

CEPA update = stronger environmental protection

CEPA – the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (1999) – plays a fundamental role in our daily lives, protecting the health and safety of our families and the complex web of nature’s ecosystems that sustain us.

CEPA, 1999 is Canada’s cornerstone environmental protection legislation. It sets out rules for identifying, regulating, and managing toxic substances, making it possible to reduce our exposure to many harmful chemicals. CEPA, 1999 required the Government to screen the nearly 23,000 chemicals in use in Canada, identify those of concern, and implement control actions accordingly.

Exposure to everyday chemicals and pollutants can disproportionately harm at-risk and marginalized populations, including those at greater risk of exposure or more susceptible to the effects of chemicals: pregnant women, children, the elderly, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities close to major sources of pollution.

Every Canadian should be able to live life free from the effects of harmful chemicals and pollutants. Many countries around the world have defined this as a ‘right to a healthy environment,’ and there is a growing consensus here in Canada that we too must act.

In the 22 years since CEPA was last amended, chemicals have become an even bigger part of our daily lives and our economy. The time is long overdue for a stronger environmental protection law that confronts 21st century dangers with 21st century science. This spring, I introduced new legislation to strengthen and modernize CEPA.

Just as science has compelled and guided action on climate change and COVID-19, so too does science guide our actions on pollution. And the right to a healthy environment provides Canadians with an assurance that their federal government will continue to respond to the evolving scientific evidence about environmental toxins.

PROTECTING OUR HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Strengthening the Canadian Environmental Protection Act

THE PROPOSED NEW LAW WILL PROVIDE:

- **the right to a healthy environment for Canadians**, which sets the stage for evolving stronger standards now and in the future, in line with advances in scientific evidence.
- **tougher rules for managing chemicals** to better protect Canadians and our environment.
- **more protection for the most vulnerable** such as children, as well as people in communities with higher levels of pollution.
- **tougher rules to reduce environmental impacts** of toxic pollution that causes cumulative impacts over time.
- **mandatory product labelling** to clearly identify contents that may cause harm in cosmetics, household cleaning products and flame retardants in upholstery.

Reducing vehicle and industry pollution, prohibiting the sale and export of asbestos, addressing single-use plastics, banning microbeads from toiletry products and keeping harmful plastic particles out of our water: none of it could be done without CEPA.

Canada’s strengthened Climate Plan is part of our blueprint for a healthy environment and a healthy economy. A modernized CEPA builds on this important work, providing certainty for industry and delivering a legacy of better health and a cleaner environment for future generations.

Reading – a pandemic pass-time

I don’t have much time to read for pleasure, but books have proven wildly popular over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Local bookstores – 32 Books in Edgemont Village, Black Bond Books in Lynn Valley Mall – and local libraries have supported our reading. Many of you likely filled time with more reading than ever before, finding new and challenging reading suggestions in newspapers, CBC Radio, on-line chats, and virtual book clubs.

The government of Canada supports book publishing in this country through the Canada Book Fund administered by Heritage Canada. Some of our local writers have had assistance getting their books to readers via this avenue for Canadian content. The fund has provided emergency financial relief to book distributors in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund assists independent Canadian publishers to provide digital books and to assure the ongoing production, marketing, and distribution of Canadian-authored books so you can find them on library shelves.

If you are interested in signing up for the Accessibility Services, visit nvdpl.ca or call 604-990-5800, ext. 8124.



For many people, the closure of public libraries during the early part of the pandemic was much more than just a loss of reading material. So many people in our community depend upon the myriad services that libraries provide – from reading rooms and computer access to companionship and public washrooms.

One of the library services that some folks continued to receive throughout was Accessibility Services, thanks to Laura at the Lynn Valley branch. This service delivers reading materials to persons unable to visit the library in person, including private residences and care homes. Books, and Laura who delivers them, keep folks occupied, informed, and entertained, particularly those who experienced a sense of social isolation over the past year.

