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A Fond Farewell: My Tenure as the Chair of the Federal Liberal Ontario Caucus

As our Prime Minister Trudeau often says, diversity is our strength. I am reminded of that every time I look around the table at the Federal Liberal Ontario Caucus.

At 79 members strong, we have the largest regional caucus in the House of Commons. We represent ridings from Toronto to Sudbury, Niagara to Brampton, Ottawa to Sault St Marie, and everywhere in between. We are lawyers, nurses, soldiers, entrepreneurs, and social workers. Our constituents come from all walks of life, can trace their roots to dozens of countries, and speak many more languages.

This diversity and inclusion is what has led both Canada and Ontario to succeed time and again. Our different experiences and perspectives have helped us grow and thrive, to reinforce our place as a leader to the world. And at our heart, we are united by the dream of making Canada a better place.

During my time as Chair of the Federal Liberal Ontario Caucus, I have watched Ontario experience remarkable growth. The Canada Child Benefit is lifting thousands of children out of poverty, with families receiving an average of \$4,600 more than under Harper's plan.

Local governments across the province have finally found the partner they need. The Municipality of St. Charles is developing a long-term plan to maintain their roads, sewers, and bridges for decades to come. My hometown of Brampton is expanding their fleet of buses for public transit to match its rapidly increasing ridership. This is all due to billions in new funding from our government; money that the Conservatives refused to invest.

Ontario has added hundreds of thousands of jobs and is reaching record low employment rates. Immigration is innovating and strengthening our labour force. Tens of thousands of affordable homes are being built and repaired.

I have been serving as Ontario Caucus Chair for nearly two years, working with my fellow MPs to best advocate for this incredible province. Being elected to the position was an honour that I strove to be worthy of every day. But as we enter the fall session, I believe that it is time to give another MP the opportunity to carry the torch.

To my fellow Ontario Liberal MPs, who have been just as much friends as colleagues, thank you for your trust and support. To my successor, Mark Gerretsen, I wish you the very best and look forward to seeing you make your mark on this role.

And to you, Ontario. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve you in this capacity. I look forward to continuing to advocate for my constituents and all Canadians.

Regardless of your political beliefs, we must hold our democracy to the highest standard. Let us continue to question, learn, and be kind to one another, and we will be equal to the task.

- 30 -

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