

Jody Wilson-Raybould  
**INDEPENDENT**  
Vancouver Granville

**Jody Wilson Raybould 2019 Federal Election Campaign**

**JWR Fundraising Rally Speech**  
***'A NIGHT FOR INDEPENDENT VOICES'***

**Hellenic Community of Vancouver**  
**4500 Arbutus St, Vancouver, BC V6J 4A2**

**September 18, 2019**

First let me acknowledge that we are on the lands of the Coast Salish peoples – Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh Nation. I want to acknowledge the prayer and the welcome.

Wow – I cannot believe how many people are here.

Thank you ever so much to everyone who has come out tonight – to our fundraising rally – our first ever – to celebrate Independence, diversity and truly doing politics differently – Thank you.

How many of you live in Vancouver Granville?

How many of you are from the lower mainland?

From elsewhere?

What an honour to be here with all of you – from across the riding, across Vancouver, and even across the Canada.

And how overjoyed I am to have my dear friend, whom I call the mother of the country, Dr. Jane Philpott here.

Yay Jane.... Yes, let's give her another huge Vancouver-Granville welcome.

Thank you Jane for being here – your words tonight were amazing – I feel like I should just say, “ditto that”.

Seriously, I cannot say enough about what it meant to all of us, when you stood up on principle for the rule of law and the independence of the Justice system – where you put country and values before partisanship and self. Gilakas'la.

For those of you who might not know, I first got to know Jane, during the work we did together on the medical assisted dying legislation right after the 2015 Election. That seems like a lifetime ago. I knew then Jane was not your typical politician. I think both of us were navigating the inner world of Ottawa, with the refreshing innocence of being rookie MPs. We were also probably drawn together by a nerdy zeal for policy and detail.

I have learned a great deal in the last 4 years... And, in particular, with respect to the role of women in politics and why we need more women in politics. Some of it is obvious. The standards one is held to and the double standards. How easy it is to label in racialized and gendered terms. That when a woman pushes back, stands up for principles, relies on their lived experience, or brings forward actual knowledge and experience, they are easily and reflexively labelled as 'difficult'. Well what I will say to this... is that if doing those things is being 'difficult', I am proud to be difficult every day of my life...

I have certainly come to appreciate how hard real change can be, but remain incredibly optimistic about our future as a country and how much more we can accomplish if we come together under strong leadership with less partisan politics.

To be clear, this is a pivotal election. Our city, our country, and our planet face a fundamental challenge – Climate Change.

A challenge unlike any other we have faced. It involves all of us. It is connected to everything – our economy, our way of life, what we eat, what we breath, where we live. It is integrated with the very fabric of who we are, and if we do not rise to the challenge it will effect all that we are – forever.

When a challenge is connected to everything and everyone, what do we need to do to address it?

The answer is simple — we have to work together, even though the solutions are difficult.

In order to meet the emission targets in the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming – and to do our duty by future generations – it requires all of us to 'colour outside of the party lines'.

Which brings me to Elizabeth May.... I want to thank and acknowledge the leader of the Green Party – our colleague and friend – for your tireless advocacy, for your message of the need for cooperation and for your powerful demonstration

of that message by being here tonight. Thank you for coming and for your support.

It speaks volumes and I cannot tell you how much it means to both Jane and I and I think most, if not everyone, in this hall.

In fact, all of us being here in this hall tonight demonstrates we all want a different way of doing politics – where people work together to confront the complicated challenges we face.

We truly need to be focused on co-operation not conflict. We need to identify and build on what unites us, not what divides us. We need to resist the childish urges to demonize and uncharitably criticize just to make the other person look bad.

We need to have the courage, and wisdom, to support a good idea and good works no matter who says it, or what political party they may be a part of. We need to stop the empty pandering and put-downs that make up partisan politics, and actually do what Canadians want us to do. A more honourable politics.

We need to lead. Together. With Independence, integrity, and co-operation.

For me, this is fundamentally what this election is all about.

Who can bring people together to confront shared challenges like Climate Change?

Who has the integrity to focus on what is right, over what is politically expedient and advantageous?

