;
- Core participant in the Integrated North Shore Transportation Project focused on short, medium and long-term transportation issues and options, including a possible rapid transit link to Vancouver.

Wastewater Treatment:

- Role in acquiring federal investment of \$212 million for the Lion's Gate Wastewater Treatment plant – the largest single capital investment of Budget 2016;
- Proponent in ongoing discussions with Metro Vancouver to shift the North Van treatment facility to more environmentally-friendly tertiary treatment.

Other Infrastructure:

- Funding for revitalization of Kirkstone and Fen Burnett turf soccer fields;
- Investment in the new North Vancouver Museum & Archives.

In The Community



Canada Summer Jobs employees at the North Vancouver Community Arts Council

Indigenous Habitat Participation at Capilano Hatchery



Celebrating success with Hollyburn Family Services



HAVE A QUESTION?
jonathan.wilkinson.c1a@parl.gc.ca

- ✉ Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca
- 🐦 @JonathanWNV
- 📘 [JonathanWilkinsonNorthVancouver](https://www.facebook.com/JonathanWilkinsonNorthVancouver)
- 📷 @JonathanWNV

www.JWilkinson.liberal.ca

COMMUNITY OFFICE
102 W 3rd Street, North Vancouver, BC V7M 1E8
(604) 775-6333

HILL OFFICE
Justice Building, Suite 09, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
(613) 995-1225

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Housing:

- Discussions leading to the *National Housing Strategy* through which the federal government is entering the affordable housing area for the first time in several decades. This Strategy provides \$40B towards additional rental housing for lower income Canadians, and rental subsidies towards ensuring accessible rental housing in North Van and throughout the Lower Mainland;
- Discussions regarding housing affordability, and significant investments in the Canada Revenue Agency, Canadian Border Services Agency and the RCMP, ensuring that foreign capital flows comply with Canada’s legal frameworks – including taxation issues impacting residential real estate, money laundering laws and transparency regarding beneficial ownership.

North Vancouver’s Economy:

- New contracts valued at nearly \$16B for Seaspan’s North Vancouver shipyards to build 16 additional Coast Guard vessels, creating significant, long-term jobs and economic opportunity for many North Shore businesses;
- Role in development of a future-oriented economic strategy for Canada – particularly clean/ green technology. In North Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, significant investments have been made in high-potential, clean tech firms such as *Ecoation*, *Carbon Engineering*, *Nano One* and *General Fusion*.

Accessible and Responsive Constituency Office:

- Policy of my Lonsdale constituency staff and I to work to respond in a timely way to every constituent who writes or calls us, and to meet with any constituent who expresses a desire to discuss an issue or concern. While sheer volume can pose challenges, the dedicated staff in my office is among the very best at these endeavours of any constituency office in this country.

AS PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Actively involved in developing *Canada’s Climate Plan* to meet our Paris targets, with over 50 measures to reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions – including phasing out coal-fired power generation;
- Deeply involved in developing a future-oriented clean tech strategy for Canada;
- Significant involvement in work to address biodiversity declines and to protect species at risk – including boreal and south mountain caribou here in BC.

AS MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS AND THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD

- Catalyzed an historic investment in habitat restoration to ensure the survival of Pacific salmon stocks, with the establishment of a \$142 M BC Salmon Restoration Innovation Fund;
- Led legislative process to restore lost protections for fish and fish habitat (gutted by the Harper Government in 2012) through a new *Fisheries Act*;
- Put into place protections for key marine species at risk, including South Resident Killer whales, North Atlantic Right whales, Fraser Chinook salmon and BC Steelhead trout, and secured a ban on shark finning;
- Bold action taken on plastics pollution – including banning key single-use plastics by as early as 2021.

Overall I am proud of the impact I believe I have made in Ottawa on your behalf. As this Parliament draws to a close, I consider it my great honour to have served you, the residents of North Vancouver. I thank you very much for having trusted me with this work.

A National Strategy for Zero Plastic Waste

About one third of plastics used in Canada every day are single-use products – close to 57 million straws each day and up to 15 billion plastic bags every year! Canadians trash over 3 million tons of plastic waste a year, by just throwing these items away. This isn’t just devastating to our environment – it’s bad for business. All that plastic waste equals \$8B per year in lost value, wasted resources and energy.

