

Ontario short-changed AGAIN!

By Maria Minna, M.P.

Ontario has been short-changed once again by Stephen Harper's Conservative government. This time it is regarding the number of seats Ontario should have in the House of Commons. The unfair legislation, as proposed by the Conservatives, only allocates ten new seats to Ontario. That's one half of the number of seats a formula distributing seats according to population growth would give our province.

This Conservative legislation will weaken Ontario's position in the House of Commons, adding fewer seats to the province than our population dictates, while British Columbia and Alberta would receive an additional seven and five seats to reflect their population growth.

The new formula would disadvantage Ontario in the future as every time British Columbia and Alberta's population grows by 100,000 they would get one more seat while Ontario's population has to grow by 200,000 before gaining a seat. This will have a negative effect on our democracy as it is most certainly not representation by population.

The Ontario legislature unanimously adopted a motion condemning the Conservative government's plan as unfair to Ontario. Conservative Members of Parliament continue to remain silent on this issue and refuse to stand up for Ontario's interests in Confederation.

Instead, Conservative House Leader Peter Van Loan called Premier Dalton McGuinty "the small man of confederation" in response to his recent criticism of the Conservative's plan. The newly re-elected Premier of Ontario is standing up for our province because of the federal Conservative government's blatant ploy to give Ontario an unfair number of seats.

Premier McGuinty is taking his job seriously and representing the people of Ontario. He should be commended.

The Ontario Liberal caucus is united against this legislation and we will oppose any plan that disadvantages Ontario and forces one region of Canada to fight against the other regions to get their fair share of representation in the House of Commons.

I encourage you to write to my office to voice your opinions on this matter.

Thank you.