

Ms. Pamela Damoff, MP
Ms. Karina Gould, MP
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0L6

November 12, 2015

Dear Ms. Gould and Ms. Damoff,

BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association (BG) congratulates you on your recent success in the federal election and we are excited about the chance to work with you as our representatives in the House of Commons.

Established in 2007 as a citizen-led, nonpartisan, not-for-profit environmental agency, BurlingtonGreen connects citizens from across Burlington with each other and with local opportunities to make a positive impact on the environment. We work hard to make a measurable, positive difference at the local level, but remain concerned about the many ongoing threats to our environment, both locally and globally. We need your support to ensure that all members of our new federal government make a concerted effort to address key environmental issues that face our communities, our country, and humanity as a whole. The environmental choices you make today will affect our future, perhaps irrevocably.

In becoming a Blue Dot community (bluedot.ca), Burlington has made a declaration enshrining our right to breathe fresh air, drink clean water, and eat healthy food. We believe passionately in these rights, but it will take all of us together to make sure our city can live up to this declaration. This means all levels of government working in harmony, with community groups and individual citizens doing their part as well. The Liberal Party of Canada made some significant commitments to address key environmental issues, and we want you to know that the members of BurlingtonGreen are eagerly awaiting their implementation. From our perspective, the top issues that need attention NOW are addressing climate change, developing a clean economy, and creating greener communities.

The timing couldn't be better for the first item on our list: with the 2015 Paris UN Framework Convention on Climate Change coming up in December, we'd like to see Canada step up and make a commitment we can all be proud of. As Canadians, we have been dismayed that Canada has lagged behind many other countries in committing to and achieving climate change targets and we want that to change. We are counting on Prime Minister Trudeau to let the world know that Canada will take a leadership role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by publicly committing to specific and ambitious targets that set the pace globally. We are running out of time, and there's no room left for a conservative approach now.

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This is also the time to shift our economy away from its dependence on fossil fuels, and begin actively stimulating economic growth and a brighter employment future for Canadians through clean jobs and the development of a robust and vibrant green technologies sector. Using these technologies in government, and ensuring that Canadian industry adopts them, as promised in your platform, will contribute positively to economic growth while at the same time cleaning up our environment. We think this will be a great win-win outcome, and we'll be watching for some specifics from you in these areas and looking for an improvement in Canada's global ranking in the clean-tech market.

As local activists, we are motivated by the notion of "thinking globally, but acting locally". On a national and international level, new laws and funding will be needed to make the changes our new government has promised. Working at the local level will also contribute significantly to the achievement of bigger picture targets, while at the same time improving the quality of life in communities. We are looking forward to seeing a lot of consultation, collaboration and concrete support from the new federal government to engage governments at the provincial and local level in developing greener communities that will offer all of us a healthier place in which to live, work and raise the next generation of Canadians.

We are doing our part and are very proud of our accomplishments over the past eight years, such as rescuing green space from development, showing 7,000 children how to "grow up green" through our "Kids Go Green" Workshops, engaging 52,000 participants in annual clean up events, growing and donating over a thousand kilos of food to local food banks, developing a Greenprint for the Future with citizens of Burlington and more (<http://www.burlingtongreen.org/about-us/our-accomplishments>). But developing a greener community in Burlington will also take federal support. Better transportation and water and wastewater treatment infrastructure and the protection of natural habitats and agricultural green space in Burlington are all important things we'll be looking to our new government to support over the next few years.

We are people who believe in a dream – a dream of a better future where humans live in harmony with our environment. During his election campaign, Prime Minister Trudeau said he would create a Canada where better is always possible. We are counting on him and on you as Burlington's two voices at the table, to make that happen with the help of citizens across the country. BurlingtonGreen looks forward to working collaboratively with you to make Burlington a greener, healthier city, and Canada a greener, healthier country, and we will be in touch soon to request an opportunity for us to get to know one another better and to discuss how we can advance this important work together.

Best regards,

Paul Haskins,
President,
BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association