

Marc Serré

Member of Parliament / Député
Nickel Belt



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Good morning everyone and a BIG thank you to the NOSDA organizers for the invitation to participate in this year's AGM. Although I had every intention of being here with you today I must offer my sincere regrets due to my parliamentary duties. I was honoured to offer the Keynote address at last year's AGM and I am equally honoured to offer greetings to you today.

I would like to thank NOSDA for the wonderful work you do for all communities in Northern Ontario. You might feel at times it may go unrecognized but I want to assure you it is not, Ottawa is in the know!

This year's AGM theme "Northern Ontario: Better Communities, Better Outcomes" speaks volumes to me personally as much of this can be achieved with the development of the National Housing Strategy.

As Chair of the Northern Ontario Liberal Caucus, with my work with the Indigenous Caucus and Status of Women Committee, I have heard loud and clear how affordable housing is a priority to the people of Nickel Belt and Northern Ontario on many levels, for social housing, for seniors and for our indigenous communities.

A large part of the 2017 Budget is investing over \$11 billion dollars spread out over 11 years for a National Housing Strategy that seeks to repair and add affordable housing in an effort to eliminate poverty within our communities. We are investing in affordable housing to help those who need it most. There are currently over a million families who cannot afford rent or are living in unacceptable conditions. As a Canadian and as a parent that saddens me.

As a Northern Ontarian, I'm all in on helping everyone have the basic needs of life.... sleeping in a comfortable home that has running water and electricity. I feel I can confidently say that everyone here today feels the same and I know NOSDA and its member organizations will continue to work together to achieve this common goal.

The National Housing Strategy provides the most ambitious long term federal housing investment in a generation. Our strategy will ensure Canadians have adequate and affordable housing, which will reduce financial stress of Canadians, help communities renovate their housing stock, and give more stable housing to the homeless. These measures will improve the lives of Canadians, build more inclusive communities, a healthier environment, and a stronger economy.

As you may know, my motion M-106 passed in the House of Commons on May 17. This Motion calls on the Federal Government to develop a "National Seniors Strategy". I am very humbled on having had full caucus support and am excited for what this means for all seniors across Canada. The implementation of a National Seniors Strategy will bring real, positive change to the quality of life and well-being of seniors. This directly works in correlation with our housing strategy as it will recognize the need for more secure housing and housing options for seniors which will give much peace of mind to the seniors themselves, their families and caregivers.

In closing, the Government is taking the next step in its long-term economic plan to support the middle class and those working hard to join it by creating a culture of lifelong learning with skills development, building healthier communities with cleaner air and water.

I wish to offer thanks to everyone for attending this event. Together we will make a stronger tomorrow!

Merci, Miggwetch



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