



ED HOLDER
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
LONDON WEST



**Welcome to Your
Federal Parliament**

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Dear Constituents,

I am pleased to provide you with a copy of a special booklet entitled *“Welcome To Your Federal Parliament”*. The information provided explains the daily procedures of Parliament, the legislative process and the different roles a Member of Parliament takes on, once elected to the House of Commons.

Our Canadian Parliament has many long-standing traditions and has a proud history that extends over 200 years in Canada. I believe we all have a duty to participate in the democratic process, to ensure that realistic goals for our society are met. It is the first step to a brighter future for generations to come.

This booklet is intended to help you understand the legislative process and was written to provide you with answers to questions very often asked by constituents who want to know how our Parliament works.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve you and I look forward to continuing this service for several more years. If I can be of assistance to you, please write to me (postage-free to Ottawa), e-mail me (holdee1@parl.gc.ca), or call my office. My staff and I would be pleased to help you. For more information on my work on your behalf, please visit my website at www.edholder.ca.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Holder".

Ed Holder
Member of Parliament
London West

www.edholder.ca

The Canadian Parliament

By the *Constitution Act*, 1867 “the executive government of and over Canada is declared to continue and be vested in the Queen.” She acts, ordinarily through the Governor General, whom she appoints, on the advice of the Canadian Prime Minister. Parliament consists of the Queen, the House of Commons and the Senate.

The Queen



Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada

The Queen is the formal head of the Canadian state. She is represented federally by the Governor General, and provincially by the Lieutenant-Governors. All Federal Acts of Parliament begin with the words: “Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows”. Acts of Legislatures in most provinces begin with similar words. All Members of Parliament swear allegiance to the Queen of Canada and Her successors.

The Governor General

The Governor General is the Queen’s representative in Canada. Under the Constitution, the Governor General is appointed by the Queen on the advice of the federal Cabinet. The Governor General is appointed for a term of five years, though the term may be extended.

House of Commons

The House of Commons is the major law-making body. In each of the country’s 308 constituencies, or ridings, the candidate who gets the largest number of votes is elected to the House of Commons, even if his or her vote is less than half the total. The number of constituencies may be changed every ten years, pursuant to the Constitution, and the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, that allots parliamentary seats roughly on the basis of population. Every province must have at least as many Members in the Commons as it has in the Senate. The constituencies vary somewhat in size, within prescribed limits.

Distribution of Commons Seats

Ontario	106
Quebec	75
British Columbia	36
Alberta	28
Manitoba	14
Saskatchewan	14
Nova Scotia	11
New Brunswick	10
Prince Edward Island	4
Newfoundland & Labrador	7
Northwest Territories	1
Nunavut	1
Yukon Territory	1

Total Seats 308



The Senate

While seats in the House of Commons are distributed roughly in proportion to each province's population, seats in the Senate are distributed to provide each major region of the country with roughly equal representation. The Senate has 105 members. The Senators are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. Senators hold office until age 75 unless they miss two consecutive sessions of Parliament. The Senate can initiate any bills except bills providing for the expenditure of public money or imposing taxes. It can amend or reject any bill as often as it sees fit. A bill cannot become law unless it has been passed by the Senate.

Distribution of Senate Seats

Alberta	6
British Columbia	6
Manitoba	6
New Brunswick	10
Newfoundland & Labrador	6
Northwest Territories	1
Nova Scotia	10
Nunavut	1
Ontario	24
Prince Edward Island	4
Quebec	24
Saskatchewan	6
Yukon Territory	1
Total	105



Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Member of Parliament Ed Holder at the London Airport.

Our Prime Ministers Since 1867

1. Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald 1867-73
2. Hon. Alexander Mackenzie* 1873-78
3. Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald 1878-91
4. Hon. Sir John J.C. Abbott* 1891-92
5. Rt. Hon. Sir John S.D. Thompson 1892-94
6. Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell* 1894-96
7. Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Tupper* 1896-96
8. Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier 1896-1911
9. Rt. Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden 1911-17
10. Rt. Hon. Sir Robert L. Borden 1917-20
11. Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen 1920-21
12. Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King 1921-26
13. Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen 1926-26
14. Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King 1926-30
15. Rt. Hon. Richard Bedford Bennett 1930-35
16. Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King 1935-48
17. Rt. Hon. Louis Stephen St. Laurent 1948-57
18. Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker 1957-63
19. Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson 1963-68
20. Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau 1968-79
21. Rt. Hon. Charles Joseph Clark 1979-80
22. Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau 1980-84
23. Rt. Hon. John Napier Turner 1984-84
24. Rt. Hon. Martin Brian Mulroney 1984-92
25. Rt. Hon. Kim Campbell 1992-93
26. Rt. Hon. Jean Chrétien 1993-2004
27. Rt. Hon. Paul Martin 2004-2006
28. Rt. Hon. Stephen J. Harper 2006-Present

