



# Linda Duncan

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT // EDMONTON—STRATHCONA

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## Message from your MP

Greetings,

As the winter session of the House of Commons ends, we usher in a summer of festivals in Edmonton Strathcona.

This past winter we celebrated the 10th anniversary of Ice on Whyte, with ice and snow sculptures adorning Tommy Banks Way. The stalwart organizers and volunteers earned recognition as one of the top 10 winter festivals in the world. Edmonton Strathcona also hosted the 23rd anniversary of the ever popular Silver Skate Festival.

Many also braved the cold to participate in IdleNoMore events that mobilized thousands of Canadians

to speak against the Conservative omnibus budget bills. I was encouraged by the large turnout to the forum I co-hosted with Lewis Cardinal on impacts of the omnibus bills on First Nations rights and title and federal responsibilities to protect the environment.

The 2013 budget bill once again ushered in significant changes to federal laws, institutions and budgets, with minimal opportunity for debate from the absorption of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) into the new Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, to the slashing of the budgets for the Auditor General and the Chief Electoral Officer, to the increase in tariffs on 100s of everyday consumer goods and reduced access to employment insurance.

While the first charges in the robocalls election scandal finally went to trial, the Conservatives have yet to table the long called for strengthened election laws to ensure fair elections through effective enforcement of campaign rules. In the wake of these scandals, astonishingly the 2013 budget gave even less resources to Elections Canada.

Canadians spoke loudly against the shutdown of the internationally acclaimed Experimental Lakes project, the decision to become the only nation to pull out



PHOTO Linda with Chris Ashdown and Ron Lawson of the Edmonton Radial Rail Society, which operates the High Level Streetcar

of the United Nations body that addresses drought, and regressive changes to public participation in review of major energy and resource projects. We raised concerns about cuts to front line services, security breaches at Canada Student Loans for 583,000 borrowers, use of taxpayer dollars for partisan attacks, the gutting of refugee healthcare and lax quality controls on pharmaceuticals, and the rising rate of unemployment for Canada's youth.

New Democrats succeeded in forcing an overhaul of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program ending the 15% wage differential and the fast tracked LMO approvals. I thank the Alberta Federation of Labour

and Edmonton immigrant support groups for their constructive roles as critics of the program and as advocates for all workers. You can find the NDP's minority report on TFWs at [lindaduncanmp.ca/TFWreport](http://lindaduncanmp.ca/TFWreport).

Along with my colleagues, I continue to stand up for your priorities – a healthy sustainable economy, a return to more democratic governance, safe communities, timely access to quality health care and protection of our environment. Send me your thoughts and ideas. I look forward to seeing you at community events this summer. ■

*Linda*

### Contact us

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## Best Constituency MP



I am honoured to have been named one of the top three constituency MPs by the Hill Times as part of their 21st annual Politically Savvy Survey. Thank you for trusting me to represent you in Ottawa!

## Here to serve you

My team can help you with inquiries relating to federal programs and services such as immigration, Employment Insurance, taxation, Canada Student Loans, and federal pensions (CPP and OAS/GIS).

They can also arrange special messages for occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries. We'll do our best to support initiatives that enrich our community.

I am here to ensure that you have a strong voice in Parliament. Please don't hesitate to write, phone or email me your views on policies affecting our community.

# Standing up for you in the House of Commons

New Democrats have tabled a number of bills and motions responding to issues that you have identified to me as priorities for federal action.

These include, for example, Bill C-400, calling for federal action on a National Housing Strategy. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has now identified affordable housing as their top ask to the federal government.

The FCM has repeatedly called for increased federal support for transit. This mirrors the NDP Bill C-305 calling for a National

Transit Strategy to end gridlock through expansion of transit, including LRT. The FCM have endorsed the NDP call for a dedicated additional percentage of the gas tax to go to municipalities for expanded transit.

In response to Canadians' demand for expedited national coordinated action to address bullying, on May 30, 2012 the NDP tabled M-385 to create a National Bullying Prevention Strategy.

