

MP no longer supports 'Freedom Convoy' protests

By **Sam Odrowski**

Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seeback has changed his tune with respect to the ongoing 'Freedom Convoy' protests in Ottawa, which call for an end to the cross-border vaccine mandate for truckers and all remaining COVID restrictions.

He said he agrees with the Federal Conservatives' interim party leader Candice Bergen's comments last Thursday, February 10, that it's time for the protestors to go home.

'It really is causing disruptions in Ottawa. There are small businesses that are not opening because of it,' Seeback told the Citizen on Tuesday, February 15.

'The Rideau Centre Mall is not opening because of it. You can argue and say that those are unreasonable choices that are being made [by the businesses to be closed], but those are the choices that are being made. So, small businesses are being hurt. People live in the downtown core are tired of the noise and the disruption.'

Seeback attended the demonstrations in Ottawa on the weekend of January 29-30 and said he was impressed by the amount of people coming together to voice their frustrations with COVID restrictions and lockdowns, voicing his support, but with the protest now in its third week, he says it needs to end.

'I think the protest has gone beyond what I would consider to be useful,' he remarked.

Seeback noted that the Federal Conservatives brought forward a motion on Monday, February 14, asking for the Federal Liberal Government to bring a plan forward to end remaining COVID-19 restrictions, which is what the protestors are pushing for. However, the motion was defeated 185-151.

'We're going to keep fighting for that,' said Seeback, regarding a plan to lift remaining federal restrictions. 'But the disruption that's being caused, I think has now gone too far. They should go home.'

He added, 'If they want to have some people stay and protest on Parliament Hill, I think that's fine. But to be taking up blocks and blocks and blocks of the downtown core, I think it's time for that to end.'

With respect to the Emergency Measures Act, which was implemented for the very first time since it was created in 1988, by the Trudeau Government, Seeback said he's deeply concerned that 'the Prime Minister decided to go there, rather than look at other options that are available'.

He said the government should have opened a dialogue with the truckers instead of 'pouring gasoline on the fire by using inflammatory language to describe protestors and others'.

With respect to the border blockades, which have largely come to an end across Canada, Seeback said he firmly opposes this style of protest.

'There should absolutely be no blockages of border crossings. This is sort of doing the exact opposite of what protests are supposed to do. This is hurting people. This is hurting businesses. It's hurting other Canadians, and that should not be what you're doing when you're trying to protest something,' he explained.

'I've never supported blocking border crossings. I'm glad that they're being cleared, and it should stop.'

Going forward, Seebach said he and his colleagues will keep pushing the Trudeau Government for a plan to end federal COVID-19 restrictions.

?Canadians are entering the third year of the pandemic. People are tired, people are frustrated. They deserve to know, what are the benchmarks for us getting back to as normal a life as possible? And I think it's the government's job to do that,? he remarked.

?Countries around the world are doing it. Provinces are doing it. It's not an unreasonable request.?