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MP • MARKHAM—STOUFFVILLE

Spring 2018



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Library of Parliament

||| A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

I'm honoured to serve as the MP for Markham—Stouffville, and to be your voice in the House of Commons.

By putting the needs of Canadians first, our government has helped to bring good jobs and more financial security to millions of Canadians and their families over the past two years. I'm proud of the accomplishments we have already made, and we will continue working hard to support communities, build a better quality of life for seniors and Veterans, and create the best possible future for our children and grandchildren.

I look forward to seeing you out in the community this summer, and as always, I welcome the opportunity to hear from you about the issues that matter most to you and your family.

Sincerely,

Jane Philpott, MP

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My Office is Here
to Help You

Citizenship
Immigration
Old Age Security
Canada Pension Plan
Canada Revenue Agency
Veterans Affairs



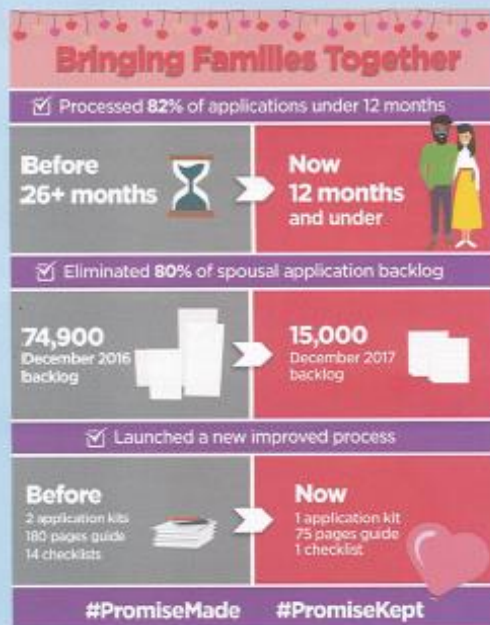
PROGRESS ON FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS

Family reunification is one of our government's core immigration priorities. Recently, we were proud to announce that we've met our goal to cut processing time in half for spousal applications for 82% of clients.

Over the past year, we have made the spousal sponsorship process faster and easier, demonstrating our commitment to family reunification and to enhancing overall client service.

Our efforts have yielded significant results: spousal inventory applications were reduced from 75,000 to 15,000 by the beginning of this year.

The changes we have made to the spousal sponsorship program are helping to bring families together, faster than ever.



PROTECTING CANADIANS' PRIVACY AND ONLINE SECURITY

The digital age has revolutionized the way we work, how we shop, and how we access services—including government and financial services. These changes have brought vast benefits along with many new challenges in online privacy and security.

Protecting Personal Data

Our government believes that Canada must balance important technological innovation with Canadians' peace of mind that their personal data is safe and their privacy is respected. We have introduced regulations that will make companies more accountable and empower Canadian consumers.

As of November 1st, companies will have to inform Canadians if their private information has been placed at risk or stolen. Companies will also have to report any breaches to the Privacy Commissioner and maintain records of all data breaches. Should companies fail to respect these obligations, severe financial penalties would apply.

Strengthening Online Security

Cyber-attacks are becoming more pervasive, increasingly sophisticated and ever more effective. They have the potential to expose the private information of Canadians, cost businesses millions of dollars, and potentially put critical infrastructure networks at risk.

To protect Canadians and the institutions we all rely on, our government will implement a new National Cyber Security Strategy that will focus on ensuring the resilience of Canada's systems. This includes creating a new Centre for Cyber Security tasked with protecting personal information, and enhancing security measures at the Canada Revenue Agency to protect sensitive taxpayer information.

The Government of Canada will work alongside other orders of government, the business community, academic experts and trusted international partners to implement this plan and raise the cyber security bar for all Canadians.

CANADA-CHINA YEAR OF TOURISM

As you know, Canada's tourism industry is not just a vital economic driver; it also gives us a fantastic advantage on the world stage. When visitors come to Canada, they get to see for themselves just how welcoming, diverse, and successful we are as a country.

This year we are celebrating the Canada-China Year of Tourism. This initiative will help strengthen the people-to-people ties that connect Canada and China, and pave the way for closer commercial ties as we deepen the trading relationship between our two countries.

The number of Chinese visitors to Canada has grown steadily over the past several years. Chinese tourists spent an estimated \$1.5

billion in Canada in 2016, helping to support the more than 1.8 million jobs in the tourism sector.

This is a wonderful time for tourism in Canada. Throughout the year, we will be marking the Canada-China Year of Tourism with exciting events and celebrations across both Canada and China.



 **2018** 
YEAR OF TOURISM
L'ANNÉE DU TOURISME
中加旅游年

In our area, the **Night It Up** outdoor festival will take place at the Markham Civic Centre (101 Town Centre Blvd.) from July 13th to 15th and will showcase a mosaic of delicious Asian street foods complemented by nightly performances by local artists.

The event will be styled in the vein of night markets from Taiwan, Hong Kong and across Asia.

For details on this and other events taking place across the country, visit:

www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/100.nsf/eng/home

We look forward to opening our doors and giving the world a taste of the legendary Canadian hospitality we're known for.

IN OUR COMMUNITY



1 Stouffville Multicultural Association's Tamil Heritage Month Celebration 2 Speaking with students at Whitchurch Highlands Public School 3 Markham—Stouffville Youth Council meeting at the Cornell Community Centre in Markham 4 Enjoying a good book with some young readers at the Markham Public Library.

NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS

From their volunteer work to the stories they tell their grandchildren, there is no end to the important role that seniors play in our lives and community. Our government recognizes the immense contributions that seniors make, and the **New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP)** is one of the ways we're giving back.

This year, more than 1,880 community-based projects are receiving \$35 million in funding through the NHSP, including some right here in our community. For example, this funding has made it possible for the Whitchurch-Stouffville Library's technology training program for seniors, which received \$24,860. Learn more by visiting: www.canada.ca



Lifelong Learning – One participant of the library's new training program was 92-year-old Koula Lakas, who was delighted to learn to correspond by email with her granddaughter overseas. She is just one of many seniors who partnered with student mentors for some technology assistance.



Investing in Research

Through Budget 2018, our government is providing a historic investment of \$925 million over the next five years to Canada's granting councils. This represents the most new funding for fundamental research made through the granting councils in Canadian history.

That includes:

- \$354.7 million for the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
- \$354.7 million for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research; and
- \$215.5 million for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

We're proud of Canada's researchers, and we'll continue to support the innovative work they do at post-secondary institutions and research hospitals all across the country.



Better Access to the Canada Child Benefit

The Canada Child Benefit (CCB) helps low- and middle-income Canadians keep up with the high costs of raising a family, and gives their children the best possible start in life.

Since being introduced in 2016, the CCB has lifted hundreds of thousands of Canadian children out of poverty. Now, nine out of ten Canadian families have a little extra help each month to pay for things like nutritious food, sports programs, music lessons, and school supplies.

To ensure that the almost six million children who currently benefit from the CCB continue to benefit in the long term, our government will be indexing the Canada Child Benefit starting this July, so that it continues to increase in value every year.



Avoid Delays: Renew Your PR Card Early

A permanent resident (PR) is someone who has been given PR status by immigrating to Canada, but is not a citizen. If you are a PR, it is your responsibility to ensure that your PR card remains valid.

You should apply for a new PR card if:

- Your card will expire in less than nine months;
- Your card has been lost, stolen or destroyed; or
- You legally changed your name.

Make sure to apply early if you know your card is expiring soon.

For details, visit:
www.canada.ca

and select **Immigration**
from the menu.

TOWN HALL ON RECONCILIATION: UNDERSTANDING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

I recently had the great pleasure of welcoming Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler, of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, as the guest speaker for a community discussion on Reconciliation: Understanding Our Responsibilities. Local Whitchurch-Stouffville resident, Victoria Grant, of Temagami First Nation, was also part of the speakers panel. Together, our speakers shared the importance of understanding the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and thoughts on how all Canadians can participate in reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.



It was also wonderful to welcome chiefs and representatives from several First Nations located in close proximity to Markham—Stouffville: Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and Six Nations of the Grand River. What an honour to have such amazing representation from neighbouring communities.

The enthusiasm for this event was tremendous, with over 300 people joining in for the discussion. There were people from all ages, from diverse cultural backgrounds, and representing a wide range of local groups and organizations.

Some highlights that participants shared were:

- Hearing directly from representatives of different First Nations;
- Connecting with others in our community who are learning about the work of reconciliation; and
- The authentic, open dialogue about the truth of Canada's history and the road forward.

The audience identified many significant points of

learning including: the impact of the *Indian Act*, the legacy of residential schools, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Williams Treaty which applies to local lands, and the challenges that continue today with regards to Child & Family Services.

We also talked about the positive progress that is taking place to close the socioeconomic gaps that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians – including the lifting of 62 long-term drinking water advisories in First Nations, the work of Jordan's Principle to provide care for First Nations children, and many innovative education initiatives that are supporting First Nations' student success.

There were excellent questions from participants, who emphasized the need for greater action and the responsibility we all have as Canadians to take part in reconciliation.

Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler said, *"I am encouraged that Canadians are eager to learn about Indigenous Peoples and our place in Canada, and the work we need to do as a country to move towards reconciliation. This includes the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples and the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and honouring the spirit and intent of our Treaties. It will take understanding and compassion to develop this new relationship."*

Friends and neighbours, there is more work to do, but it is wonderful that our community is taking significant steps in this journey of reconciliation. Thank you to everyone who took part in the event. As suggested by many participants, continuing together on this journey of reconciliation will be important. If you would like to be informed of our next event, please contact my office.



ENABLING ACCESSIBILITY

Canadians with disabilities face challenges every day that prevent them from participating fully in all aspects of our society, and our government is taking action to break down these barriers.

The Enabling Accessibility Fund supports community-based projects across Canada aimed at making public facilities and workplaces more accessible.



Thanks to over 600 projects recently announced by our government, Canadians with disabilities will be able to fully participate in their communities and their workplaces.

Projects like:

- Installing automated door openers and building a barrier-free accessible washroom at the Stouffville Arena.
- Retrofitting the family washroom with automated door openers at the Cornerstone Christian Community Church in Markham; and
- The installation of a wheelchair lift at the Canadian Mar Thoma Church in Stouffville.

Canada is at its best when everyone is included, and projects like the ones approved through the Enabling Accessibility Fund do just that.

Enabling Accessibility Fund announcement at the Stouffville Arena
Photo courtesy of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Recently, I stopped by Bill Hogarth Secondary School in Markham to speak to a civics class. I was pleased to have an opportunity to engage with students and share some first-hand experience on Canada's federal government and how it works.



I was also pleased to have an opportunity to join members of the Probus Club of Swan Lake for an engaging discussion on Indigenous issues in Canada.