In The Community



Seaspan to build Polar Icebreaker here in North Vancouver

Grand Boulevard sidewalk artist welcomes summer



Everyone anticipates Loutet Farm produce markets



Our constituency office has fully reopened. Please stay COVID-safe. Wear a mask.



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SUMMER 2021

North Vancouver Constituent Update | Environment Edition



It’s past time to clean up plastic pollution

Summer is here and Canadians are getting vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus in historic numbers. As we safely move out of homes into our streets and parks, Canadians from coast to coast to coast are once again being greeted by our hardy summer perennials – sunshine, pollen and... plastic pollution.

Plastics litter our beaches, parks, streets, shorelines and other places Canadians value. They collect in our oceans and waterways, harming marine life.

Canadians dispose of more than 3 million tonnes of plastic every year – the vast majority of which ends up in landfills and in the natural environment. That represents a waste of **about \$7.9 billion** worth of plastic resins, annually.

Only 9 percent of plastics are presently recycled. About 30,000 tonnes of plastic every single year finds its way directly on to our lands and into our waterways.

That’s a serious problem that requires serious leadership.

The harmful impacts of discarded plastic on nature and wildlife must be addressed. A science assessment published last October by the Government of Canada found that plastic pollution, in both macroplastic and microplastic form, is everywhere in the environment. Macroplastics harm animals and their habitats. Concerns exist regarding the potential effects of microplastics on individual animals, the environment, and human health, although the data here is less clear and requires additional research.

That is why the federal government is taking swift action to ban harmful single-use plastics that can’t be recycled, or are difficult to recycle and for which reasonable alternatives exist – such as plastic bags. We are also working to ensure producers will be responsible for preventing waste and promoting design that aids recycling and managing materials.



CANADA IS STEPPING UP TO BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION:

- ✔ Banning harmful single-use plastics
- ✔ Promoting the use of affordable & safe alternatives
- ✔ Making sure companies take responsibility for their plastic waste

This isn’t about banning plastic, which is and will remain a useful part of our lives. It is however about responsibly managing plastic so it stops polluting our environment. By moving to a more circular economy to manage plastic waste, **we can reduce 1.8 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year, generate billions in revenue and create approximately 42,000 jobs across the country by 2030.**

Canada Summer Jobs provides meaningful work for young people in North Vancouver

- ✔ Over 110 employers
- ✔ Over 275 young people with jobs
- ✔ Over \$1.5 million in this riding to support young Canadians getting back to work



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On May 12, as the next necessary step in our ongoing process to eliminate single-use plastic waste from our environment, we added “plastic manufactured items” to Schedule 1 under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA). Listing manufactured plastic products under CEPA is required to legally regulate the clean-up we all recognize is so desperately needed.

We’re also taking action to ensure producers are responsible for their plastic waste and we are developing recycled content standards that will drive demand for recycled material.

Plastics that can be easily recycled can and should continue to help our society, a fact recognized by many responsible industry leaders who are also taking action to address this issue. Developing and enforcing recycled content standards – just as banning single-use plastics – required listing under CEPA.

However, some in the plastics industry would rather litigate than work with government and other partners to correct longstanding practices and improve environmental outcomes. We saw this recently when some members of the plastics industry launched a lawsuit against government efforts to curb plastic pollution.

Certainly there is a history of some entrenched companies in some industries that have worked to maintain the status quo long after health and environmental science have clearly shown that a change in behavior and practice is required. We saw it with lead in gasoline, with microbeads and even with carbon dioxide causing climate change.

These products and their manufacturers didn’t start out with the intent to cause harm. But over time, we clearly experienced that they could create harms, and governments had to act for the good of our health and of our natural environment – often in the face of entrenched opposition from commercial interests.

There is broad public support behind our efforts to address plastic pollution, including, for example, the development of recycled content standards that will drive innovation and create jobs in a more circular economy. There is also significant support and constructive engagement on the part of thoughtful members of the plastics industry.