Prime Minister

The Prime Minister is normally a Member of the House of Commons. A non-Member could hold the office but, by custom, would have to be elected to a seat very soon after appointment. A Prime Minister may lose his or her seat in an election, but can remain in office as long as the party can command a majority in the House of Commons. Again, he or she must, by custom, win a seat promptly. The traditional way of arranging this is to have a Member of the party resign, creating a vacancy, which gives the defeated Prime Minister the opportunity to run in a by-election.

*Prior to 1968, "Right Honourable" was accorded only to Prime Ministers who had been sworn into the Privy Council for the U.K. Prime Ministers Mackenzie, Abbott and Bowell were only members of the Canadian Privy Council and Prime Minister Tupper became a U.K. Privy Councillor after his term as Canada's Prime Minister.



The Cabinet

The Cabinet is the executive arm of the Government, consisting of those Members and Senators appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Cabinet is the policy-forming body of the government. Most Cabinet Ministers are responsible for the administration of one or more Government departments and for reporting on their departments' activities to Parliament. By convention, almost all Cabinet Ministers are members of the House of Commons. Members of Cabinet are bound by collective responsibility.

Secretary of State

A Secretary of State is responsible for providing support to a Minister. Though not a full member of Cabinet, they are also bound by collective responsibility.

Parliamentary Secretary

A Parliamentary Secretary is appointed by the Prime Minister to assist a Minister. A Parliamentary Secretary may table documents or answer questions on behalf of the Minister.

***Collective Responsibility:** Refers to the principle that all members of Cabinet are, in the end, jointly responsible for the administration of government and the policies enacted by the government. As such, all Ministers must support the final decisions taken by Cabinet. If a Minister does not agree with a policy position, he or she must still support the policy publicly. As well, Ministers must not reveal any detail about Cabinet discussions. If a Minister is strongly opposed to a decision of Cabinet, only by resigning from Cabinet may a Minister publicly voice opposition. Collective responsibility of Cabinet is a principle of our parliamentary system. Cabinet solidarity is imperative if the government is to maintain the confidence of the House of Commons.*

The Official Opposition

In a parliamentary system, the Official Opposition is the driving force in holding the government accountable and responsible. The process of contest and confrontation between the government and the opposition pushes the government to produce policies that have the widest possible acceptance. A good opposition shows leadership, discloses the flaws in the government and presents serious and acceptable policy alternatives. A good opposition acts as the conscience of the Government in power and wields considerable influence. A weak opposition would not be able to ensure accountability, nor would it be considered a credible alternative.



Inside the Chamber

The House of Commons meets for approximately 130 days a year. Each day the House meets or sits is called a sitting day. When it is in session, the House meets Monday through Friday. Members are called to the House by the ringing of the bells. While the bells ring, the Speaker and the Clerks march through the Hall of Honour to the Commons Chamber, with the Sergeant-at-Arms leading the way carrying the mace. After taking the Chair, the Speaker leads the House in a brief prayer. On Wednesdays, the House is led in the singing of O Canada. The House is then called to order and the parliamentary day begins.

The Speaker

The Speaker of the House of Commons is elected by secret ballot by the House itself after each general election. He or she must be a Member of Parliament. The Speaker is the highest presiding officer, decides all questions of procedure and order, controls the House of Commons staff, and is expected to be impartial, non-partisan and as firm in enforcing the rules against the Prime Minister as against the humblest opposition backbencher. Several Deputy Speakers assist the Speaker.



The Speaker's Chair in the House of Commons.

House Officers

House Officers are the Clerks of the House and the Speaker's senior procedural advisers. They are seated at a long table in front of the Speaker. At the end of the table lies the mace, the symbol of the authority of the House of Commons. At the end of the Chamber, opposite the Speaker, sits the Sergeant-at-Arms. He has a number of ceremonial, administrative and security duties. Parliamentary pages are seated at various locations in the Chamber and carry messages to the Members.

