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STEPHANIE KUSIE, M.P.
CALGARY MIDNAPORE

Update to Constituents of Calgary Midnapore **June 15, 2020**



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June 16, 2020

Dear Constituents,

We've been through hell and high water, but there seems to be a light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel. As the provincial government has begun to loosen some restrictions and we enter Stage 2 of the Alberta Relaunch, many of us are now able to see the friends and family we've been missing, get long awaited haircuts, attend worship services, enjoy our beautiful parks, and support local businesses.

Since we can now do all of these things, my Conservative colleagues and I continue to advocate for Parliament to be recalled so that MP's can do the job that Canadians elected us to do. Although the Prime Minister managed to get the support of the NDP to allow his minority government to continue to keep Parliament shut down until September, the Official Opposition wants to see the return of a fully functioning House of Commons. Many of you have called or written to me on the topic, and I am taking the opportunity to provide additional information in this newsletter.

I am hosting two more virtual events in June and welcome you to join if you are interested. On June 16th, I will be joined by my colleague, MP Glen Motz, for a fulsome discussion on the recent Liberal firearms ban, and on June 22nd, I will be participating in an initiative to connect youth in Calgary Midnapore with wonderful local mentors to help them get a great start post-graduation. Details on both of these events are below.

Lastly, please note that both my Constituency and Hill offices will officially re-open on Monday, June 15th. Please keep in mind that visits to either office must be scheduled ahead of time with my staff. Both offices will have hand sanitizer and protective masks available for those with appointments.

Please continue to keep in touch and let me know what's on your mind. I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Take good care!

Sincerely,

Stephanie

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House of Commons Update

What happened to Parliament?

Over the past weeks and months, our office has been inundated with requests to support the reopening of Parliament.

With a global pandemic underway, Canada steamrolling towards a debt-to-GDP ratio of over 50%, and growing abuses of power by the state, it is clear Government accountability is needed now more than ever. While these concerns have been heard loud and clear by Conservative Members of Parliament across Canada, the other federal parties seem unconcerned by the lack of government oversight.

Even though the Liberal government is only a minority, Justin Trudeau refuses to allow the House of Commons to sit “normally”. Instead, with rare exceptions to pass legislation, he turned Parliament, a place where Opposition can hold the government to account, into the “Special Committee on COVID-19”. This effectively limits topics which can be discussed, and legislation which can be tabled, to topics relating only to the coronavirus. Additionally, Justin Trudeau managed to get the backing of the NDP for his motion to have Parliament stay shut down until September. *This means that virtually every tool available to the Official Opposition to hold the Liberal government to account in the House of Commons has been stripped away until at least late September.*

The Opposition cannot use Opposition Day Motions, Private Members' Business, Order Paper Questions, or Committee Reports as means to question the government. It also means that the Liberals can delay the presentation of their Budget and an Economic Update, which my colleagues and I feel is extremely important.

Businesses have shut down, millions of Canadians are unemployed, and billions of dollars are flying out of government coffers. The need for oversight has never been greater. But Justin Trudeau refuses to be transparent with Canadians. He has opted to shut down Parliament in order to avoid answering legitimate questions and stifling democratic debate.

Under the guise of health and safety, while himself participating in public protests and speaking in person at convocations without appropriate PPE, Justin Trudeau has managed to nullify the most essential function of Canada's proud democratic institutions.

The Conservative Party of Canada has been advocating since early April that the House of Commons be considered an essential service to Canada; and all Canadians. Andrew Scheer called Trudeau to account for this on a speech to the Special Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic. Scheer's speech can be found on Facebook here: [Andrew Scheer: Parliament should be sitting / Le Parlement doit siéger.](#)

If you agree that this is a stonewalling of democracy, you may wish to consider signing e-Petition 2629, sponsored by Conservative MP Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville). [Click here to sign: e-2629 \(Parliament and politics\)](#). The petition will be tabled in the House of Commons when Parliament resumes.

Stephanie in the COVID Committee...

Stephanie had the opportunity to question the government in person during a June COVID Committee meeting. She asked about erroneous CERB payments, and how and when Canadian families can expect those funds will be recouped by the government. She also asked if the government would admit they'd taken a dictatorial

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approach after reading the Debate Commission's latest report about the 2019 election debates. The Commission recommended *against* many of the unilateral rules imposed by the Liberals as they de-legitimized the Commission.

She also gave a Member's Statement on the 31st anniversary of the Tiananmen Square protests, which felt timely given the tenuous and concerning situation in Hong Kong.