Cleaning up plastic waste on BC’s coastline

In a unique initiative that grew out of pandemic desperation to keep staff on and provide meaningful work, a number of small ship tour operators got together last summer to do some serious beach clean-up on the BC coast. North Vancouver tour operator Randy Burke, of Bluewater Adventures, alerted my office of their efforts to put their boats and crews into service for the greater good.

With funding from the province of BC, the Wilderness Tourism Association of BC (WTA) and the Small Ship Tour Operators Association of BC (SSTOA) are pleased to once again be participating in an ambitious initiative to remove harmful marine debris from the BC Coast. The Marine Debris Removal Initiative (MDRI) is part of the province’s Clean Coast Clean Waters (CCCW) fund. Ocean Legacy will be handling the recycling of the majority of the debris removed. Check out their website to find out more about recycling plastics: oceanlegacy.ca



Total Debris Collected:
104 tonnes / 10,4097 kg
Approximate total # of plastic water bottles collected: **47,613**
Approximate # of foam floats collected: **6,068**
Length of shoreline cleared: **145 km**

“This work is challenging but inspiring, and disheartening but uplifting. The area we were able to cover on this expedition is a very small drop in a very large pool. I sincerely hope this spurs meaningful conversation around possible solutions to this crisis.”

Emily Fulton | Crew Member

Thanks to this committed group doing some heavy lifting along our glorious west coast. The work they are doing underscores the importance of the federal government’s strategy and ongoing efforts to keep plastics out of our environment.

Shining a spotlight on inclusion

Like most of you, I have been troubled by the recent rise in racism across Canada and the Lower Mainland, and particularly by the very sad act of violence in London, Ontario. It is a painful reminder that, for too many, race continues to dictate how our fellow Canadians are regarded and treated. More immediately, it is a call to conversation about the barriers that remain to building a truly fair and multicultural Canada which values all its citizens equally.

These attacks – and the rise of racist rhetoric and discrimination – have disproportionately impacted Canadians of East and Southeast Asian origin, who number 17,000 strong in our community. According to the Vancouver Police Department, anti-Asian hate crimes increased by 717% during 2020.

That is why, in May, Asian-Canadians from all walks of life mobilized to celebrate Asian Heritage Month. Among the many initiatives was the Asian Gold Ribbon Campaign, which featured two Asian-Canadian youth from North Vancouver: Aria Duggan, a Grade 10 student, and Liam Olsen, in third year at McGill University.

Aria and Liam participated in a youth summit that included Asian-Canadians from other provinces to discuss anti-Asian racism in their personal lives.



Perhaps the most shocking story shared was of a teacher who mocked her student in front of the class for mispronouncing words. This was not a one-off incident – a few years later, at a different school, this same individual’s teacher refused to learn to distinguish her from her Asian friends of different heights, with different hairstyles and very different personalities.

At the conclusion of the event, the panelists presented a list of recommendations to the experts present, including Honourable Bardish Chagger, Minister of Diversity Inclusion and Youth.

As Environment Minister, the work I do impacts generations to come. To see young Canadians – particularly young North Vancouverites – taking the lead on such difficult conversations around diversity and inclusion should encourage us all; the future must incorporate changes that assure greater fairness and equity for all of us.

Green goals and accomplishments we can be proud of:

- ✓ Together, with Canadians in communities across the country, **we’ve begun planting our target of 2 billion trees over the next decade** – to clean the air we breathe, cut pollution, create green jobs and make our communities more resilient. Local silviculture company Zanzibar Holdings is leading the way in getting seedlings into the ground.
- ✓ To improve the energy efficiency of your homes and reduce your energy bills, **we’re providing homeowners with up to \$5,000 in retrofit grants**. Now, replacing a drafty window or making upgrades ahead of winter will make our homes more comfortable and life more affordable, create jobs and cut pollution.
- ✓ **We exceeded Canada’s goal of protecting 10% of our oceans by 2020** – going from less than 1% in 2015 to 14% in 2020 – and we’ll be protecting one-quarter of our lands and oceans by 2025.

