



# Linda Duncan

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT // EDMONTON – STRATHCONA  
[www.LindaDuncanMP.ca](http://www.LindaDuncanMP.ca)

IN THIS ISSUE: Electoral Reform | Climate Change Action | Canadian Pension Plan Reform | Health Care | Rail Safety | Pay Equity | Federal Action on Environment | Medical Assistance in Dying Legislation | Decriminalizing Marijuana | Photos in the Community

## Greetings!

Over the past several years I have been privileged to work with representatives from the South Alberta Light Horse Foundation, the Old Strathcona Foundation, the Old Strathcona Community League, the Old Strathcona Business Association, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, the Youth Empowerment Support Society and municipal and provincial government representatives to re-establish a place of honour for the Old Strathcona cenotaph. This June we were privileged that Her Royal Highness, the Countess of Wessex, Honorary Colonel of the South Alberta Light Horse, joined us at the celebratory sod-turning for Light Horse Park, home of the Old Strathcona Cenotaph. Each November 11th, I have been invited to join the Light Horse regiment and local community in a service at Holy Trinity and march to the cenotaph. Light Horse Park will provide information on a century of military service by the Regiment, including within Edmonton Strathcona, and an enhanced community gathering place.



I was honoured to attend the sod-turning ceremony for Light Horse Park, located at 104 Street and 85 Avenue and site of the Strathcona cenotaph, with HRH Sophie, the Countess of Wessex and other dignitaries.

This past year I have also appreciated participating in a wide variety of community events, to mention just a few — the commemoration of the Holodomor, Chinese New Year celebrations, the Nagarkirtan (Sikh parade), Vimy Ridge High School

Remembrance ceremonies, King's University and high school graduations and the Centre Alberta d'information Juridique anniversary celebrations, events at SEESA, Strathcona Place Seniors and S.C.O.N.A., the Varscona Theatre grand opening and the PRIDE parade. I appreciated tours of the Stollery Children's Hospital and the AltaSteel plant and briefings by University of Alberta academics, students and leadership and Alberta's agricultural producers.

I look forward to seeing you at our fabulous summer festivals. Have a great summer!

*Linda*

### UPCOMING EVENTS

*All Welcome!*

#### DESSERT AND COFFEE SOCIAL

Tuesday, August 9,  
6:30–8 pm  
Capilano Community Hall, 10810 54 Street

Plus — join our garden share — bring your extra fruit, vegetables, herbs.

#### ANNUAL SUMMER BBQ

Tuesday, August 23,  
6–7:30 pm  
Ritchie Community Hall, 7727 98 Street

Enjoy burgers, hotdogs & salads. Balloon animals & facepainting for the kids.

Plus — join our garden share — bring your extra fruit, vegetables, herbs.

#### ELECTORAL REFORM TOWN HALL

7 pm, Thursday,  
September 8  
Westbury Theatre, ATB Financial Arts Barns, 10330 84 Ave

Come and take part in the discussion about how the way we vote in Canada should be changed.

**HOW I CAN HELP**

My staff and I are available to support constituents on federal matters. Below is a guide to the range of services we offer. *Contactez H el ene   mon bureau de circonscription (780-495-8404) pour de l'assistance en fran ais.*

**My Edmonton constituency office can help with:**

- Employment insurance
- Citizenship and immigration
- Canada Pension, Old Age Security (OAS) & Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- Canada Revenue Agency
- Student loans
- Meeting with the MP
- Invitations to events
- Veterans Affairs

**My Ottawa office can assist with:**

- Information on legislation
- Submitting a petition for presentation in the House of Commons
- Accessing information on bills, laws, policies and statements in the House
- Contacting government departments
- Visiting the House of Commons and attending Question Period

**GREETINGS & CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES**

Celebrating a special Birthday? An anniversary? A graduation? I would be pleased to send or facilitate special greetings.

**Her Majesty, The Queen**

**Anniversaries:** 60 years or more, at five year intervals.  
**Birthdays:** 100 years or more. *(Six to eight weeks notice required. Requests must include a photocopy of the birth or wedding certificate.)*

**Linda Duncan, MP**

Any anniversary, birthday, graduation, new citizenship or other occasion.

**Governor General**

**Anniversaries:** 50 years or more  
**Birthdays:** 90 years or more *(Both at five year intervals. Six to eight weeks notice required.)*

**Prime Minister**

**Anniversaries:** 25 years or more, at five year intervals.  
**Birthdays:** 65 years or more, at five year intervals. *(Six weeks notice required.)*

**GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

Information on Government of Canada programs and services can be obtained by dialing toll-free 1-800 0-Canada (1-800-622-6232) TTY: 1-800-926-9105, going online to [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca) or visiting a Service Canada Centre.

