

*Martha Hall Findlay, MP for Willowdale*

*Hi-Rise, August, 2008*

To all the readers of Hi-Rise,

As the summer months carry on, the work of the federal government continues. This summer has been an opportunity for Members of Parliament to speak with our constituents about their top-priority issues. From what I've heard, the key issues our environment and our economy and people are eager to discuss ways to help both.

This isn't very surprising, since these two aspects of Canadian society are critical to ensuring that we live healthily and happily. As we entered the summer months, we continue to be informed of more job cuts. Most recently, a report by the Labour Force Survey announced that we lost another 55,000 jobs in July 2008.

Compounding this economic bad news, the current government posted a deficit for its first two months of fiscal 2008 (April and May). The \$517 million deficit reflects contrasts sharply with last year's April-May numbers, which showed a \$2.8 billion surplus. This is partly due to the reductions in the GST, but this government's spending has continued to go up with the two biggest spending budgets in Canadian history. These negative economic developments are affecting Canadians in a very serious way.

Canadians are also very concerned about the environment. I have been very impressed with people's courage to confront our climate change challenge. Much of my summer has centred around Stéphane Dion's Green Shift plan. People are excited about the prospect of preserving our planet, receiving tax breaks, and the concept of "taxing what we burn, not what we earn". Town hall sessions will continue to be held across the country throughout the fall, so keep your eyes and ears open to find out about a local opportunity to learn the details of the Green Shift. Please check the website: [www.thegreenshift.ca](http://www.thegreenshift.ca), for more information and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

And your federal Parliamentarians do not slow down as we head in the fall. Parliament is scheduled to resume on September 15<sup>th</sup> and this autumn is set to

be very exciting – election or not! There is legislation ready to be tabled and debated, as well as much committee work to be done. For me, this means working on the Parliamentary Committee on Finance, as well as the Parliamentary Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

As for an election, only time will tell. On Stéphane Dion's Green Shift cross-country tour, he has discovered that Canadians are frustrated with the current government. However, only the resumption of Parliament will tell.

Finally, my thoughts go out to those who have been affected by the frightening August 10th propane explosion.

Enjoy the end of the summer and, as always, if we can answer any questions, please contact us!

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