- ✓ To help you where you need to go in cheaper, cleaner, faster ways, **we’ve invested over \$25B in public transit**. Significant improvements here in North Vancouver include express bus routes, improved transit lanes, increased SeaBus service and the prospect of rapid transit to the North Shore. Recreational paths and bike lanes have also benefited from increased funding from the federal government.
- ✓ We’re making it easier and more affordable for Canadians to make your next vehicle purchase an electric one by **giving you \$5,000 off your EV purchase and by building 6,000+ charging stations across the country**.
- ✓ Plastics are polluting our parks, rivers, oceans and green spaces. That’s why we have already **banned microbeads in toiletries, we’re banning some harmful, single-use plastics, and eliminating plastic waste by 2030**.

- ✓ **We introduced tougher rules for managing chemicals** to better protect our health and the environment that will enshrine Canadians’ right to a healthy environment for the first time in our history. We’re also taking action to ensure that chemicals in cosmetics and cleaning products are disclosed through better labeling.
- ✓ **We’re making sure pollution isn’t free anywhere in the country** and putting more money in the pockets of hard-working people like you through the Climate Action Incentive rebate – which will be delivered quarterly starting in 2022.

- ✓ Canada is a clean tech leader with the second-highest number of clean tech companies on the global Top 100 list, following the U.S. To ensure we continue to lead and succeed in zero-emissions clean tech, **we’re cutting corporate taxes in half for businesses manufacturing zero-emission products**.
- ✓ **We introduced the Net-Zero Accelerator Fund – supported by \$8B worth of investments** – that will decarbonize heavy industry, secure Canada’s clean industrial advantage and create secure jobs along the way.
- ✓ By fighting climate change we’re creating jobs, growing the middle class, protecting our environment, and building a cleaner future for everyone. From 2015 to 2019, we invested \$60B toward climate action and clean growth. **Since October 2020, we’ve invested \$53.6B in Canada’s green recovery**.
- ✓ **This is the first federal government in Canadian history to set a climate goal and have a plan to get there**. That plan has also allowed us to increase our ambition with a new target for 2030.
- ✓ **We’re taking action to get to net-zero emissions by 2050** – including by delivering on our commitment to introduce a Bill that enshrines Canada’s net-zero goal into law.

Mental health top-of-mind for NV youth

Interacting with youth in our riding is a priority in my work as Member of Parliament for North Vancouver. It is vitally important to hear the concerns of young Canadians, and to invite their collaboration. Young people have been greatly affected by the pandemic – thrust into online learning, isolated from friends, experiencing drastic changes to everyday routines. Two topics that rise to the top of the issues list for youth are mental health and climate change.

In May, I met with a group of students from Carson Graham Secondary to hear of the impacts of the pandemic on their mental health. They discussed fears and uncertainties they have faced attending school, and shared personal thoughts regarding online vs. in-person education. Hearing their perspectives first-hand certainly highlighted just how difficult this last year has been for North Vancouver youth.

I was recently asked questions by senior Boundary elementary students, ranging from the decline in southern resident killer whale populations to clean energy and nature conservation. I am constantly buoyed by their desire to know what they can do to address environmental challenges. Their teacher is encouraging a deep and broad learning experience for these classes.

My Constituency Youth Council (CYC) recently presented a follow-up report to last year’s focus on mental health. Their report, entitled “*Youth Mental Health: One Year with COVID-19*,” collected survey data to better understand the mental health impacts of the pandemic on 13 to 24-year-olds. Their intention is to convey firsthand how they feel the federal government can better support youth.

Finally, I want to offer my congratulations to all students who graduated in June – you spent your entire final year under pandemic conditions and triumphed – you will, I hope, be stronger and more resilient for the experience.

For more information or to join CYC, please email kelly.perrais.821@parl.gc.ca.