**Filing your Taxes**

Revenue Canada no longer mails out tax forms. To order a form call 1-800-959-8281. You can also print forms from CRA's website: [www.cra.gc.ca](http://www.cra.gc.ca). The website has a link to a free software package for online filing.

**Student Loans**

For information about obtaining student loans: [www.canlearn.ca/eng/loans\\_grants/loans/](http://www.canlearn.ca/eng/loans_grants/loans/)  
 For the Repayment Assistance Plan: [www.canlearn.ca/eng/loans\\_grants/repayment/help/index.shtml](http://www.canlearn.ca/eng/loans_grants/repayment/help/index.shtml)

**Finding a Job**

For information on the Job Bank, on resume writing tips, opportunities for youth and students, and for job openings with the Federal Government: [www.servicecanada.gc.ca/jobs](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/jobs)

**Canada Pension Plan**

For CPP, Survivors Benefit and CPP Disability benefit: [www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cpp](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cpp)

**For Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)**

[www.servicecanada.gc.ca/oas](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/oas)

July is the month where some **federal benefits are recalculated or renewed** based on your income tax return. This includes Child Tax Benefit, GIS, and GST credit. Do not hesitate to contact our office if you have inquiries or issues with the recalculation or renewal.



In April Murray Rankin, NDP Justice Critic, joined me in Edmonton for a town hall to discuss the new Assisted Dying Legislation.

**Medical Assistance in Dying Legislation**

Much of the spring session was dedicated to debating Bill C-14 triggered by the Supreme Court of Canada ruling striking down the prohibition on assistance in dying on the basis it violates Canadians' Charter rights. The court directed that for a specified period, during which the government may consider a new law, the court would hear applications from patients seeking permission to secure assistance in dying on condition they were suffering from a grievous and irremediable medical condition. Bill C-14 adopted the definition articulated by the court, but imposed additional criteria including that their natural death has become reasonably foreseeable. This latter condition attracted the strongest objections to the bill on the basis that it will trigger constitutional challenges as it is not consistent with court rulings including in Alberta and Ontario.

The bill imposes additional conditions on accessing medical assistance in dying including competency, a prescribed waiting period, independent witnesses and advice on availability of palliative care. It also extends protections for conscience rights for medical personnel. The government is required to undertake independent reviews on future access to assistance in dying by mature minors, advance requests and requests by those suffering mental illnesses.

While I support access to medical assistance in dying I opposed the final bill because it excludes access to medical assistance to an entire category of people; medical practitioners are concerned that the criteria "reasonably foreseeable death" is imprecise; and because many suffering patients may still be forced to seek redress in the courts to obtain medical assistance.

**How to Contact Linda Duncan**

 <p><b>In Edmonton</b>                  10049-81 Ave (Entrance on 101 St)                  Edmonton, Alberta T6E 1W7                  Phone: 780-495-8404                  Fax: 780-495-8403</p>	<p><b>In Ottawa</b>                  House of Commons                  Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6                  Phone: 613-995-7325                  Fax: 613-995-5342</p>
<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:linda.duncan@parl.gc.ca">linda.duncan@parl.gc.ca</a>    <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.LindaDuncanMP.ca">www.LindaDuncanMP.ca</a></p>	

*Veuillez trouver la version fran aise de ce bulletin sur mon site web.*

**Electoral Reform**

A motion by the NDP called for a fair, inclusive process based on cross-party collaboration to examine potential electoral reforms. In response, the government changed MP representation on their special committee to reflect voter support and to give all parties a vote on proposed reforms. Consultations are being commenced to seek Canadians' opinions on voter reform. I will be hosting a forum to seek your input this September 8 (*see front page*). In the interim, I welcome hearing from you on your ideas for how we can make every vote count.

**Climate Change Action**

The government has asked MPs to seek constituents' views on federal action to deliver on international commitments to reduce greenhouse gases. I continue to welcome your input on potential measures such as support to energy efficiency investments for home owners and small and medium businesses and investment in cleaner energy sources. It is becoming evident it is possible to build a healthy economy and create jobs while reducing emissions. I welcome your ideas for federal action.

**CPP Reform**

The federal government has reached agreement in principle with eight of the provinces and territories to phase in increased Canada Pension Plan contributions and benefits over a seven year period. Pension reform, long supported by the NDP and promised by the Liberals, is intended to enable more Canadians to retire with dignity. While the current maximum annual benefit is \$13,110 the average paid out is only \$7,974.84. The proposal is to eventually increase premiums by 1% with resulting increased

benefits. It will be equally important that agreement be reached on significant enhancement of GIS, OAS and the Working Income Tax Benefits to assist low income earners.

