



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA



# MIKE MORRICE

Member of Parliament  
Kitchener Centre



morricemike



Mike Morrice Kitchener Centre

## In this issue:

- » Advocating for a tariff response that meets our community's needs
- » Success securing \$18 million to address encampments
- » Improving prescription drug coverage for rare diseases
- » Pushing for follow through on promises to people with disabilities
- » Progress on housing advocacy
- » Building cross-party support for fairness in arts funding

March 2025

## A MESSAGE FROM MIKE


While prorogation reduces the tools available for advocacy and federal action - disappointing at a time when our community is staring down the significant implications of US tariffs and so many folks are reeling from the increased cost of housing and living - my team and I are continuing to find ways to advance our community's priorities with the tools we do have available.

In the recent weeks and months, I've continued to bring our community's priorities to federal Ministers - pushing forward initiatives to

prioritize those most impacted in a united tariff response, support housing affordability, lower costs, address gaps in our healthcare system, and address rising chronic homelessness.

I'm pleased to share some wins in many of those areas with you in this edition. Read on for more.

All my best,



Mike

## INFO

### COMMUNITY OFFICE

305 King Street West  
Suite 303  
Kitchener ON N2G 1B9  
At King St W and Water St S

Open Mondays, Tuesdays,  
and Thursdays from  
10am-4:00pm

Tel. 519-741-2001

✉ [mike.morrice.c1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:mike.morrice.c1@parl.gc.ca)

### OTTAWA OFFICE

Confederation Building  
Suite 313  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Tel. 613-995-8913

✉ [mike.morrice@parl.gc.ca](mailto:mike.morrice@parl.gc.ca)

🌐 [mikemorricemp.ca](http://mikemorricemp.ca)

## ADVOCATING FOR A TARIFF RESPONSE THAT MEETS OUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

As we work toward a continued, united approach to combat tariffs from the US, I'm particularly concerned about workers who may be affected by job losses, small businesses in our community caught in the crossfire of this trade war, and folks who would be deeply impacted by a spike in the cost of living.

It's why my team and I have been prioritizing meeting individuals, business owners, and business leaders from across our community in order to amplify their concerns and advocate for the government to implement

solutions that reflect our community's priorities.

This includes advocating for countertariff revenue to flow quickly to those most impacted, ensuring the federal government prioritizes buying Canadian, breaking down interprovincial trade barriers, and implementing measures to support the small businesses to diversify their export partners.

Scan the QR code to the right to read my letter to Minister Leblanc, the Chair of the Cabinet Committee on Canada-US relations, for more on this.



Scan to download  
my letter to  
Minister Leblanc



## Federal government signs deal with Waterloo Region to house homeless



Victoria Street encampment in Kitchener, winter 2023. (Justine Fraser)

## Waterloo Region to receive share of federal funding to fight homelessness

By Shelby Knox  
Published: January 22, 2025 at 12:36PM EST



The Weber Street encampment in Kitchener in November 2024.

# SUCCESS SECURING \$18 MILLION IN ENCAMPMENT FUNDING

Months ago, the federal government approached five communities across the country to provide funds for supporting those experiencing homelessness and living in encampments – and while Toronto was included, Waterloo Region wasn't.

At the time, I immediately began advocating to the then-Minister of Housing and Infrastructure to include the City of Kitchener and Region of Waterloo in the next round of funding.

I'm thrilled to share that the federal

government recently announced that Waterloo Region will be included in the second wave - receiving \$18 million to help create new shelter space and increase transitional housing options.

As I often share in Parliament, our community is at the epicentre of the housing crisis. Our most recent Point in Time Count revealed that homelessness in our community has now increased five-fold since 2018.

While I continue to push for long-term solutions to the housing

crisis, including in my most recent Motion 170 to ensure affordable housing dollars build housing folks in communities like ours can afford, I'm glad that the federal government heard our calls to provide our community with funds to support folks sleeping rough in the meantime.

Every dollar helps.

Scan to download  
my letter to the  
Housing Minister



## IMPROVING DRUG COVERAGE FOR RARE DISEASES

Last year, I heard from Noor, a young mother in our community battling a rare type of cancer – all while she and her family grappled with the fact that the medication that would extend her life cost a staggering \$15,000 US per month - which she was somehow expected to pay out-of-pocket.

While the medication was approved by Health Canada for her condition and her oncologist recommended it, the Canadian Drug Administration (CDA) had not recommended it for public coverage.

In response, I took it up with the Minister of Health directly – asking

him to urge the CDA to review their decision.

Heartbreakingly, Noor has since passed away - but her family has asked me to keep fighting for folks just like her across the country. A glimmer of good news that's come from that advocacy: the CDA has opened public consultations as part of re-examining their decision.

I'm also building on this by urging Minister of Health to ensure the calls of the Canadian Cancer Society are heard so all cancer patients have access to the medications they need, regardless how rare their diagnosis is.

Noor, her husband, and her child







Canada Disability Benefit **Now**



La Prestation canadienne pour les personnes en situation de handicap

Canada Disability Benefit rally on Parliament Hill alongside Disability Without Poverty



## PUSHING FOR FOLLOW THROUGH ON PROMISES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

After years of advocacy to move quickly and improve the Canada Disability Benefit - a new monthly benefit for folks with disabilities meant to supplement the meagre amount provided by the Ontario Disability Support Program - a likely spring election now threatens all the work done to date.