The Legislative Process

I

Government Bills

Most legislation, including government bills which are proposed by Cabinet Ministers, is first considered by the House of Commons. The Senate also initiates legislation, but any bills concerning taxation or the expenditure of public money must originate in the Commons. Both Houses must approve all bills before they become law. Each bill goes through several stages in the House. First reading is a formality and there is no debate or discussion. Second reading allows Members to debate the principle of a bill. If a bill passes second reading, it goes to a committee of the House for detailed consideration. Witnesses are called and amendments to the bill can be proposed.

When a committee has completed its study, it reports the bill back to the House. The entire House then has the opportunity to consider the legislation. During report stage debate, Members can propose additional amendments to the legislation. Once report stage is completed, the bill is called for third reading debate. Members who voted for the bill at second reading may sometimes change their opinion at third reading after seeing what amendments have or have not been made to the bill. Once a bill has passed third reading in the House of Commons, it must go through a similar process of readings in the Senate. Bills come into force on receiving Royal Assent on a date specified in the bill or on a date set by Cabinet.

Private Members' Bills

Like Government bills, a Private Member's Bill is a piece of draft legislation which is submitted to Parliament for approval and possible amendment before it can become law. Most Private Members' Bills originate in the Commons, but some Private Members' Bills are sent to the Commons from the Senate. In short, Members of Parliament who are not Cabinet Ministers can use Private Members' Bills to put forth their own legislative and policy proposals. This method of producing legislation is used more frequently by opposition members than by government.

SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- ✓ **Introduction** – The process begins when a bill is introduced in the House of Commons.
- ✓ **First Reading** – The bill is “read” for the first time without debate and printed.
- ✓ **Second Reading** - The principle of the bill is debated. It is then voted on and the bill is sent to a parliamentary committee. A bill may go to committee before second reading.
- ✓ **Committee Stage** - A committee hears witnesses, examines the bill clause by clause and submits a report with or without amendments.
- ✓ **Report Stage** - Additional amendments to the bill may be moved, debated and voted on.
- ✓ **Third Reading** - The bill is debated a final time and voted on.
- ✓ **Senate** - The bill is sent to the Senate where a similar legislative process takes place.
- ✓ **Royal Assent** - The Members are summoned to the Senate Chamber where the bill is given Royal Assent and becomes law.

Business in the House of Commons

Routine Proceedings

Routine proceedings cover many different items, not all of which are dealt with everyday. It includes the tabling of documents, statements by Ministers, presentation of petitions and committee reports, introduction and first reading of bills and presentation of motions.

- **Tabling of documents:** The first item called by the Speaker under routine proceedings. At this time Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries have the opportunity to table returns, reports, responses to petitions or to committee reports and other documents.
- **Statements by Ministers:** A minister may make a short factual announcement or statement of government policy and the opposition replies.
- **Presenting of Petitions:** A petition by Canadians presented to Parliament for some action. Such a request can only be presented to the House by a Member.
- **Introduction and First Reading:** Bills, draft Acts of Parliament, are introduced and given first reading. The proposer is allowed to give a brief explanation of the bill.
- **Presentation of Motions:** A motion which, because of its substantive nature or procedural importance, is subject to debate before being put to a vote.
- **Presenting of Reports:** Committees make their views and wishes known by tabling reports in the House, reflecting the opinion of the majority of the committee. Reports may deal with routine matters affecting the operations of a committee. Or, following the completion of an inquiry, the committee tables the report containing its findings and recommendations.

Government Orders

They are items of business (such as motions, bills or questions) that the government initiates and places on the agenda of the House.

Members' Statements

A daily 15-minute period, preceding the oral question period, when Members other than Cabinet Ministers may make statements on matters of national, regional or local importance.

Statements are limited in length to one minute and the opportunity to speak is given equally to all Members.

Ed Holder has used his Members' Statements to highlight important events in London and the extraordinary achievements of Londoners such as our Olympic athletes and those serving in our Armed Forces.

All these statements are available at www.edholder.ca or by searching 'Ed Holder, MP' on YouTube.



MP Ed Holder in the House of Commons

Oral Questions

This closely-watched 45 minutes is also known as Question Period. It is a chance for opposition Members, and sometimes Members of the governing party, to seek information from the government. By questioning the Prime Minister and the other Cabinet Ministers, Members try to call the government to account for its actions.

