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North Vancouver Constituent Update



## A collaborative approach to the housing crisis

In March, I was very pleased to announce that the City of North Vancouver has been awarded more than \$18 million in federal funds that will incent the construction of 3100 additional homes over the next ten years. This funding is meant to assist in the preparations necessary to speed up the building process – to streamline regulations, to shift zoning and to move permitting forward faster.



### The effort and diligence the City put into its application was commendable.

The City of North Vancouver successfully joined 60 other ambitious municipalities across the country whose residents are benefiting from the \$4 billion federal Housing Accelerator Fund. These agreements will fast track construction of an estimated 600,000 new homes across Canada over the next decade.

The **Housing Accelerator Fund** (HAF) is a Canadian government program to encourage local initiatives that boost housing supply, incentivizing homes that are more affordable, diverse and climate resistant.

This significant funding opportunity is a call to action – providing consequential financial support to those communities willing to do more than simply tinker on the edges of municipal housing policy to actually implement transformational changes that create a pathway to solving the housing crisis in each of their communities.

### HIGH IMPACT

The process was a competitive one. The City's application was selected based on its concrete implementation timelines, high impact and detailed descriptions of each initiative's milestones and expected outcomes.

As a part of the agreement to unlock this funding, the City of North Vancouver has committed to significant actions that will speed up home construction.

Under the plan, the City will allow more multiplex homes to be built (including up to four, six, and eight units), and allow for higher residential housing density near the urban core and close to transit.

It will improve the City's land acquisition and disposition practices to build more affordable homes on city-owned land and prioritize affordable housing projects.

The action plan also includes streamlining development approvals, reforming the City of North Vancouver's zoning bylaws to end exclusionary zoning, reducing minimum parking requirements for development projects, and removing barriers to building prefabricated and modular housing.

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## DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP

Mayors and councils from across Canada have demonstrated leadership by implementing creative ideas to solve local housing challenges. These will serve as examples for other municipalities to follow.

In a community like ours where housing affordability is a pressing concern, funding provided through the Housing Accelerator Fund creates an avenue to housing that will bridge the gap between rising home prices and the aspirations of residents, while creating good jobs in home construction.

**Ensuring that everyone has a safe, affordable home is a priority for this federal government and for me personally. This is the foundation for building strong, successful communities.**



The federal government has made housing a priority, as have the Province of BC and the City of North Vancouver. We all share the goal of ensuring that everyone has an affordable place to call home.

We will work through this housing crisis only if all levels of government, industry, labour and Indigenous leadership are working together to incentivize and implement the construction of new homes so that we can make housing more attainable for all Canadians. And in that regard, the recent announcement made with the City of North Vancouver keeps us moving in the right direction.

## A hyper-partisan spectacle

My concern about the growing hyper-partisanship in Canadian politics, sadly, reached new heights in the closing months of 2023, when what should have been standard parliamentary process descended into an appalling and symptomatic spectacle.

An all-party working group, the Natural Resources Committee, tasked to review and suggest improvements to legislation focused on building a prosperous, low-carbon economy, had its work obstructed for seven weeks by waves of delay tactics by Conservative members.

Conservative MPs proposed 20,000 frivolous amendments to draft legislation, the Sustainable Jobs Act – a document that runs all of 10 pages. These MPs made endless points of order and constant interruptions – at times talking at once into their microphones to drown out other speakers.

At one point, Conservative MPs spent 45 minutes arguing over who could speak next. Their filibuster included one Tory MP winding down the clock by waxing nostalgic about muscle cars he owned in the 70's.



## DISCUSSION AND COMPROMISE

Political parties will – and in a democratic system, often should – disagree on matters of policy. However, parliamentary committees have traditionally been less partisan forums, in which MPs try to truly listen to each other. Through good discussion and compromise at committee, MPs often can and have improved legislation.