Sadly, the Conservatives opposed this motion, and all the aforementioned bills as well. ■



1 Linda at the launch of her Hockey Day Bill with Brendan Kallis (St Albert Flyers) and Troy Van Tetering (AC Avalanche)



2 Linda with members of Edmonton's Azerbaijani community celebrating Novruz

## You're invited!

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### Annual summer BBQ

It's that time of the year again! Linda and her team are excited to invite you to this year's summer BBQ.

Join us on Tuesday, August 27 at 7 pm at Ottewell Community Hall, 5920 93A Avenue, for a fun filled evening with the community.



3 Linda at the annual Spring Mill Creek clean-up





PHOTO Ted Blowers of the Strathcona Legion receives his Diamond Jubilee Medal



# Diamond Jubilee Medals

It was a great pleasure to be able to award 30 Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medals to Albertans who have made a special contribution to our community. The commemorative medal was created to mark the 2012 celebrations of the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada and to honour significant contributions and achievements by Canadians.

The decisions about who should receive the medals were not easy to make. There were many wor-

thy nominees. I chose to honour those who have volunteered their time and gone above and beyond their professional duties to improve the lives of Canadians and people around the world. The recipients had volunteered in a variety of fields – health, education, environment, Indigenous Peoples, arts and culture, literacy, seniors, youth, veterans, human rights, new Canadians, disabilities and community safety.

I would like to thank Professor Margaret-Ann Armour, Councillor Ben Henderson and Allan Bolstad,

Executive Director of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, for their assistance in selecting those who should be awarded medals. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Strathcona

Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the South East Edmonton Seniors Association and the Mikisew Cree and Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations for hosting special awards ceremonies. ■

**List of recipients:** Sir Francis Price, Lewis Cardinal, Suzanne Shaw, Patricia Derkach, Ed Struzik, Ted Snow, Lawrence Wang, Anna Talman, Abdullah Saleh, Michael Kalmanovich, George Poitras, Chief Allan Adam, Roland Ulmer, Gordon Block, Michael Phair, Earl Choldin, Josephine Pallard, Edna Dach, Daniel Lidgett, John Wodak, Ted Blowers, Tom Radford, Wei Yew, Les Umperville, Curtis Jaffrey, Gayle McKenzie-Findlay, Wayne Rogers, Arlette Zinck, Linda Dumont, Elauna Boutwell.

## Unfair charges for paper bills

Over the last year many telephone, internet, TV and other companies have introduced new monthly charges on customers who continue to receive a paper copy of their bill in the mail.

New Democrats think these extra charges are unfair and are calling on the Government to prohibit these 'Pay-to-Pay' fees.

We feel they unfairly target Canadian seniors, and Canadian families

already struggling to pay their bills, as well as those who do not have regular access to the internet or do not feel comfortable performing such transactions online.

If companies are serious about "going green", they could offer a discount for customers that use online billing rather than penalize those who can't easily make the transition.

Visit [www.stoppaytopayfees.ca](http://www.stoppaytopayfees.ca) to sign our petition. ■



At the Edmonton Nagar Kirtan in May, celebrating Baisakhi with the Sikh community





(L-R) Jinny Sims MP, NDP Immigration Critic; Earl Choldin, President of Edmonton Multicultural Health Brokers; Linda Duncan, MP

## Budget 2013-14 and clean energy

The latest Conservative budget has been roundly criticized for the myriad new tariffs imposed on everyday consumer goods, driving up costs for families. Less attention has been given to the failed support to energy security or sustainability, including zero support to home or small business energy efficiency upgrades and no allocation for the long awaited public dialogue on a Canadian clean energy strategy.

Since 2011 greenhouse gas emissions are reported to have doubled for in situ oil sands operations. Together Alberta's coal fired power plants and oil sands emit over 50% of ghgs in our

province. As soon as the federal government exempted all existing coal fired power plants from ghgs reduction rules for the life of their units, the industry pulled out of the taxpayer subsidized carbon capture sequestration pilot. Despite decades of consultations, no reduction targets have been imposed on the oil sands sector. Until we impose a price on carbon driving deployment of cleaner technology, the emissions will continue to rise and our export economy will be put at risk.