You can watch all of these questions, responses, and statements on Stephanie's Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/stephaniekusiepolitician>.

Did you hear about the Budget Bill (Supplementary Estimates)?

We saw clearly why a sitting Parliament is so necessary with the tabling of the government's new Supplementary Estimates. With an overall cost of **\$87 billion**, the package included such items as \$88 million in advertising and \$48.7 million for Trudeau's Privy Council's Office, but huge cuts for the Auditor General's office. And to top it off, the government allocated only *four hours* for Parliament to read, debate, and (potentially) approve the estimates.

We were successful in securing more time to study and debate Bill C-17, and it will be before another short Parliamentary session this week.

Trudeau does not want Canadians to know about the state of our finances and he is actively trying to prevent the Official Opposition from shining a light on them. In fact, it's the job of the Official Opposition to comb through every line item, to question every expense and make sure that Canadians' tax dollars are spent properly. The Conservative Party has been pushing for an update on our finances and we hope to see the Trudeau government to table an economic update before the end of the month. The Liberals are spending hundreds of billions of taxpayers' dollars. Canadians deserve to see where that money is going!

In the meantime, the Conservative Party will remain focused on ensuring families, seniors, and small businesses get the help they need to make it through this pandemic, despite Trudeau's attempts to prevent the Opposition from doing its job. How?

- Currently, nine committees are meeting virtually. The CPC will be moving motions to call Ministers to those committees so that we can question them and get answers.
- Our Party is prepared to call emergency committee meetings.
- We won't agree to fast track any more government legislation. If the Liberals had bills they needed to introduce, they should have allowed Parliament to resume at the end of May like it was supposed to.

In Committee...

One of the few tools left for us to utilize as the Official Opposition, is having Parliamentary Committees sit. Currently there are nine Committees meeting virtually, providing an opportunity to call witnesses and study the impact of the Liberals' financial aid package.

Stephanie continues to serve as Vice-Chair of the HUMA Committee which has been studying the government's response to COVID-19, and its impacts on individuals and organizations in Canada.

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She and her Conservative colleagues have been questioning Liberal Ministers (Hussen, Monsef, Schulte, Qualtrough, Mendicino, Chagger, and Tassi), regarding the CERB, Service Canada accessibility, supports for seniors, maternity benefits, supports to emergency shelters, and assistance for students.

Stephanie will continue to hold these Ministers, and their government accountable for the many promises they've made as well as identify gaps and propose solutions for the betterment of all Canadian families.

As always, you can watch these Committee meetings here:

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/HUMA>

OAS/GIS increase:

Although the Prime Minister originally promised that seniors who normally receive these benefits would see an increase on their June deposits, he recently revised this to indicate seniors would see the increase on July 6th. More information can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>.

Calgary Midnapore Economic Recovery Taskforce:

Entrepreneurs in our community have been clear that businesses need more support and that the current Government programs are falling short of their intended outcomes. This is why Stephanie has assembled the *Calgary Midnapore Economic Recovery Taskforce*. The Taskforce has met twice virtually, and findings from those meetings as well as feedback from the survey (link below) are currently being summarized.

Alongside her Taskforce colleagues, MLA Richard Gotfried (Calgary-Fish Creek) and Ward 14 Councillor Peter Demong, Stephanie is looking forward to continuing to hear from business owners in the coming weeks as she works to prepare a final report aimed at helping to rebuild our local economy.

If you are a small business owner in Calgary Midnapore, please share with us your input by completing our Small Business Input survey at: <https://stephaniekusiemp.ca/small-business-survey/>.

Please note: this survey closes on July 24, 2020.

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Upcoming Events

Facts & Firearms Virtual Town Hall, with Special Guest, MP Glen Motz

Tues. June 16, 2020, 5-6 PM via Zoom. *(See attachment)*

This special event will feature a discussion surrounding the order-in-council ban and a live Q&A with MP Motz. Learn more and register [here](#).

The Power of Mentorship

Mon. June 22, 2020 9:30 – 11 AM (MST) – via Zoom. *(See attachment)*

Stephanie is teaming up with the Canadian Mentoring Partnership to host a virtual event that aims to connect youth in Calgary Midnapore with local mentors, who can help give some helpful advice as they take a big step out into the world.

The 1.5 hour virtual experience will include both large group skill-building activities and two rounds of facilitated 1:1 / small group career mentoring discussions.

If you or someone in your household is interested in participating as either a mentor or a mentee, please contact Katie Cook via email: stephanie.kusie.c1@parl.gc.ca