But the recent behaviour of Conservative members of the Natural Resources Committee choked off even the possibility of a conversation and provided a circus act instead. **This was, in my opinion, an outlandish waste of taxpayer dollars.**

**Making headway on sustainable jobs is critically important.**

Workers across this country rightly have a keen interest regarding how we create well-paying jobs in an economy that will increasingly value low-carbon solutions. Delaying the committee's work risks sidelining Canada at a time when the world is moving rapidly toward a low-carbon economy.



## TROJAN HORSE?

Irrespective of tactics, why do Conservative MPs say they oppose the Sustainable Jobs Act? Well, for reasons that I sincerely find difficult to comprehend, they say the bill is a 'Trojan horse' aimed at phasing out Canada's oil and gas sector.

**This charge is ludicrous, ideological fiction.**

Canada's energy future very much includes an oil and gas sector which must be thoughtful and aggressive in decarbonizing its operations. While global demand for oil and gas will peak this decade, there will continue to be reasonable demand for low-carbon oil and gas in non-combustion applications (e.g., hydrogen, petrochemicals) even in a post 2050, net-zero world.

The Sustainable Jobs Act is designed to engage a public, transparent conversation about how we best develop a workforce and an economy that will ensure Canada remains competitive and prosperous in a much lower-carbon world.

Personally, I wonder whether the real Trojan horse in Parliament isn't Mr. Poilievre's increasing use of obstructive and disruptive tactics for self-serving, partisan political purposes.

Poilievre is deliberately generating fear and anger to be harvested and distilled into a political force.

Building an approach to politics based on fostering anxiety, anger and division may perhaps be considered good politics in these polarized times – though I certainly hope not.

**Political dialogue in Canada has historically been far more thoughtful and respectful than this. Canadians deserve and should demand better.**



## Prime Minister's visit electrifies Sutherland

Sixty or so students and many staff members gathered in the library at Sutherland Secondary for an informal Q&A in late February. Students had prepared their own questions and were provided an opportunity to ask Canada's Prime Minister anything. Justin Trudeau, a former classmate of Sutherland counsellor, Bhashy Pather, paid a visit in person that afternoon to speak with the Boys Club, the Girls Club, and the Global Perspectives class.

**The Prime Minister is a former teacher – he knows the value of connecting with kids, and he knows how to listen to them. As the MP for North Vancouver, I was there to hear what kids had to say, which matters to me, too.**

And the students delivered – asking questions ranging from what hockey team he supports to how living such a public life affects him. To one question about who he'd choose to have a conversation with – he good-naturedly asked, "dead or alive?" – the Prime Minister spoke quite movingly about his father, Pierre Elliot Trudeau. Students asked policy questions, about choices he'd had to make, to name the big influences in his life, and what he felt is important to being a success.



My sense was that the assembled crowd found the Prime Minister's responses thoughtful, entertaining, down to earth, and forthright.

As the PM exited the library, he was surprised, as we all were, by a rabble of hundreds of students lining the hallway, awaiting selfies. Never shy, the Prime Minister obliged as many as he could, providing them with a lasting memory of meeting their country's leader.

Thanks to Bhashy for this opportunity to speak so intimately with such a thoughtful, respectful, and attentive group of students. Thanks, also, to principal Mark Barrett and staff for putting up with the happy disruption, and for creating such a welcoming atmosphere.

**I always welcome invitations from teachers to come and chat with students.** To organize an MP visit to a North Vancouver school, please contact my Constituency Director, Cynthia Bunbury at [Cynthia.bunbury.821@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Cynthia.bunbury.821@parl.gc.ca).

# Cari Wilson: technology trailblazer

Long-time North Vancouver resident Cari Wilson is enjoying some well-earned recognition of her educational excellence, having been honoured with the 2023 Certificate of Excellence in Teaching Prime Minister’s Award.

With a career spanning decades, **Wilson, a self-taught programmer and robotics enthusiast, has emerged as a bit of a trailblazer in the realm of technology education**, leaving an indelible mark on students, colleagues, and the educational community at large.

