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**STEPHANIE KUSIE, M.P.**  
**CALGARY MIDNAPORE**

July 23, 2020

Dear Constituents of Calgary Midnapore,

Restrictions have loosened, many businesses and public places have been able to re-open, and life is starting to feel a little more normal. For this, I am thankful. We have been through a lot, and like true stalwart Albertans, we have worked diligently together to move forward.

That being said, we must prepare ourselves for the challenges that lay ahead. We do not know what the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be and how it will affect us individually.

This is a time of extreme uncertainty, which is deeply concerning to me as a Member of Parliament, a mother, and a Canadian. Canadians need information in order to plan for their families' futures and the government has yet to provide us with an adequate forecast, or any semblance of a plan to help Canadians get back to work or to restart our economy.

I will continue to look for solutions to the issues that we're facing here, in Calgary Midnapore. In this newsletter, you will find more information on some of the work I've been doing, an update on some current issues, and details on upcoming events.

I encourage you to remain vigilant; taking proper health precautions as you visit with friends, families, and neighbours for BBQ's and other fun summer occasions. Please also take care of your mental health. There is a lot of negativity and divisiveness out there, and it can be a lot to carry on top of your other responsibilities and stresses. Take time for yourself, be patient with others, and don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. [The Mental Health Help Line](#) is: 1-877-303-2642.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Kusie".

Stephanie Kusie, MP  
Calgary Midnapore



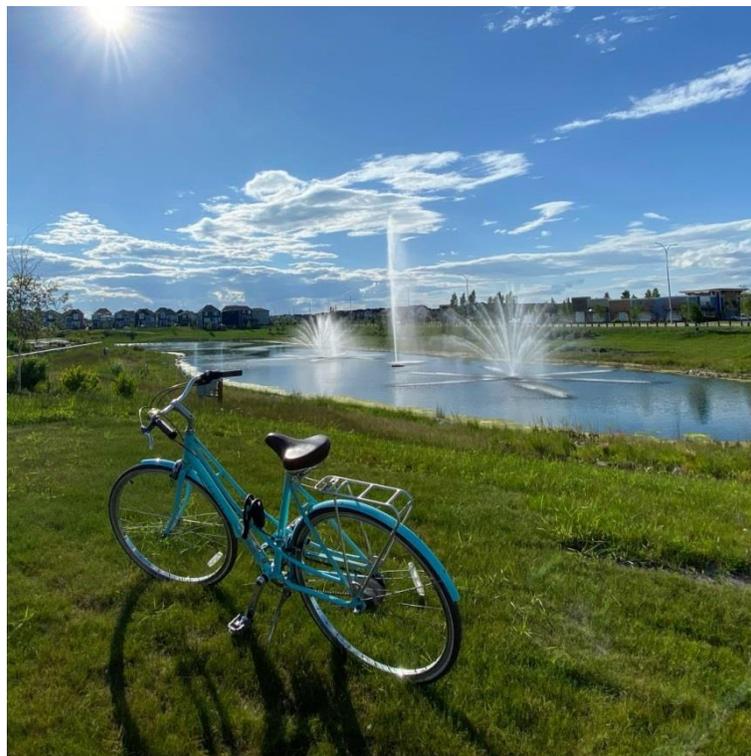
## Monthly Update

July 2020

**Do you have a photo of the riding that you'd like to share with our office?**

If so, we would love to feature it in future Monthly Updates!

Please email your photo(s) to: [stephanie.kusie.c1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:stephanie.kusie.c1@parl.gc.ca)



Courtesy of a constituent in Silverado

## House of Commons Update

My [June newsletter](#), outlined the shameful deal between the Liberals and the NDP to suspend Parliament until September. All of the “sittings” that have taken place this summer have actually been “COVID-19 Committees”, which consist of a handful of MP’s physically present in the Chamber, and others tuning in via the web when possible. As predicted, this hybrid model has been fraught with connectivity issues.