We’ve known for a long time that plastic pollution harms the environment; it’s devastating for wildlife and ocean ecosystems, including marine mammals, fish and birds. With the longest coastline in the world, and one quarter of the world’s fresh water, Canada recognizes that we have both the opportunity and the responsibility to lead in reducing plastic waste.

In June, our government announced that we will:

- **ban** harmful, single-use plastics as early as 2021 – including plastic straws, shopping bags, cutlery, stir sticks, and take-away containers;
- **increase** recovery of ghost fishing gear floating in our ocean waters;
- **implement** an Extended Producer Responsibility system to assure that companies responsible for producing plastics collect and recycle their plastic waste.

WILL THIS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Over the last 25 years, nearly 800,000 volunteers have removed 1.3 million kilos of trash from Canada’s shorelines through Ocean Wise and World Wildlife Fund’s Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up, supported by the Government of Canada. The most common litter found? Single-use products...mostly plastic.

Another significant pollution problem for ocean ecosystems is abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear – 460,000 tons of it a year – accounting for as much as 46 percent of plastic garbage in the great Pacific garbage patch. Research suggests it takes 600 years for monofilament fishing nets to break down in the ocean! Each year, one million birds and over 100,000 sea mammals worldwide are injured or die when they mistake plastic waste for food, or become entangled in garbage or fishing nets, and fish suffer collateral damage. So yes, it will make a difference.



WILL IT COST ME MORE?

We intend to shift the burden of recovering and recycling plastics to retailers and product manufacturers, through a system known as Extended Producer Responsibility. This lifts the increasing costs of recycling systems from municipalities and provinces, and places it squarely on the producers of such waste. The European Union leads the way in this economically sound approach to discouraging wasteful production practices.

As a government, we have committed to lead by example: we will divert at least 75% of plastic waste from federal operations by 2030, changing our purchasing practices to use more sustainable products, and eliminating unnecessary single-use plastics in meetings, events and government facilities. We’ll invest \$10 million to develop innovative, home-grown solutions to reduce plastic waste, and we are launching a new Plastics Science Agenda, which will accelerate research and provide evidence-based solutions to meet our goal of reducing the amount of waste going to landfills by 30% per Canadian by 2030, and by 50% by 2040. This will be a cost saving, and will create jobs for Canadians.

IS IT ALL OUR RESPONSIBILITY?

We know that these important steps to reduce plastic waste don’t happen in a vacuum. That is why Canada is investing \$100M to address plastic waste management in developing countries, including \$65M through the World Bank, \$6M to private-public partnerships through the World Economic Forum’s Global Plastic Action Partnership, and \$20M towards the G7 Innovation Challenge to Address Marine Plastic Litter. North Vancouverites can each be part of the solution, through advocacy and through the choices we make in our daily lives to reduce plastic waste.

Renewal of the Canadian Coast Guard

On May 22nd I joined Prime Minister Trudeau in Stanley Park to announce that our government will be moving ahead with a full renewal of the existing Coast Guard fleet. The Coast Guard plays a number of very significant roles for Canadians from coast to coast to coast, including search and rescue, marine pollution response, ice breaking and fisheries enforcement. Many of our ships are approaching 50 years old, with the average age of our ships being 38 years.

Indecision on the part of previous governments came to an end when the Prime Minister announced we would be committing to the construction of 18 new vessels – 16 of which will be built at Vancouver Shipyards (VSY)/Seaspan, here in North Vancouver. This represents a commitment of almost \$16B in additional contracts and up to 20 years of work for the North Vancouver shipyards.



During my tenure as Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, I have become convinced of the critical need to renew our fleet. While a few vessels have been under construction over the past few years, including three Offshore Fisheries Science vessels, a commitment to a large-scale fleet renewal was required.

It is abundantly clear that significant economic benefits accrue by building ships here in North Vancouver, in Canada. Not only does the industry benefit, but we know that good, middle-class jobs are created in spin-off industries across the lower

mainland and the country as a direct result. Through the work Seaspan has already undertaken as a partner in the National Shipbuilding Strategy, VSY has issued nearly \$850M in contracts to approximately 570 Canadian companies, including nearly \$350M in contracts awarded to 400 BC-based companies.

The first new ship constructed by Seaspan under the National Shipbuilding Strategy, the *CCGS Sir John Franklin*, was accepted into the fleet on June 27th. I sincerely look forward to launching additional new ships as they come on line over the next number of years.