At the heart of Wilson’s success is her unyielding commitment to student development. Wilson started integrating technology into her career when a pilot project introducing students to laptop use in classrooms yielded exciting results in increased accessibility to information and improved ability for teachers to cater to the different learning needs of students. This experience completely redefined Wilson’s future in teaching, and she now serves as the West Vancouver District Vice Principal of Innovation and Technology.

## TEACHING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

**Her teaching philosophy is rooted in the belief that education extends far beyond the confines of textbooks, emphasizing the importance of fostering critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong love for learning.** Wilson’s classrooms are vibrant hubs of intellectual curiosity, where students are not merely recipients of information but active participants in the journey towards knowledge acquisition.

Technological innovation is woven into the fabric of Wilson’s teaching approach. Recognizing the transformative power of technology, she has pioneered the integration of cutting-edge tools in her lessons, creating an immersive and dynamic learning experience. Her forward-thinking methods have not only kept her students engaged but have also positioned her as a thought leader in leveraging technology for educational advancement in STEM.

Wilson’s impact extends far beyond her role as a classroom teacher. A dedicated mentor and advocate, she has played a role in shaping the next generation of educators on the North Shore. One example of this is a weekly blog she publishes called *This and That: Tech Tips on Tuesdays*. Wilson initially started the blog to help her North Shore colleagues learn more about technology and to integrate it into their lives and classrooms, but her reach has now expanded across the globe. Her leadership in curriculum development initiatives may have contributed to the evolution of educational practices that are relevant and responsive to the changing needs of students in the 21st century.



## PROMOTING STEM

**Critically, Wilson also recognizes the need to encourage girls to further explore the still male-dominated world of STEM.** It is instrumental that young girls see women in STEM to help illuminate the fact that women belong in this realm, and that science, technology and math are not sectors that exclude them. An after-school program designed and run by Wilson, *Girls With Superpowers*, hopes to inspire girls to find the fun and creativity in STEM. Her advice to all girls exploring STEM? “Follow your heart and don’t let anyone convince you otherwise.”



The 2023 Certificate of Excellence in Teaching Award is a well-deserved acknowledgement of Cari Wilson’s extraordinary contributions to education. Her life’s work exemplifies the transformative power of education.

Educators can and do have huge impacts on students and the broader community when driven by passion, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to excellence. **Congratulations Cari; thank you for all the work you do to inspire students and colleagues in our North Shore communities, and around the world.**



# Reflections on the tragedy of Gaza

**The ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is increasingly desperate and heartbreaking. Tens of thousands of innocent civilians – including children – have died. The scale of destruction is enormous.**

What began October 7th with the attack by Hamas-led terrorists, followed by a sustained air and ground offensive by Israel targeting Gaza – has cost well over 33,000 lives.

As a human being, I grieve every Israeli and Palestinian innocent life lost in this conflict. I share an overwhelming mixture of shock, horror, and revulsion at what we have witnessed – feelings echoed and amplified in hundreds of passionate emails and phone calls from constituents.

## FEELINGS RUNNING HIGH

This conflict has divided opinion globally and Canadians are no exception. Passions have been running high – with rising antisemitism and Islamophobia seen as a major and malevolent concern.

**That is why it's critically important that we remind ourselves who we truly are as Canadians.**

**This is a country we have built on a foundation of tolerance and diversity;** a country with a tradition and a future of finding pathways for dialogue towards solutions that work for all. We can't let Canada become a terrain on which conflicts from other parts of the world are fought.

Canada must strive to rise above this. We must strive to be an example of how people of different backgrounds and different faiths find ways to live together peacefully, and allow constructive and fruitful dialogue.

Moreover, we mustn't tolerate situations where members of Jewish or Muslim communities in Canada fear for their safety because of the situation in the Middle East. A responsible federal government must lead Canadians through this conflict – and through the pain and emotion associated with it – in a way that brings citizens together.

