
For Immediate Release

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Liberals and Conservatives duck the climate issue in Trinity-Spadina

Toronto, Canada – June 17, 2014 – Neither the Liberal nor the Conservative candidate in the Trinity-Spadina federal by-election chose to participate in a candidates' debate on climate change.

[Photos from the debate on June 16th can be viewed here.](#)

[A video of the debate can be viewed here.](#)

Among candidates for parties represented in Parliament, only two candidates took part in a debate on climate change in the Trinity-Spadina riding on June 16th, 2014. Both Joe Cressy, the NDP candidate, and Camille Labchuk, the Green Party candidate, were present, and both candidates answered tough questions from a packed room of voters.

Conservative candidate Benjamin Sharma declined the invitation from the outset, while Liberal candidate Adam Vaughan twice confirmed that he planned to attend before canceling at short notice, in order to attend a pizza party.

Katie Krelove, who organized the debate on behalf of climate group Toronto350.org expressed her disappointment about the failure of the Liberal and Conservative candidates

to participate: “After Chrystia Freeland backed out of the environmental debate in 2013, we were hoping for more from Adam Vaughan. It seems the Liberals wish to remain silent on this crucial issue, while the Conservatives completely ignore the fact that the majority of Canadian voters are concerned about the climate crisis.”

With several weeks before the election, Toronto350.org is calling on the absent candidates to confront and engage with their constituency on this critical issue by offering to host another debate: if Adam Vaughan or Benjamin Sharma name a date, Toronto350.org will host another climate–focused candidates’ debate—and will make sure to provide pizza!

Toronto350.org President, Stuart Basden, voiced his concern that the absence of the Liberal candidate was pointing to a disturbing trend: “We are well aware that many Conservative politicians are blind to the climate issue, but we were hoping for more leadership from the Liberals. If this is a taste of what’s to come in 2015, Adam Vaughan is demonstrating that the Liberal party is incapable of confronting the greatest challenge of this generation—the impending destabilization of our climate.”

The failure of the Liberal and Conservative candidates to attend the debate runs against the emphasis their parties have placed on the importance of climate action. The Liberal website criticizes the government of Stephen Harper for having “hijacked international progress in the fight against climate change.”¹ In their 2010 Speech from the Throne, the Harper government announced that: “Nowhere is a commitment to principled policy, backed by action, needed more than in addressing climate change.”²

Carbon pollution and the climate’s destabilization is a critical issue for the health, safety, and prosperity of Canadians, and the voters of Trinity–Spadina deserve to hear how their parliamentary candidates intend to address it.

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¹<http://www.liberal.ca/protecting-our-environment/>

²<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Documents/ThroneSpeech/40-3-e.html>