**Rail Safety**

As NDP Transport Critic I participated in a comprehensive study on rail safety examining many critical issues raised by the Transportation Safety Board, rail workers, rail inspectors and communities including actions to address fatigue management, dangerous railway crossings and improved tank car standards. The Federation of Municipalities and communities located along rail lines called for enhanced access to information on dangerous rail cargo and consultation on safety standards. We travelled to Lac-M egantic to hear directly from the community on their rail tragedy, efforts towards recovery and recommendations for reform. To access the Committee report and NDP Supplementary Report visit my website at [railsafety.LindaDuncanMP.ca](http://railsafety.LindaDuncanMP.ca).

**Pay Equity**

In February the House of Commons adopted an NDP motion calling for urgent action to end discrimination against women on equal pay for work of equal value, to recognize pay equity as a human right. Canadian women working full time still make only 77% of what men earn for work of equal value and there are signs the gap might be growing. In response, a special committee was struck to conduct hearings on pay equity and propose a plan to adopt a proactive federal pay equity regime. A report issued this June recommends proactive pay equity legislation within 18 months. The NDP believes that equal pay for work of equal value is a human right and action should be taken without further delay.



Appreciated the briefing in May from Friends of Medicare seeking federal action on critical issues.

**Health Care:** I continue to hear from constituents that health care is a priority for federal investment, including for palliative care, mental health supports and senior care. Regrettably, the federal budget failed to provide any substantial increases for these priorities. The lack of accessible palliative care was raised as a key issue during debates on medically assisted death. It is also important to recognize that provision of these medical supports to indigenous Canadians, veterans

**Federal Action on Environment**

I have re-tabled for the third time my private members bill, a Canadian Environmental Bill of Rights (*ebr.LindaDuncanMP.ca*). My bill would extend to all Canadians the right to a clean ecologically balanced environment, impose duties on the federal government to take actions to enact and enforce protections and extend rights to Canadians to environmental information, to participate in decisions impacting the environment and to take action to force government action. This fall I will also table a bill requiring that rail shipping of dangerous cargo be made subject to environmental impact assessment with a voice to concerned communities.

The government has also announced reviews of key federal environmental laws downgraded by the previous Conservative

and our armed forces is a federal responsibility. We continue to champion the call for a national dementia strategy. I am also supporting the efforts of the Stollery to be recognized for serving the medical needs of children right across the Western region. Finally, I support our Mayor's proposal that Edmonton be recognized as the health innovation capital. I also supported private member's bill C-223, to establish a National Organ Donor Registry, regrettably not supported by the government.

government. Along with my NDP colleagues I have issued a call for a comprehensive government-sponsored public consultation process. You can share your views at [www.canada.ca/environmentalreviews](http://www.canada.ca/environmentalreviews).

**Decriminalizing Marijuana**

The NDP Motion calling on the government to immediately decriminalize the simple possession of marijuana for personal use did not receive government member support, despite their election promise. Our concern is that this year alone it is projected that at least one third of the almost 60,000 Canadians, including youth, who will be arrested for simple possession of marijuana will obtain a criminal record. Many, including police forces, have called for simple ticketing for these offences.

## IN THE COMMUNITY



1

**1:** Always a pleasure to attend citizenship ceremonies and meet new Canadians.

**2:** With Director Ali Rachid at the first anniversary celebration of Centre Albertain d'information juridique, a free legal information service located at Cité Francophone.

**3:** Denise Nobert helps organize the display of Canadian flags on the balconies of the Riverwind buildings each July 1.

**4:** I had a terrific time at the launch of the SkirtsAFire festival as a judge at their skirt design competition. The skirt by Brenda Philp (centre) was made from felt using Opus the dog's hair. His owner Tina modelled the skirt.

**5:** I enjoyed a tour of AltaSteel, who use scrap steel generated within Alberta to manufacture prime quality steel products.

**6:** It was a treat to meet with the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation for a facility tour. An added bonus was meeting volunteers who bring cheer to the kids with puppies.

**7:** My team getting ready to march in the Pride Parade on Whyte Avenue.

**8:** It was an honour meeting Dr. Monia Mazigh who spoke at an Alberta Muslim Public Affairs Council fundraiser for Fort McMurray fire victims.

**Front cover (top):** A highlight of my spring is helping with the Mill Creek ravine cleanup.



2



3



4



5



6



7



8