## INTERNATIONAL LAW MUST PREVAIL

Canada must base its engagement in these matters on a deeply-held Canadian respect for international humanitarian law.

**We have unequivocally condemned Hamas' attacks of October 7. We will continue to condemn Hamas' unacceptable treatment of hostages and to call for, and work towards the unconditional release of all remaining hostages.**

We must also be very clear that Israel must respect international humanitarian law. Civilians and humanitarian aid workers must not be targeted.

The need for humanitarian aid in Gaza is extreme. Rapid, safe, and unimpeded humanitarian relief is essential to prevent more suffering and death. The price of defeating Hamas cannot be the continuous suffering of all Palestinian civilians.

## SUSTAINABLE CEASEFIRE

**The federal government continues to push for a sustainable ceasefire** – one that must involve parties on all sides taking a step back. Hamas must lay down its arms and release all hostages immediately. Israel must be willing to engage in talks to end the suffering and open a process to achieve peace and stability.

Canada has historically supported Palestinians' right to self-determination. We remain committed to working with partners towards a just and enduring peace in the form of a two-state solution, wherein Israelis and Palestinians can live securely within internationally recognized borders. This was reflected in the motion passed by the House of Commons on March 18th and overwhelmingly supported by MPs from all political parties – with the exception of the Conservatives.

## HELP FOR GAZANS

Canada has restored funding to UNWRA, after a pause to obtain assurances by the UN that the organization has undertaken an investigation into alleged associations with Hamas. We continue to provide aid to Palestinian civilians throughout – Canada is a top donor globally, committing \$100 million in humanitarian assistance since October 2023.

Canada has also implemented a program of reunification of families for Gazans with links to Canada. We are processing applications through special measures – this will proceed once avenues for exit are available.

## CAREFUL REFLECTION OF ALL PERSPECTIVES

I am far from immune from the pain and anguish wracking so many in our community as we witness what has unfolded in the Middle East. We must all try to find the space and the courage to carefully reflect on all perspectives in this extremely complex conflict.

**I am deeply committed to doing all I can to ensure that Canada is thoughtful and constructive in advancing goals that we all, as Canadians and as fellow human beings, ascribe to.**

# A tribute to Parviz Behrouzi

It was with great sadness that I attended a memorial celebrating the life and contribution of Parviz Behrouzi, known best as the owner of Persia Foods, but equally well-known for his community involvement and his generosity.

Parviz was taken from us too early, suffering a heart attack on March 20, 2024. Born in 1959, he left his home country of Iran following the revolution and eventually established himself and his growing family here on the North Shore.

I met Parviz soon after I was elected. He was an advocate for important causes, including assuring there was health care for everyone, fair treatment for international students, ample housing for those in need, cultural spaces reflecting the diversity of our community, adequate minimum wages, just immigration and import regulations, and so much more.

Whenever Parviz came to see me, he always came with ideas and with potential solutions. Sometimes these related to issues of concern to the Iranian Canadian community, but even more often, they were relevant to the community of North Vancouver as a whole.



His daughter, Maryam, herself an accomplished lawyer and entrepreneur, described her father as devoted, loving, but also impatient to see progress being made. He was deeply devoted to his family – in recent years, especially to his grandchildren.

As a man of courage, vision, and commitment to our community, Parviz has left a strong legacy in his wife, Mahnaz, his daughter, and sons, Sobbuh and Quddous, and his beloved grandchildren.

Our community is much stronger and better for his contributions. He will be sorely missed by many – and certainly by me.

## In The Community



Opening of the NS Rescue Arnold Wallner SAR building

Announcing the National School Food Program with Rubina Jamal, Kulvir Mann, Brent Mansfield, Tine Parker & Minister Sajjan



Celebrating the North Shore Women’s Centre



Our office welcomes ideas and feedback. Thanks to Nataliia from Ukraine for volunteer help this spring.



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