After months of calling on the government to provide a budget, or at minimum, an Economic Update, the Liberals provided nothing more than an abbreviated glimpse into the current state of the Canadian economy in their “**Fiscal Snapshot 2020**” of July 8th. In this announcement, we learned that the Liberals are running a deficit of *\$343.2 billion* this year alone, and for the first time, the net federal debt will reach over *\$1 trillion*. The Snapshot also showed a revenue loss of *\$71.1 billion*, spending increases of *\$236.9 billion*, and that the federal debt has increased to *49.1 per cent* of GDP. As proof of their skewed priorities, the Liberal government included an additional \$15 million for the Deputy Prime Minister’s office but failed to include any new funding for the Auditor General’s Office which provides oversight on government spending. Also completely absent from the Snapshot was a plan for recovery.

In mid-July, the COVID Committee was recalled to debate *Bill C-20, an Act Respecting Further COVID-19 Measures (an extension to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and disability payments)*. Although the Prime Minister has emphasized time and again how important this legislation would be, Mr. Trudeau did not show up for the tabling of this legislation.



**ECONOMIC UPDATE**  
"SNAPSHOT"

**BREAKING**

For the first time in Canadian history:  
**Federal debt to hit**  
**\$1 TRILLION**

Trudeau has **no plan** to guide  
Canada through the recovery

## The WE Charity scandal



### Minister Chagger testifies at FINA

As you are undoubtedly aware, the Prime Minister and his Cabinet are under fire for awarding a \$900M sole-sourced contract to the WE Charity. The Liberal government initially claimed them to be the *only* organization in Canada that could carry out the extensive program which was intended to provide youth who participate in the volunteer sector with an income.

Days after the contract was awarded, media uncovered that WE has paid members of the Prime Minister's family almost \$300,000 collectively for various speaking engagements. (Other notable Canadian public figures who have spoken at WE Day events claim they were *not* paid for their speaking engagements.)

It was also revealed that the Finance Minister's daughter works for WE, and that Natural Resources Minister Seamus O'Regan, and Katie Telford, Justin Trudeau's Chief of Staff, helped to raise \$400,000 for the Charity in 2010 and 2011, prior to the Liberals forming government.

Despite a clear conflict of interest, neither the Prime Minister nor Minister Morneau recused themselves from the Cabinet decision to award the untendered contract. The fact that not a single Cabinet member or Senior Advisor bothered to mention this conflict of interest is troubling to say the least. Everyone involved seemed to turn a blind eye to the decision being made.

Further investigation by members of the media and others has subsequently revealed that the organization owns millions of dollars of real estate in Toronto, which has been bought and sold under questionable circumstances.

Canadians have also learned that the WE Charity may have been in financial turmoil prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the attention applied by the Official Opposition, the Liberals decided to cancel their contract with WE. The Conservative Party has always suggested that the Canada Summer Jobs program, which is already run by highly skilled public servants, would have been more than capable to carry out the program in question.

At the request of the Official Opposition, two House of Commons Standing Committees (Finance and Ethics) have called for witnesses such as the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, the Finance Minister, and the Prime Minister himself, to testify as to their involvement and knowledge of the conflict of interest. On the first day of

Ethics Committee hearings, the Liberals filibustered in order to prevent any substantive discussion from taking place. Hearings can be viewed at <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/Meetings>.

Again, at the request of the Conservatives, Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion has launched a formal investigation into the matter. Should the Prime Minister be found to have made an ethics violation, it would be his third within the span of five years.

The Conservative Party has called for the Auditor General and the RCMP to investigate. This was later supported by the Bloc Quebecois.

Canadians are currently waiting to see whether the Prime Minister will testify at the Ethics Committee in the coming days.

On July 22, media reported that the Trudeau government's \$900 million contract was awarded to WE Charity Foundation, a separate entity from WE Charity, and one that only received charity status last year and whose stated purpose is to "hold real estate".

