

## Minister Raitt tells the faithful government has kept most of promises

By Bill Rea

It was an upbeat time locally to be a federal Conservative.

The Dufferin-Caledon Conservative Riding Association hosted their annual Falling into Fashion Event recently, and the keynote speaker was Transportation Minister Lisa Raitt.

Both local MP David Tilson and Raitt were enthused, stating these are heady times for the governing Conservatives, with the House of Commons set to resume with a speech from the throne next month.

"I think you're going to find it exciting," Tilson told the faithful assembled at the Royal Ambassador Event Centre, as he said the government plans to continue getting things done for the riding.

Raitt was commenting on the way Canada is viewed elsewhere in the world. She said she had been talking to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, and he told her Canada is viewed as stable and well-run by those in other lands.

"It sounds a bit boring, but I'll take boring any day," she commented.

Canada got out of the recent recession much faster than most other countries. Raitt said things have been getting better in the United States and economies in Europe just posted a positive quarter. Canada is a tiny country, compared to the States and some of the nations in Europe, in terms of population. This country is going to be impacted by what goes on in these places and she stressed the need for Canada to stay on the path it's been following.

Raitt pointed to the potential that is in Canada, maintaining the need to use it properly.

"We have to get it right," she declared. "We have to make sure we deliver on the riches that we have."

She also took some time to boast about the performance of the government, pointing out they have fulfilled most of the promises they made to Canadians.

"We told you we were going to make changes," she said. "We did it."

Raitt also identified herself as an activist, so she wanted to make sure she made changes. "We do it in Ottawa," she declared.

As a Conservative, she believes the role of government is to create conditions that create jobs. Raitt said this is different from the Liberals, who believe regulations create jobs, and the New Democrats, who can't believe jobs not created by government are really jobs.

She also said she's proud of what the government has done to combat crime.

She said she has two sons who are into video games, meaning she has to make sure she monitors their activities on the internet. She recently learned that a man in Australia had tried to contact her nine-year-old son on Skype.

"That happened in my house," she declared. "These are scary things."

She added that with things like that on her mind, she's not ashamed to be tough on crime.

While Raitt said about 86 per cent of the government's promises have been kept, there's still more to do.

"We're not done yet," she declared.

The government promised to have the budget balanced by 2015-16, and that's still on the agenda. "It's part of our mid-term plan," she said.

While Canada did come out of the recession early, and can absorb economic shocks from around the world, the government has to make sure those conditions remain. That means no new spending is in the works, as this is not the time for pet projects. It also means downsizing administrations and finding efficiencies. On the other hand, she stressed the need to be mindful there are some services people do want, and the government has an obligation to make every Canadian's life better.



Dufferin-Caledon MP welcomed Federal Transport Minister Lisa Raitt to the riding association's annual Falling into Fashion event. They were joined by association president Wes Robertson. Photo by Bill Rea