



## MARK GERRETSEN Your Member of Parliament

### A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MP

As we head into the summer months, I want to take a moment to connect with you and share a few updates from Ottawa and here at home in Kingston and the Islands.

This spring marked one year since I began serving as Chief Government Whip in the 45th Parliament. It has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and an honour to take on this responsibility on behalf of our government. One of the most meaningful parts of the role has been welcoming new Members of Parliament—helping them settle in, identify where their strengths can best contribute, and supporting their work in the House of Commons and in Committee. Ensuring our team is organized, informed, and ready to deliver for Canadians is demanding work, but it is also deeply fulfilling.

Inside, you'll find a summary of the Spring Economic Update, outlining how we are continuing to strengthen Canada's economy and support families during uncertain times. You'll also see an update on Canada's defence commitments, including the steps being taken to support our Armed Forces and meet our responsibilities at home and with our allies. Additionally, I'm very happy to introduce Canada's next Governor General.

Finally, I'm pleased to include a Save the Date for our 4th Annual Labour Day Community Picnic—a tradition I truly enjoy and look forward to every year. I hope you'll be able to join us to celebrate the end of summer and the incredible workers in our community.

Thank you for the continued privilege of serving you. I wish you a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer.

Warm regards,



## SPRING ECONOMIC UPDATE

The Spring Economic Update 2026 maintains Canada's fiscal strength – while investing for Canadians to continue to build Canada's prosperity today and for the next generation. This includes new core investments in Canada's future, and in good-paying careers that will advance national affordability, prosperity and safety. Take a look below for a quick overview of the update!



### Canada's own Sovereign Wealth Fund

- Canada is creating its own sovereign wealth fund - the **Canada Strong Fund**. This new Fund will strengthen Canada's economy and give Canadians a direct stake in its success.
- The Fund will invest in key strategic Canadian projects and companies on a commercial basis and alongside private sector investors.
- Canadians will have the opportunity to invest in the Fund and share in the financial returns generated by these projects and companies.



### Supporting Workers and Young People

- Launching **Team Canada Strong** to recruit, train, and hire **100,000 Red Seal skilled trades workers by 2030-31**.
- **\$2.9 billion** to support paid, job-ready placements leading into registered apprenticeships.
- **Up to \$10,000** per apprentice to help employers (especially Small & Medium Enterprises) hire, train, and retain apprentices.
- Enhanced income support, including a **\$400 per week Apprenticeship Training Grant** while apprentices are in mandatory in-class technical training, so more can complete their training.



### Making Life More Affordable for Canadians

- **\$42 million** to enable factory-built housing, make homebuilding more efficient and innovative, and to improve the responsiveness of housing markets.
- Accelerating **over \$7 billion in low-cost loans** to speed up the construction of up to **16,500 new rental homes**.
- Reducing the contribution rate of the base **Canada Pension Plan**.
- Making it easier to access the **Disability Tax Credit** by streamlining the application process for individuals with certain long-lasting medical conditions.



### Stronger and Safer Communities

- **\$75 million** for the **Canada Community Security Program** to help keep communities safe
- **\$755 million** to support **Canadian athletes**, host major events, and increase participation in sport.
- Nearly **\$1 billion** to repair and maintain small craft harbours in **coastal communities**.
- Establishing the **Financial Crimes Agency** to investigate serious financial crimes and recover proceeds of crime.
- Nearly **\$4.3 billion** to support healthy, thriving **Indigenous communities**.

# CAF RECRUITMENT MILESTONE

The Canadian Armed Forces have reached their highest recruitment level in over 30 years.

This milestone follows historic improvements to military pay and compensation, including long-overdue pay increases for members of the Armed Forces.

It reflects ongoing efforts to strengthen and grow Canada's military capacity.

News release:

[bit.ly/48i7MYs](https://bit.ly/48i7MYs)

# CANADA'S NEW GOVERNOR GENERAL

Congratulations to the **Hon. Louise Arbour** on her appointment as Canada's 31st Governor General and the King's representative in Canada. With a distinguished career in law, human rights, and public service, she brings extensive experience to this important role.

A sincere thank you to the **Rt. Hon. Mary Simon** for her leadership and dedicated service to Canadians since 2021.



Rt. Hon. Mary Simon



Hon. Louise Arbour

News release:

[bit.ly/48FYJHA](https://bit.ly/48FYJHA)

# CAF RECRUITMENT

Update



**7,310**

New recruits in  
2025-26

Highest recruitment  
level in over

**30**

years



**6,957**

Recruitment  
target (2025-26)



**2**

Years in a row  
targets surpassed



**8,200**

New recruitment  
target (2026-27)

# LABOUR DAY COMMUNITY PICNIC

Join us for the **Annual Labour Day Community Picnic**, co-hosted with MPP Ted Hsu.

Enjoy a fun-filled, family-friendly afternoon. We look forward to seeing you there!

- Lake Ontario Park
- September 7
- 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.



**SAVE THE DATE!**



### LaSalle Causeway Schedule

The temporary bridge will remain in place for 2026, with steady progress underway to develop a long-term business case. See below for the full schedule of closure dates.



### New School Food Hub at Regi

This new space will provide nutritious meals to students across three local schools. Happy to see the National School Food Program, in partnership with local organizations, making a real impact in our community.



### Canada Strong Pass is back

Free and discounted access to parks, museums, and travel across Canada from June 19 to September 7. For more details:

[bit.ly/CanadaStrongPass](https://bit.ly/CanadaStrongPass)

## 2026 LaSalle Causeway Bridge Closures

- Sunday, April 19, from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, May 3, from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, May 17, from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, May 31, from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, June 7, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, June 14, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, June 21, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, June 28, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Wednesday, July 1, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, July 5 from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, July 12, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, July 19, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, July 26, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, August 2, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, August 9, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, August 16, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, August 23, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, August 30, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, September 6, from 9 am to 7 pm
- Sunday, September 20, from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, October 4 from 9 am to 5 pm
- Tuesday, October 13 from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, October 18 from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, November 1, from 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, November 15, from 9 am to 5 pm

## LET'S BE IN TOUCH!

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Subscribe to my **Community Update e-newsletter** for local highlights, announcements, and news from Kingston and the Islands.

To join, email [mark.gerretsen@parl.gc.ca](mailto:mark.gerretsen@parl.gc.ca) and request the update. Let's stay connected!