People with disabilities make up 40% of those living in poverty, so ensuring the Canada Disability Benefit begins as promised in July 2025 is absolutely essential, now more than ever.

It's why in recent weeks I've been lifting up the calls of March of Dimes and other organizations that serve folks with disabilities pushing for the regulations for the Canada Disability Benefit to be fixed, finalized, and moved through the Treasury Board quickly - so that it can be delivered regardless of a potential early election.

As part of this advocacy, I've met with the Minister of Diversity, Inclusion, and Persons with Disability's team to push for swift action and spoken with cabinet members on Treasury Board to ensure this is a priority for them as well!

## SUBSCRIBE TO MY MONTHLY EMAIL UPDATES

Would you like more frequent updates on my advocacy on behalf of our community?

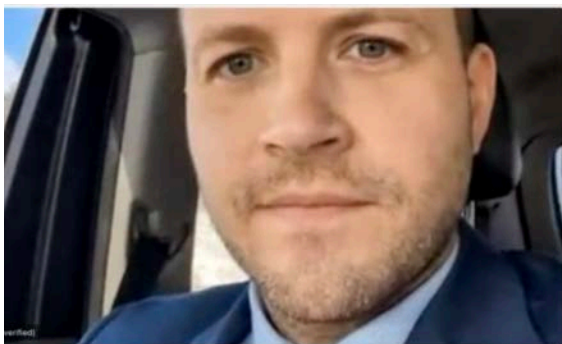
Sign up to my monthly emails on my website, [mikemorricomp.ca](http://mikemorricomp.ca) or by scanning the QR code on the right.



## PROGRESS ON HOUSING ADVOCACY

During prorogation, I've been continuing to advance our push to address the housing crisis. This includes moving forward my new Motion 170, to ensure affordable housing funds result in housing folks in our community can actually afford; addressing the financialization of housing by ending a tax exemption for Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), which largely buy up existing affordable housing and drive up prices; and increasing affordable supply by extending an HST exemption, already in place for for-profit developers of rental housing, to non-profit affordable home ownership builds, like those done by Habitat for Humanity in our community.

A big part of this has been working across party lines through direct advocacy to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure. I'm glad to report that we recently sat down together twice to discuss moving each of these initiatives forward. The Minister has also met with Dr. Carolyn Whitzman - a national housing policy expert - who has supported Motion 170.



Mike chats with Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Nathaniel Erskine-Smith



# BUILDING CROSS PARTY SUPPORT FOR FAIRNESS IN ARTS FUNDING

In Waterloo Region alone, we face an over \$9 million arts funding gap compared to the average of higher funded regions like Montreal, Winnipeg, and Vancouver!

As a result, not only are we missing out on our fair share of the \$55 billion the arts add to Canada's GDP, but artists in our community are left balancing multiple jobs to make ends meet and people in our community have reduced access to everything from concerts to museums, to street art.

Our community isn't alone: this is part of a pattern playing out in underfunded communities around the country.

It's why I'm glad that, after months of building support across party lines, MPs from every opposition party represented in Parliament joined me in writing a letter to urge the federal government to address these massive regional inequities in federal arts funding, just as I proposed in my Motion 129 back in June.



The Honourable Pascale St-Onge  
Minister of Canadian Heritage

December 9, 2024

**RE: Urgent Need to Restore Public Arts Funding and Address Regional Inequities**

Dear Minister St-Onge,

We are writing today – as MPs from every opposition party represented in Parliament – regarding the urgent need to restore public funding for the arts, and to address long-standing inequities in how funds are allocated across the country.

The arts play a pivotal role in our society, enriching our lives, fostering creativity, promoting cultural diversity, and providing a critical outlet for activism. However, artists and arts organizations across the country are grappling with significant financial challenges amidst often reduced government funding.

These financial challenges are made worse by regional inequities in federal funding: according to public data from the Canada Council for the Arts for 2022-23, while Montreal, Winnipeg, and Vancouver received an average of \$18.30 per capita, other communities fared dramatically worse. For example: Edmonton received \$5.56 per capita, the Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo area received a mere \$3.39 per capita, and Sarnia-Lambton received nothing at all. Additional examples are included in the attached table.

Scan to download our letter to the Minister of Canadian Heritage



## IN OUR COMMUNITY



Joining FASS for a cameo in their latest production at KW Little Theatre.



Answering questions from KCI students and teachers.



Hearing from local business owners at Live with SWAY's Ramadan Market.



Celebrating Black History Month at a local citizenship ceremony alongside Laura Mae Lindo and Judge Rochelle Irvi.



Awarding 20 community leaders with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.



Kicking off MT Space's Works-In-Progress Mini Festival.

## LET'S CONNECT

My advocacy in Ottawa is driven and strengthened by your concerns and perspectives. That's why I make it a priority to keep time in my schedule to connect with folks in our community - whether that's connecting through a community conversation with you and 6-12 of your neighbours or friends, or in a direct call.

If you're a constituent in Kitchener Centre and would like to discuss issues you're passionate about, whether by hosting a Community Conversation, or through a 15-minute phone or video call, simply email [mike.morrice.C1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:mike.morrice.C1@parl.gc.ca). Please be sure to include your postal code so my team can prioritize your message.

