

Joel Harden

MPP for Ottawa Centre



Friends in Ottawa Centre,

Sixteen months after being elected as the MPP for Ottawa Centre, I look back on the journey with pride. I'm truly amazed at what we've accomplished together.

We held eleven town halls and roundtables in 2019 to listen and learn from you. Ottawa is rich with expertise, so we took your ideas to Queen's Park. We worked hard for justice, even when that meant challenging powerful interests.

We demanded urgent action on climate change, and supported advocates for autism, dyslexia, eating disorders, and so many others fighting for an accessible Ontario.

We supported the Abdi family who tragically lost their son Abdirahman over three years ago. We supported action on reconciliation as Treaty Peoples, and opposed the abuse of human rights at home and abroad.

We filled sandbags for communities in Ottawa impacted by floods. We supported education workers, health care workers, and harm reduction workers suffering under provincial cuts. We met experts who urged us to address our affordable housing and homelessness crisis.

We supported seniors facing social isolation, and their caregivers impacted by trespass orders in retirement homes. We listened to transit riders and transit workers about how to improve ParaTranpso, our bus system, and our much-maligned LRT.

In 2020 and beyond, our MPP Office will be there for you. Battles are raging over the future of our public services, about access to supports for people with disabilities, about the well-being of children and seniors, and about the future of the planet on which we all depend.

We will keep listening and organizing. We will fight for Ottawa and the compassionate Ontario we love. Our future depends on it.

My very best,

Joel

Check out our website
for details at JoelHarden.ca

Winter 2020 Newsletter

In our community



Joel and panelists at our town hall on transit



Joel at Capital Pride

Save the date!

Saturday April 18th, 1pm:
Town Hall on Nuclear Power
and Protecting the Ottawa River

Ongoing:

Java with Joel: Join me at a local coffee shop to chat about local and provincial issues.

Political spin: Join me at a spin class to exercise and talk politics after!

Take your MPP to work: invite me to your workplace for a three hour shift (no compensation required - I already work for you!)

Listening to You

Through the monthly meetings and events our office has been hosting, we have tapped into an incredible amount of knowledge, expertise and stories that our neighbours possess. We've hosted over 25 events since being elected, including town halls on the Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works, education, transit, health care; roundtables on autism, personal support workers; canvasses, coffee shop meet and greets, social events and dinners and so much more.

In each of these events, we've put out food and heard powerful stories of people working to make our community and province better. Thank you for engaging with our office on the issues that matter to you, and please get in touch to tell us what issues you want us to talk about next.



Hearing from students affected by OSAP cuts

Seniors Issues

Seniors built this province, and they deserve a secure and dignified retirement. Over the last year, we've hosted meet and greets at seniors' community housing, retirement homes, and a discussion at the Good Companions Seniors' Centre on addressing social isolation with former Ottawa Centre MPP Evelyn Gigantes.

I've also been calling on the government to take action on the use of trespass orders by some retirement homes and long-term care centres to ban family members who speak out about their loved ones' living conditions.



Evelyn Gigantes and Joel, speaking at our town hall on seniors issues



Officially opening the Rideau Canal Skateway for 2020



Announcing our PMB on Dyslexia Awareness

Cuts to Education

Time and again, I've heard from parents, educators and students in Ottawa Centre who are all concerned about the government's cuts to public education. Over the next 5 years, these cuts will result in 10,000 fewer teachers, larger class sizes and fewer elective courses for students to choose from. I stand with teachers and education workers that are fighting to reverse these cuts.

It was an honour to join teachers and education workers on their respective picket lines. They understand that their working conditions are students' learning conditions, and that every kid deserves the best possible start in life.

Accessibility

One of my priorities as your MPP has been fighting for disability rights at the legislature and in the community. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) puts our province on a deadline for full accessibility by 2025. As the report by former Lieutenant Governor David Onley confirmed, we are nowhere near that benchmark. We must act with greater urgency.

That's why last spring I hosted a town hall at Queen's Park bringing together over a hundred people with disabilities from across Ontario to share their views on what needs to happen for Ontario to become fully accessible. I also tabled a motion for Ontario to adopt the accessibility recommendations contained in David Onley's report. Unfortunately, the motion was defeated by government MPPs, who claimed it would burden employers with "red tape".

I was also proud to table my first private member's bill in November to declare October as "Dyslexia Awareness Month" in Ontario. If passed, an awareness month would be an important opportunity for bringing attention to how children and adults with dyslexia can be supported, and how we can eliminate barriers preventing people with dyslexia from realizing their full potential



Supporting education workers on the picket lines



Participating in a silent bike ride demanding better cycling infrastructure for our city

Our office is your office.

WE CAN HELP YOU NAVIGATE ISSUES WITH PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, SUCH AS:

- 📞 OHIP and health card
- 📞 Ontario Photo ID card and drivers' license issues
- 📞 Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)
- 📞 Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW)
- 📞 Birth, marriage and death certificates
- 📞 And more

WE CAN ALSO ASSIST AND ADVOCATE FOR YOU IN REGARDS TO:

- 📞 Landlord and tenant issues
- 📞 Issues with the healthcare system
- 📞 Consumer complaints
- 📞 Services for seniors
- 📞 Employment issues and WSIB
- 📞 And more

Spotlight on our community kitchen movement

Ottawa is a city filled with empathy and neighbours that care.

As MPP, I've had the pleasure of meeting many individuals, groups and organizations doing creative and innovative work to make our community a better place. One thing that stands out, however, is the community kitchen movement that exists across our city.

During the winter and especially the holiday season, when many of our vulnerable neighbours risk going hungry, Ottawa's community kitchens are there for them. They not only offer a meal, but a group of folks that care for others out of the spirit of solidarity, not charity.

Spaces like the Parkdale Food Centre, St. Luke's Table, The Well, Operation Come Home, The Mission, the Debra Dynes Family House, the Caldwell Family Centre, the Salvation Army, and the Shepherds of Good Hope offer fresh meals for those in need.

If you need a place to go for good food, Ottawa community kitchens are the place to go. They are also great places to volunteer and support!



Joel serving lunch at St. Luke's Table

Contact us

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