Who actually walks the walk of co-operation across party lines, pursuing good ideas and actions?

I know over the past eight months we have been hearing a lot about “truth to power”.

“Truth to power” is, of course, important.

But so too is the “power of truth”. One of the problems with our partisan politics is we do not get enough truth. We get packaged truths. We get spun truths. We get partisan truths.

But here’s the thing... No political party has the monopoly on truth. And where truths are bent and shaped to meet a partisan agenda and create spin – that is no longer truthful.

We know that in every sphere of life the best decisions – the ones grounded in the deepest understandings of the Truth – come about from listening and learning from each other with open minds and hearts, putting our best ideas and thoughts together with the intention of finding the best solution, and then adopting and implementing in collaboration.

We try to do this every day in our relationships, our families, our workplaces, and communities. I think we feel happiest, healthiest, and most productive when we build understanding and knowledge, and act, in this co-operative way.

Everywhere we strive to do this, except it would seem in Ottawa.

This is why we need more independent voices in Ottawa. To help change the system. To support a new culture of politics where listening, collaboration, and consensus are core to what we expect of our elected officials. But this is not going to happen over night and it is not going to happen on its own. The problems are systemic. Structural changes are needed – concrete democratic reform is required. This is of course easier said than done.

Every election we hear a lot about reforming governance. But after elections we rarely see much real reform take place. This election needs to be different.

In many places around the globe, we have seen an erosion of democracy, the trafficking of fear, and the promotion of division – where people naively think that the response to the interconnected challenges that affect us all is to try to protect the few or put up barriers. The truth is we have to do the opposite. Here in Canada, we have to build on our strengths and accomplishments that have

brought us together as a nation and allowed us to prosper and let our democracy advance for the better not the worse.

It is perhaps fitting that we are meeting in the Hellenic Community Centre – Greece was, after all, the cradle of democracy.

Working with other like-minded MPs we can improve the structure of how our democracy works and we will – over time – change the political culture in Ottawa. This needs to include electoral reform as well as changing the rules for how Parliament operates – how decisions are made. How our voices – the voices of Canadians – are heard.

When we strengthen our democracy we will be better placed as a country to meet our challenges. In addition to climate change there are many other complicated issues where an improved system would lead to better decision making: for example, in establishing a system of universal pharmacare – something that many of you have talked to me about. Another issue that needs cooperation to ensure action plans survive the life of one government is reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. Yes, progress has been made but far more can and needs to be done.

And here in Vancouver Granville, the cost of living – and especially affordable housing – is a huge challenge. While it is great to see our City making progress, there is still a need to significantly increase the supply of housing. This happens faster when there are partnerships between the City, the province and Canada and where policies and investments are coordinated and complimentary.

The common message is this – working together collectively we can make a difference. We are all a part of making this so – we all have a role to play.

For all of you who have been volunteering on our campaign – and hundreds have signed up – I want to thank you. We could not do this without you. What is so inspiring to me is that so many people with different political perspectives have coalesced around the idea of supporting an Independent. Motivated and inspired by the idea of not only someone that will stand up on principle and do what is right – but who has both the ability and the freedom to make informed decisions

around the issues and to act in the best interests of their constituents, rather than simply towing the party line for political expediency. This is powerful.

What is also powerful are the numbers of people who have donated to the campaign from Iqaluit to Halifax, to Victoria, and everywhere in between. And the contributions you are making here tonight are getting us closer to our targets. Thank you.

In closing, it has been my greatest honour and privilege to be your Member of Parliament – the MP for Vancouver Granville – for the last four years. I am proud of my record and the work I was able to do in Ottawa on your and all Canadians' behalf – along with Jane, Elizabeth and others. But there is more to be done and I feel our time in federal politics is not over.

Thank you all once again for coming out. Thank you Jane – thank you Elizabeth – thank you Harold – and to the organizers. And finally thank you Tim – you are always there for me – by my side – and I could not do this without you. And to my mother and my sister and our nieces...

Let's send that powerful message to Ottawa – and elect strong Independents on October 21<sup>st</sup>.

Enjoy the rest of evening.

Gilakas'la