#### Summary of the actions taken on behalf of the Official Opposition:

- *Called for a criminal investigation into Justin Trudeau's \$900 million scandal;*
- *Sent a letter to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner asking for an investigation into Justin Trudeau's involvement in awarding a \$900M contract to the WE Charity;*
- *Sent a letter to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner asking for an investigation into Bill Morneau's involvement in awarding a \$900M contract to the WE Charity;*
- *Sent a letter to the Auditor General asking her to include the \$900 million CSSG program and the government's outsourcing of it to WE Charity in the final report to Parliament on the government's pandemic spending;*
- *Sent a letter to the Procurement Ombudsman asking him to review the Trudeau government's decision to award the CSSG program to We Charity, as well as the five sole-source contracts that the organization has previously received;*
- *Called for Parliament to investigate the Liberal government's involvement in this \$900 million scandal at the Finance Committee, the Government Operations and Estimates Committee, and the Ethics Committee; and*
- *Sent a letter to the Lobbying Commissioner asking for an investigation into the relationship between the Trudeau government and the WE Charity.*

There is no doubt that there is more to this story. Stephanie and her Conservative colleagues will continue to keep you informed.

## **Back to Work Bonus**

As provinces continue to rollout their reopening plans, the Conservative Party announced a new proposal to help workers transitioning back to work and small businesses who are reopening called the **Back to Work Bonus**.

Under the Conservative plan, Canadians who lost their job due to the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to receive their full \$2,000 CERB. As businesses reopen, workers who make between \$1,000 and \$5,000 per month would qualify for the Back to Work Bonus, a CERB top-up that would be gradually phased out by 50 cents for every extra

dollar earned over the \$1,000 threshold. For a part-time server making \$2,000 per month, the Back to Work Bonus would result in a top-up of \$1,500, for a total monthly income of \$3,500.

## BACK TO WORK B O N U S

Conservatives  
propose changes  
to the Canada  
Emergency  
Response Benefit  
(CERB):

- Making less than \$1,000/mo? **You keep your full \$2,000 benefit.**
- Making over \$1,000/mo but less than \$5,000/mo? **You qualify for the Back to Work Bonus!**
- The CERB top-up will be gradually phased out (50 cents for every extra dollar earned over \$1,000) so that **it always pays to work.**

## Canada-China Special Committee

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Canada-China Relations Committee** was meeting regularly to study and make recommendations to the government in hopes of improving the incredibly strained relationship between Canada and China. When Parliament shut down, so did this Committee -- much to the frustration of Canadians and the majority of Committee members. Finally, on July 20, the House of Commons passed a motion to allow the Committee to meet and vote via videoconference, as many of the other Standing Committees had been doing. The Shadow Minister for Canada-China Relations and Multiculturalism, Garnett Genuis, asked the Liberals to call a meeting as soon as possible.

Many critical matters regarding the relationship between Canada and China need to be addressed, including: the arbitrary detainment of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor; the genocide of Uyghur Muslims; the violation of human rights and international law in Hong Kong; the Chinese Communist Party's influence in the World Health Organization; the question of Huawei in Canada, etc. There is much work to be done on this Committee and it cannot begin soon enough.



Hong Kong skyline

Recently, Stephanie has made her concerns with the actions of China very clear by joining 59 other Members of Parliament in signing a [letter](#) calling on the government to take action against Chinese and Hong Kong officials over 'human rights atrocities' by invoking Magnitsky Sanctions.

## In Committee

The HUMA Committee, which Stephanie Vice-Chairs, will meet virtually three times in July and August to continue its study on the government's Response to COVID-19. Normally, Committee work is put on pause during the summer months so Parliamentarians can work from within their constituencies. However, due to the pandemic, several House of Commons Standing Committees will continue to meet virtually in order to study and respond to the ongoing crisis.