What do you think? ■

## Energy efficiency in govt buildings, structures and public works

Last fall, at my recommendation, the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates (OGGO) commenced a study on potential savings from investment in improved energy efficiency in federal owned and leased buildings.

In addition to hearing witnesses on government initiatives and the private sector, including two Edmonton

Strathcona energy efficiency businesses, we reviewed information on U.S. federal initiatives.

Investment in energy efficiency saves money, reduces pollution and provides well paying jobs.

The Committee and NDP minority reports are posted on my website. ■

## Conflict minerals

The war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has claimed more than five million lives. It's a shocking fact – but we have the power to do something about it.

This devastating war is financed with profits from illegal mines. The minerals are sold onto the international market, and eventually end up in products you and I purchase – from cellphones to tin cans and from medical devices to jet engines.

If we stop conflict minerals from entering the products we consume, we can dry up the financial support

for the war and take the first steps in peace building.

That is why I support Bill C-486, the Conflict Minerals Act, proposed by NDP Foreign Affairs critic Paul Dewar. This bill will make sure that Canadians can choose products that don't fund armed conflict.

The Just Minerals Campaign is a national grassroots campaign in support of this bill. Together, we are building a movement that really can change the world.

Join the campaign and sign the petition at [www.ndp.ca/conflictfree](http://www.ndp.ca/conflictfree) ■

## NDP Democratic Reform Campaign

In early April 2013, close to 2000 delegates at the NDP's biennial policy convention voted overwhelmingly to send Craig Scott, the Official Opposition's Democratic Reform Critic, across Canada to engage Canadians on democratic reform. Development of a Mixed Member Proportional Representation System (MMP) and an electoral system that reflects everyone's vote will be discussed.

Contact me if you wish to join the discussions. ■

## Crime bills

I along with my colleagues have been raising concerns about the implications of the Conservative approach to amending the Criminal Code.

The majority of reforms have been brought forward as one-off private member bills in reaction to a particular case. Compared to a public bill, this limits debate. Concerns have also been raised about the minimal advance consideration of Charter implications. A number of the new laws have been struck down by the courts.

A better approach could be a return to government sponsored omnibus bills allowing for careful study of implications of consolidated reforms. ■

## Scrutiny of estimates and spending

Among the most important duties of all MPs is to hold the government accountable for spending taxpayer monies. I participated in the OGGO Committee study on improving MPs capacity to effectively deliver this duty including the role of the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

The report, recommendations and supplementary report by NDP can be viewed on my website. Visit [lindaduncanmp.ca/OGGO](http://lindaduncanmp.ca/OGGO) ■

## Public Private Partnerships (P3s)

I also participated in the OGGO study and report on federal use of P3 approaches to financing infrastructure. The report, including the NDP supplementary recommendations, can be viewed at my website. Visit [lindaduncanmp.ca/p3report](http://lindaduncanmp.ca/p3report) ■

## Tackling senior's poverty

My New Democrat colleague François Pilon (Laval – Les Îles, QC) tabled Bill C-480 to exempt seniors from GIS pension claw backs where they choose to withdraw money from an RRSP to pre-pay funeral expenses. Only those individuals with annual incomes below \$16,500 or couples with incomes below \$21,888 can qualify for GIS.

In our view surely seniors already living on such a low income deserve a break not a penalty. The reform would offer one small step towards financial security.

If you support this please contact the Minister of Finance to express your support by sending an email to [jim.flaherty@parl.gc.ca](mailto:jim.flaherty@parl.gc.ca), and please copy me on your email as well. ■

## Tackling Credit Card Fees

Every time you make a purchase with your credit card, a significant amount goes to pay the credit card companies fees. And in Canada those processing fees are some of the highest in the world. This is a problem for small and medium-sized businesses and for consumers, who have costs passed onto them. My New Democrat colleague Glenn Thibeault, M.P. is campaigning to bring credit card charges in Canada in line with those in other countries.

Visit [ndp.ca/creditcards](http://ndp.ca/creditcards) to join our campaign at contact my office to let me know what you think. ■



Glenn Thibeault, MP, NDP Consumer Protection Critic held a town hall at Allendale Community Hall on consumer issues