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GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

Conservative Lisa Raitt lets out a celebratory cry at the Best Western hotel late last night, after Halton voters chose her as their next Halton MP.

Conservatives take back Halton

Constituents vote in Lisa Raitt

By Melanie Hennessey
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

The Halton Riding is back in blue at the federal level as Conservative newcomer Lisa Raitt unseated controversial Halton Liberal MP Garth Turner in last night's election.

The north Oakville resident was deemed the winner less than one hour after the polls closed as she quickly pulled ahead by hundreds and then thousands of votes.

Around 11 p.m., Raitt gave her victory speech to the dozens of supporters who gathered to celebrate with her at the Best Western

hotel in Milton.

The new MP — amidst chants of "Lisa! Lisa!" — said the vote of confidence in her and the Conservatives is immense and touching.

"Thank you, Halton," she said. "It (the campaign) has been the most meaningful five weeks of my life."

Raitt said it's no secret that Halton riding "has been without representation" on the government side of the House of Commons for a while.

"It ends tonight," she said, which was met by a round of cheers.

The married mother of two went on to

thank her campaign team, the Halton Conservative Association, her family and people at the Toronto Port Authority, where she was the president and CEO until recently taking an unpaid leave of absence to run in the election.

"It was a team victory," she said. "Everyone on our team dedicated themselves and pulled together."

She also acknowledged the other local candidates who she said worked hard to deliver their messages on behalf of their parties.

"They have made democracy stronger," she said.

While things often became heated between Raitt and Turner during the campaign, she said

• see RAITT on page A5

Turner ousted

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Moments after his January 2006 victory, Garth Turner said he was "proud to be a foot soldier in Stephen Harper's army."

Last night the outspoken and now ousted politician — turfed out of the Conservative caucus for his controversial blog and later joining the Liberals — could only sit back in dismay as the Harper invasion made its way back into Halton.

Unable to maintain his foothold in the area following a heated and at times nasty campaign — which featured plenty of on-line mudslinging — Turner lost a relatively decisive race to Tory Lisa Raitt.

Shortly before his defeat was official, *Champion* news editor

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