

Election Q&A

The Independent & Free Press posed three questions to each of the six Wellington-Halton Hills candidates. Here are their responses.

1. Why are you the best candidate to represent the riding of Wellington-Halton Hills? (Response limited to 100 words).

2. Looking at each of the other parties separately, please offer an opinion as to why they should not form the next government. (Response limited to 200 words).

3. What is the major local issue(s) in this campaign and what will you do to deal with it if elected? (Response limited to 100 words).



BRENT BOUTEILLER
(Green Party)

1. The Green Party's platform, with policies that cover all aspects of government, will provide you with sensible, sustainable, long-term solutions.
2. Using my engineering, retail business and strategic planning skills, I have the ability to work with all levels of government to provide you with the services you want.
3. Having been a candidate in municipal, provincial and federal elections, I am familiar with the issues at each level.

I normally do not criticize the other parties but you asked this specific question and here is my answer:
Conservatives: Their policies are designed to serve the interests of the very highest income brackets only.
Liberals: Their inability to define the problem of the Quebec issue led to the sponsorship scandal. If they cannot define the problems properly, they will never provide you with decent solutions.
NDP: Heavily supported by one specific interest. Heavy-handed centralized policies. Question of fiscal responsibility.
Christian Heritage: Focus is far too narrow.
The Green Party represents all Canadians. We will work to protect the air, soil and water. We will develop a strong sustainable economy. We believe in health, not just health-care. We can restore Canadian values of fairness, equality and justice. Check out our website at www.greenparty.ca for all our policies.

1. Health Care
• Oppose any steps that open the way to two-tier health care in Canada; co-ordinate with provinces for a national pharmacare plan; ensure clean drinking water for all Canadians.
2. Transportation Alternatives for Commuters
• Support pedestrian, cycling, and car-sharing infrastructure in municipalities; Increase joint federal-municipal transit investments and VIA rail service; Make transit passes tax-deductible
3. Farming
• Restructure agricultural markets to ensure that farming families receive a fair share of the consumer food dollar; Reform the regulatory environment to challenge corporate concentration, eliminate international dumping and subsidies, and continue to allow seed-saving by farmers
4. Many more policies on the above and other issues.



MICHAEL CHONG
(Conservative)

Prior to being elected, I worked as Chief Information Officer at the NHL Players' Association and as senior advisor at the GTAA for Pearson's redevelopment. My private sector experience taught me the value of a dollar.
I'm also involved in volunteer work. I co-founded the Dominion Institute, which partners with the Royal Canadian Legion, to educate youth about veterans. I'm on the boards of the Elora Festival and Trinity College at the University of Toronto.
Being active in the community has taught me that those who get involved can make a difference. That's why I decided to enter public life.

Since the Liberal Party is the only party other than the Conservative Party likely to form government, my comments will focus on them.
The re-election of a Liberal government would further damage national unity. Liberal involvement in the sponsorship scandal has damaged federalism in Quebec, resulting in a resurgence of separatism and discrediting Liberals as a force for federalism in Quebec.
Support for Quebec separatism has actually increased because of the Liberal Party's sponsorship corruption. In 2001, support for separatism stood at 40% (*Winnipeg Sun*, Oct. 29, 2005). Since then, a Leger poll shows support for separatism rising to 54% (*Hamilton Spectator*, Apr. 28, 2005). Most damning of all, 37% of Quebecers said the Gomery inquiry's testimony of sponsorship corruption motivated their decision to support getting out of Confederation (*Winnipeg Sun*, Apr. 28, 2005).
If Liberals are re-elected to government, Quebecers will conclude that their only choice is between the discredited Liberals and the separatist Bloc. But if Ontarians elect a Conservative government, Quebecers will see that they have a third option: a Conservative government untainted by corruption and dedicated to keeping Canada united. Only by electing a Conservative government can we restore Quebecers' faith in federalism and in Confederation.

Last election, I helped fight to keep Georgetown Hospital open, something I continue to be involved with.
This election, the local issue is ensuring the high quality of life in Georgetown and Acton continues despite growth pressures. If elected, a Conservative government will help commuters and the environment by reducing GO Transit costs 16%.
I'll continue to work with Mayor Rick Bonnette to push GO Transit to extend service to Acton.
We'll also help working families by giving parents \$1,200 a year for each pre-schooler in their family, money that can be spent on daycare, a babysitter or other essentials.



NOEL DUIGNAN
(NDP)

As a passionate believer in social justice and a member of the NDP for 30 years, I am running because I want to help get more done for our community and Canada.
I believe that I am the only candidate who wants to take better care of our seniors, to make sure we invest more in education and training, to improve health care and stop privatization in its tracks, get serious about our environment and clean up government.

The Liberals had 12 years to act on all the social issues facing Canada, but they spent 12 years "doing nothing about anything" except making sure their friends got rewarded. They failed to act on child property—they cut social spending instead.
They balanced the budgets by cutting health care, education and spent billions on corporate tax cuts to biggest corporations in Canada instead of taking care of Canadians and did nothing to stop corporate agribusiness from squeezing farmers to extinction.
Stephen Harper and the Conservatives are wrong on the issues, out of touch with Canadian values, and he leads an ineffective opposition that did not get results for people in the last parliament. For example, their child care plan is a tax cut worth about \$19 a week, which would barely make a dent in a family's bill for child care. They want to be part of the U.S. missile defence scheme, they have no credibility on the environment, their record on ethics is a little better than the Liberals, they support the Liberals on trade deals that make life tough for the farmers, they want, like Ralph Klein, to expand for-profit health care.

One of the issues facing the people of Wellington-Halton Hills is the issue of gas prices. Most people living in our riding have no choice but to use vehicles whether it is going to work, working on the farm, buying groceries or picking up their children.
The NDP is the only party willing to take on the oil companies and has a plan for fair gas prices. (Conservatives brought in the GST on gas prices). On the above issue and other Canadians have only one real alternative to the Liberals in Ottawa, the NDP.