Production of Papers

Members can ask the government to present certain documents to the House of Commons. The government can respond to these requests when this item is called.

Private Members' Business

Members who are not Cabinet Ministers can present bills and motions for debate during Private Members' Business. Items are selected at random to be discussed in the House and these items may be chosen to come to a vote. A one-hour period is devoted to this business each sitting day.

Adjournment Proceedings

A Member who is dissatisfied with a reply received in Question Period can ask, in writing, for the matter to be raised again during the adjournment proceedings. A Cabinet Minister or Parliamentary Secretary will respond to the concerns raised.



MP Ed Holder speaks with St. Paul's students in the Visitor's Centre before their tour of the Parliament buildings. In addition to taking their questions, he provided them with information packages that the students took back to class to help with their projects..



MP Ed Holder speaks with Byron Northview students following their tour of Parliament Hill on the steps of the Peace Tower.

To learn more about booking a free tour of Parliament Hill for yourself or your group, please visit www.parl.gc.ca

A Member of Parliament's Role

A Member of Parliament has many responsibilities. Essentially, a Member of Parliament wears three hats:

- that of a Constituency Representative,
- a Parliamentarian,
- and a Member of a Political Party.

Constituency Representative

A Member of Parliament is responsible for dealing with any number of problems his or her constituents may have with the federal government. This can include everything from the late payment of pension cheques to immigration matters. An MP will contact various government officials on behalf of constituents in order to have these problems resolved. Members of Parliament also represent their constituents by attending official functions on their behalf. For example, on Remembrance Day MPs lay wreaths at local memorials in honour of those Canadians who served during wartime. Members of Parliament also attend official openings in the riding for such things as community centres or businesses, and are frequently asked to give speeches to various local organizations. School graduations, anniversaries and parades provide opportunities to meet with constituents. In order to accommodate the needs of constituents, MPs maintain offices in both the constituency and Ottawa.

Duties in Parliament

Parliament provides MPs with the opportunity to raise matters of concern in a national forum. Through debates, question period, and committee hearings, MPs are given the opportunity to shape the course of national affairs. Constituents expect an MP to be in Ottawa when the House is in session, and to take part in the business of Parliament. By doing so, not only are the concerns of constituents voiced, but the MP also has a chance to put his or her own views on the public record.

Member of a Political Party

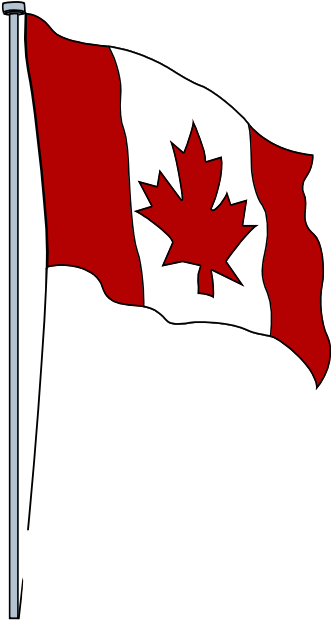
During elections, parties set out their position on the major issues. Once elected, voters expect an MP to support the policies put forth by the MP's party. If the MP refuses to do so, the government will not be in a position to honour its election commitments, nor will the Opposition be able to press effectively its objections. Political parties provide the public with information and proposals as to how they will govern. Based on those proposals and promises, members of the public determine how to vote. MPs have an obligation to support their political party and its leader as it attempts to implement these election promises, promises which can at times be controversial. As members of a political party, MPs also play a role in the functioning of the party. Each riding has a local party association which helps organize political events and helps in election campaigns. These local associations also help keep the MP in touch with the views of the constituency.



MP Ed Holder is a proud member of the Conservative Party of Canada, but he represents constituents of all political persuasions.

While a person may run for political office under a particular political banner, once they are elected, they have a responsibility to represent and assist all their constituents.

Our National Anthem



*O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide,
O Canada, We stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land, glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.*

*O Canada! Terre de nos aïeux,
Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux!
Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
Il sait porter la croix!
Ton histoire est une épopée
Des plus brillants exploits.
Et ta valeur, de foi trempé,
Protégera nos foyers et nos droits,
Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.*

“O Canada” was proclaimed Canada’s national anthem on July 1, 1980, one hundred years after it was first sung on June 24, 1880. The music was composed by Calixa Lavallee, a well-known composer; French lyrics to accompany the music were written by Sir Adolphe-Basile Routhier. The song steadily gained in popularity. Many English versions have appeared over the years. The version on which the official English lyrics are based was written in 1908 by Mr. Justice Robert Stanley Weir. The official English version includes changes recommended in 1968 by a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons.