## In the riding

In late June Stephanie hosted a press conference along with Alberta MP's John Barlow, Jag Sahota, Greg McLean, and Tom Kmiec, concerning verdicts of not criminally responsible (NCR). Alongside her colleagues, she announced a plan to move a motion to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights to study the decisions made by review boards that determine the release of individuals found **not criminally responsible (NCR)**. Stephanie's commitment to this issue comes as a result of working with the families who tragically lost loved ones in the Brentwood Five massacre which took place in 2014. The killer of the five young people was Matthew de Groot, who is eligible for an assessment this fall.

Stephanie wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to the victims' families for taking part in the news conference, recognizing the emotional toll that events such as this can take.

Various local media covered the event, and you can find relative articles [here](#).



Stephanie speaks to local media

## Border Security

Several constituents have contacted Stephanie's constituency office with questions regarding foreign travelers crossing the US/Canada border en route to Alaska. It has been reported that some of these travelers are taking recreational detours.

Stephanie and her colleague, Shadow Minister for Public Safety Pierre Paul-Hus, MP, sent an official letter to Public Safety Minister, Bill Blair, asking what measures his government is taking as it relates to these questionable border crossings in the midst of a pandemic.

You can view/download the letter [here](#).

## Canadian Section of ParlAmericas

As a Parliamentarian who previously served as a diplomat in El Salvador and who is fluent in Spanish, Stephanie is proud to be on the Executive Committee of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas Interparliamentary Association. The Association seeks to strengthen democracy and governance in the hemisphere through political dialogue and parliamentary cooperation. Stephanie has participated in a number of virtual meetings over the past few months and from them, receives important news from various perspectives.



Stephanie has recently participated in discussions surrounding COVID-19, such as its global impact, legislative actions to prevent violence against women during the pandemic, economic recovery, and Canada's current relationship with Venezuela.

## Real Talk Live with Faisal Karmali

Stephanie was invited to discuss the challenges currently facing small business owners on *Real Talk Live*, with Faisal Karmali. In addition to being the host of *Real Talk*, Mr. Karmali is First Vice President, Portfolio Manager and Investment Advisor at CIBC Wood Gundy, and the Business and Market Expert for CTV Morning Live and 770CHQR in Calgary. Their discussion was streamed over Instagram and Facebook Live. You can watch it [here](#) at your leisure.



## Calgary Midnapore Economic Recovery Taskforce

From the start of this pandemic, Stephanie felt it was very important that leaders not only work to deal with the immediate crisis, but also prepare for the future in order to have programs available to help businesses and employees as the economy reopens. She wasn't seeing any signs that the Liberal government was looking ahead, and wanted to make sure she knew what Calgary Midnapore needed so she could advocate for them.



She assembled an Economic Recovery Taskforce, comprised of elected officials, local entrepreneurs, and community members who engaged with the small business community in Calgary Midnapore. They were tasked with the goal of identifying specific challenges the riding is facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Feedback was obtained from both virtual consultations and two surveys. Stephanie released the final report and the resulting recommendations on July 17th, 2020, along with her colleague, MP James Cumming, the Shadow Minister for Small Business and Export Promotion during a Facebook Live event.

You can read the Calgary Midnapore Economic Recovery Report and watch the online launch [here](#)

## A new Liberal tax on your primary residence?

Media recently reported that the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has spent \$250,000 researching a first-ever federal home equity tax. This news comes after the government promised that they wouldn't raise taxes on Canadian home buyers, despite a 50 per cent capital gains tax on the sale of residential homes previously being proposed at the Liberal Party policy convention.



As the Shadow Minister for Families, Children, and Social Development, Stephanie is concerned that Justin Trudeau will attempt to impose a new tax on Canadians who are working hard to pay their mortgages. On the latest edition of The Blueprint, Stephanie clearly stated her concerns and vowed to fight tooth and nail should the government attempt to impose this tax. You can watch her conversation with MP Jamie Schmale [here](#).

