



# ***News Article***

**Susan Kadis, M.P., Thornhill**

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**Thornhill**

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## **Crisis At Chalk River**

In December the conservative government took the extraordinary step of introducing emergency legislation to restart the 50 year old Chalk River Nuclear Facility. The facility was shut down for failing to implement safety measures as part of its licensing agreement as mandated by Canada's nuclear watchdog, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. The House of Commons sat late into the evening in order to address the medical isotopes crisis which was now delaying treatments for serious illnesses, such as cancer and heart disease, across the country and around the world. The medical isotopes produced at Chalk River are used to treat approximately 16 million people in 80 countries and provide 5 million people with medical image scans annually.

I always consider the health and safety of Thornhill residents and all Canadians as the first priority when making public policy decisions. As a cancer survivor, I understood the impact that the shortage of medical isotopes was having on patients. As Parliamentarians we had to carefully weigh the impact caused by the shortage of medical isotopes with the risks of restarting the nuclear facility before the required work could be complete. As I voted to restart the Chalk River facility, I was deeply disturbed with how this government had allowed this situation to escalate to the level where Parliament was required to intervene.

The conservative government and the Minister of Natural Resources in particular, have refused to own up to their responsibility for the mismanagement of this crisis. There are serious unanswered questions surrounding when the government was made aware of the problems with Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL), who operate the Chalk River facility and significant concerns about the Minister's conduct both throughout the crisis and his recent heavy handedness in trying to force Linda Keen, the president of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission out of office.

The crisis at Chalk River demands a thorough review and full examination in order to provide Parliament and all Canadians with a full account of what happened. The Liberal Opposition has already called on the Minister to appear before the Standing Committee on Natural Resources in order to provide answers about his role in this crisis. I will be working with my colleagues to ensure that we get those answers and that we never face this situation again. Canadians must have confidence in both the supply of medical isotopes and the safety of the Canadian nuclear industry.