

Jones ready to defend her Dufferin-Caledon seat in next month's election

By Bill Rea

With a June 12 Provincial election looming, Dufferin-Caledon Progressive Conservative incumbent Sylvia Jones was wasting no time hitting the hustings.

Jones said she was nominated a little more than a year ago to carry the party's colours in the coming campaign, and said she was ready to go.

"In a minority government, you never know when a government is going to fall or chose to go on its own, as it did this time," she observed. "We were ready."

Jones made it clear she was not impressed with the budget that was brought down last week by Finance Minister Charles Sousa, calling it reckless and saying it will drive the Province deeper into debt.

"It is remarkable that Kathleen Wynne and the Liberal government are able to both increase the deficit by over a billion dollars, while also simultaneously increasing taxes," Jones said last Thursday after the budget had come down. "The Liberal budget introduced today takes us in the totally wrong direction where spending is skyrocketing with no regard to responsible management of taxpayer money."

"Since the recession, government revenue has increased by \$23 billion and yet we are still seeing increasing deficits," she added.

"This is evidence that the Liberals have no plan to balance the budget."

In reading the budget, Jones said it was clear to her that the government was ready to take it into an election. NDP Leader Andrea Horwath announced Friday her party would not be supporting it, and Jones said she didn't think the Liberals were expecting support. She thinks the budget was meant to appeal to NDP voters, as opposed to NDP MPPs.

"To me, the budget is proof that the government will willingly spend anything to get past an election," she said.

When it comes to predicting how the election is going to work out, Jones admitted she has never been very good at calling such shots, but she plans to focus her energies on her riding.

"I believe that there is an interest and ability for people to be able to see beyond the promises and IOUs," she remarked.