

Activists gather to discuss Canada's record on environmental issues



Liberal environment critic MP John McKay, Doug Tripp, Concerned Residents Coalition, Liberal candidate Dr. Don Trant. - Submitted photo

Environmental activists from Halton Hills, Rockwood, Fergus, Elora, and Erin packed the Limehouse Town Hall recently to hear the Liberal Environment Critic and MP for Scarborough - Guildwood John McKay speak about Canada's record on environmental issues.

Attendees included members of the Georgetown POWER group (Protect our water and environmental resources), Save our Ravines, Concerned Residents Coalition of Rockwood,

and the Citizens' Climate Lobby of Erin.

McKay outlined the recently announced Liberal plan "Real Change for the Environment and the Economy", including action on climate change. "We have serious targets and plan to achieve them", he said. He was the guest of the federal Liberal candidate for Wellington-Halton Hills Dr. Don Trant, who said that what pushed him to run was his embarrassment at Canada's lack of commitment to green energy and the

environment. "Tying the economy to the opportunities just waiting to be tapped in green energy and the environment is the only sensible approach", he noted. "It is not just something I'd like to push it is something that must be pushed."

Doug Tripp of Concerned Residents Coalition, agreed saying "marrying the environment and the economy, and viewing it as an opportunity, is the only way" while Liz Armstrong of Citizen's Climate Lobby said she was ashamed that Canada is listed as #57 in the world for climate change initiatives.

MP REPORT

By: Michael Chong ~ MP Wellington - Halton Hills



On June 23, the Reform Act, 2014 was granted Royal Assent by Governor General David Johnston, after it passed the Senate of Canada on June 22, 38 to 14. It will now come into force later this year, on October 26.

Eighteen months after the Reform Act was introduced in the House of Commons, it is now the law of the land. The road to its passage was hard-won and the bill was subject to much scrutiny and debate. The bill was amended to gain support from MPs in the various parties in the House of Commons. As a result, the Reform Act was passed with support from all recognized parties in the House of Commons, 260 to 17.

Ultimately, the bill passed for one reason: Tens of thousands of Canadians, including many in Wellington County and Halton Hills, spoke up and voiced their support for the bill to MPs, who responded by voting for it. Thank you for your support. Without it, the Reform Act would never have become law.

The hard-fought battle to get the bill passed demonstrates that the changes in the Reform Act are significant. And the multi-party support for the bill demonstrates it is possible to set aside partisan differences, reach across the aisle and work across party lines to

advance issues in the public interest.

The Reform Act will reinforce the principle of responsible government in the House of Commons, making the executive more accountable to the legislature and ensure that party leaders, including the Prime Minister, are more accountable to party caucuses. The Reform Act will remove the statutory requirement, in place since 1970, which mandates that leaders approve party candidates. It will allow MPs to decide whether the leader or caucus can expel MPs from caucus and how the caucus chair is selected. It will allow MPs to choose an interim leader, in the event of the leader's removal, sudden resignation, incapacity or death. Finally, it will allow MPs to formalize the rules to review and remove party leaders, thereby enhancing the democratic accountability of party leaders to elected MPs in party caucuses.

The passage of the Reform Act is a victory for Canadian democracy. It demonstrates that Parliament, while very old and sometimes archaic, is capable of reform and renewal. It is my hope that the passage of the Reform Act is the beginning of further reforms of Parliament to strengthen our democracy and prepare it for the challenges Canada faces in the 21st century.

Bike it to Leathertown Festival

The Halton Hills Bicycle Friendly Community Committee is pleased to announce that it has added an Acton departure location to its popular Bike it to Leathertown Festival cycling event to be held on Sunday August 9.

Bike it to Leathertown is a free recreational group ride that links Georgetown and Acton

via our scenic country roads and features an interesting layover at the Leathertown Festival.

There are two routes to choose from depending on cycling ability. The 22 km round trip is meant for recreational cyclists but includes several hills. The advanced 50 km route does an additional loop before arriving back in Acton.

Acton registration will be at the GO Station bike parking location beginning at 9:45 a.m. with departure at 10 a.m. The group will be led to the Halton Hills Civic Centre parking lot where they will join up with the Georgetown cyclists for the return trip to Acton.

Free valet bike parking will be hosted at the Acton Go Station between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to allow participants time to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Leathertown Festival. At 1:30 p.m. the Georgetown cyclists will depart for the Civic

Centre. At that time the bike parking will remain but the supervision will no longer be available. Those wishing to use the bike parking after 1:30 p.m. should bring their own locks.

"We have partnered with the Acton BIA and are excited to bring more people to the Leathertown Festival as well as offer Acton cyclists an opportunity to participate in a group ride. We are hoping that more Acton residents will take their bikes out of the garage and start riding. And it would also be really great to sign up more Acton residents for the Halton Hills Bike Challenge." Said Committee Chair Councillor Jane Fogal.

Although this is a free event, registration is requested in advance by emailing hbcycling@haltonhills.ca or by calling Jane Fogal 905-877-5806.

Further information about this event and the Bike Challenge is available at www.haltonhills.ca/CyclingEvents

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