

Outpouring of support by Raitt's colleagues, including prime minister

At the meeting at the Mohawk Inn and Conference Centre in Campbellville to discuss new transport standards for rail.

At the end of her speech, she announced she had been having health issues and said a tumour had been found.

Raitt, who appeared to be in good spirits, said she would be "out of commission" during the recovery period when she will need painkillers, and joked that "you're a better minister when you're not high."

She said she wouldn't know if the tumour is

cancerous until after the surgery when the growth would be tested.

"It could be benign," she told the crowd of about 75 Chamber members.

Raitt told the Chamber she made the announcement in part to curtail speculation about her absence from Parliament.

She added she wouldn't be taking any questions on the subject.

News of Raitt's surgery has resulted in an outpouring of support from her closest colleagues, including Prime Minister Stephen

Harper.

"We wish you all the best for a quick and full recovery," tweeted Harper on Sunday evening, on behalf of his family and the Conservative Party of Canada.

On Monday morning, Oakville MP Terence Young told the *Champion* that his thoughts and prayers were with Raitt.

"When we were under attack by the terrorist outside our caucus room Lisa was fearless. She will no doubt face this challenge with the same courage and prevail," he said, referring to the October 22 shootout in Ottawa that took the life of Corporal Nathan Cirillo.

Burlington MP Mike Wallace called Raitt a "valuable team player" and added, "we need

her back nationally and we need her back globally."

Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong also wished Raitt all the best as she deals with the matter.

"My thoughts are with her and her family," he said.

Raitt lost her father to colon cancer when she was 11 and her 36-year-old brother to lung cancer. She's the mother of two young boys.

At press time yesterday (Wednesday), no information was available on Raitt's condition after surgery.

Staff at Raitt's Ottawa office said any updates would be posted on her website, www.lisara-ittmp.com.

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