Politicians of all political stripes celebrate together on Canada Day at Harris Park

The Canadian Flag

The maple leaf is but the latest in a series of flags that have flown over what has become Canada. On June 24, 1497, John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto) raised the Cross of St. George, the English flag at the time, over Newfoundland. Thirty-seven years later, and several hundred kilometres further west, Jacques Cartier planted the royal fleur-de-lis and claimed the land it stood in for the King of France. The fortunes of war saw the colony of New France ceded to England and the arrival of the Royal Union Flag (the Crosses of St. George and St. Andrew) after 1759. Following the Act of Union (1801), in Britain, the Cross of St. Patrick was added and the Royal Union Flag became the Union Jack.

It was not until 1924 that the image of a maple leaf officially graced a flag representing Canada. The shield of the Arms of Canada, consisting of the Lions of England, the Lion of Scotland, the Harp of Ireland, three Lillies of France's old regime and a sprig of three maple leaves, was added to the Red Ensign, a flag originally created in 1707 for the British Merchant

Marine. Referred to as the Canadian Red Ensign an unofficial version was flown in World War I and officially later flown by Canadian troops during the Second World War. Both the Canadian Red Ensign and the Union Jack were supplanted by the current flag in 1965.

The search for a uniquely Canadian flag began in 1925. In 1946 a parliamentary committee called for designs to be submitted. Though more than 2,600 were received, Parliament was never asked to vote on a design.

In 1964 Prime Minister Pearson renewed the search with a special committee that held 46 sittings and heard from heraldic experts, historians and citizens.

By October 1964, the number of designs had been narrowed to three: *a Red Ensign with the fleur-de-lis and the Union Jack*; *a sprig of three maple leaves between blue bars*; *a stylized maple leaf on a white square flanked by red bars*.

The committee endorsed the single maple leaf design and the House of Commons approved it on December 15, 1964. Two days later the Senate followed suit. Canada's national flag was proclaimed by Queen Elizabeth II on January 28, 1965 and inaugurated on February 15, 1965. Flag Day is celebrated on February 15th.

RULES FOR FLYING OUR FLAG

The National Flag of Canada should always be flown on its own mast - flag protocol dictating that it is improper to fly two or more flags on the same mast (eg. one beneath the other). Further, the following points should be kept in mind:

- The National Flag of Canada should not be used as table/seat cover, as a masking for boxes or as a barrier on a dais or platform.
- While it is not technically incorrect to use the National Flag of Canada to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony, it is not common practice to do so and should be discouraged.
- Nothing should be pinned to or sewn on the National Flag of Canada.
- The National Flag of Canada should not be signed or marked in any way (A border could be attached to the outside edge of the Flag on which it would be acceptable to have signatures leaving the Flag itself untouched).

When the National Flag of Canada is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, all present should face the flag, men should remove their hats, and all should remain silent. Those in uniform should salute.



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Please call to make an appointment ahead of your visit.

Visit us on the internet at www.edholder.ca

Ed Holder is one of only 22 MPs out of 308 with a **100% voting record** in the House of Commons. (source: www.howdtheyvote.ca)

"I know every MP has their own reasons for missing a vote, but I believe an MP's top priority is to be in Parliament to vote on their constituents' behalf and I hope my record demonstrates my commitment to you."



**GIVING
100%
FOR YOU**

QUESTIONNAIRE

As your elected Member of Parliament, I have many concerns that I would appreciate your feedback on. Your opinions will determine how you are represented.

	YES	NO
Do you believe that Canada's Head of State should continue to be the King/Queen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you believe that members of the Senate should be elected by the people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Currently there are 105 Senators to represent 10 Provinces and 3 Territories. Should there be fewer Senators?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you think the House of Commons should be opened each day with the singing of O Canada?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you think the lyrics of O Canada should be changed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you think the voting age should be lowered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Should convicted criminals in jail be allowed to vote?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is it beneficial to have students visit Parliament Hill?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What issues would you recommend that your Member of Parliament Ed Holder focus on?

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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