## COVID-19 Committee attendance report

It is unfortunate that misinformation continues to circulate as a result of a recent inaccurate article in the *Calgary Herald* claiming to record attendance at COVID Committee meetings.

We aren't sure where the Herald obtained their original information, however Mrs. Kusie attended the COVID Committee in person twice, and monitored most of the other sessions. This is all she was able to do when not assigned either a question or a speech by the Whip. The House of Commons initially had a great deal of difficulty with establishing the technology to allow all 338 MPs to log in virtually, with the priority being given to those who were actually scheduled to speak. The result being that many had to find other ways to watch. The article also failed to mention her attendance at the Parliamentary Committee on Human Resources.

## Come, hell, high-water, or even pandemic: the Stampede Spirit lives on

“Dust off your boots” is a common phrase thrown around this time of year.

This year is different. For the first time since its establishment in 1912, the Calgary Stampede was cancelled. The challenges posed by COVID-19 along with government directives made hosting the 108th annual rodeo impossible

The history of the Calgary Stampede is long and rich – and remains a testament to the determination of southern Albertans in the face of attrition. Rodeos like the Calgary Stampede were an expression of the West's egalitarian ideals in a land where everyone was expected to pull their weight. As the old adage goes, “everybody ropes, everybody rides”.



Cowboys at the Bow Valley Ranch, 1913

It is the expression of these values which manifested in the rodeo competitions hosted throughout southern Alberta. This included the small village of Midnapore, where the ranchmen of Fish Creek made names for themselves, taming the West. These same values enabled the Calgary Stampede to sustain widespread popularity even after the decline of ranching and agriculture in the Canadian West – swiftly usurped by the supremacy of the Alberta's oil and gas industry.

For many, the Calgary Stampede serves as an important reminder of the values that allowed 'Cowtown' to transform into an economic powerhouse.

Examples of Calgary Midnapore's industrious past are evident throughout our community; such as Nickle School's 'wildcat' mascot (a reference to the 'wildcat' oil wells which sprouted across the prairie's during the oil boom).

The Calgary Stampede is however, the most explicit reminder of Calgary's Western roots; roots grounded in the persistent determination necessary to build the West. In no small part, that is why, "Come Hell or High Water", the Stampede has continued uninterrupted through crisis after crisis; until this year.

Nevertheless, despite the pandemic, we have seen Calgarians continue to dust off their boots and celebrate the Stampede, in whatever way they can – be it smaller gatherings with friends and family or simply a change in wardrobe. The food trucks still rolled-on and the pancake batter still flowed.

Perhaps it isn't correct to say the Stampede was 'cancelled', because perhaps, just as being Calgarian isn't a matter of geographical origin, the Calgary Stampede isn't just an event; it's a state of mind.

Come, hell, high-water, or even pandemic: the Stampede Spirit lives on.

## The rise of pandemic-related fraud

The COVID-19 pandemic has not stopped scammers and fraudsters from achieving their malicious goals – in fact, they've just become more creative. Stephanie wants to ensure constituents remain vigilant in order to protect themselves from those intent on stealing personal and/or financial information.

Scammers are sending emails and text messages regarding COVID-19 with the hopes of tricking the recipient into revealing their bank account passwords/passcodes. They are very tricky, leading the recipient to believe they are clicking on links that will assist them with government benefits they may have applied for. Criminals are also creating fake apps and websites that appear real, but are actually just attempts to steal sensitive information.

These scams are elaborate and require scrutiny. Click [here](#) to read some tips from the Canadians Bankers Association. Additional tips are available on the [CRA's website](#).

## Upcoming Events

Join Stephanie for an Ice Cream Social(ly) distanced Meet & Greet at Annie's Café in Fish Creek Park this coming **Saturday (July 25<sup>th</sup>)!** **The first 150 visitors will receive a free kid's cone!** Hope to see you there!

