



## *Message from Queen's Park*



**Monthly Column by MPP John Yakabuski**

**September, 2008**

Monday, September 22nd signaled the reconvening of the Provincial Legislature, but something was missing. It was yours truly. I wasn't there. I must say it felt strange to be at home while my colleagues were opening the fall session. It's not like I didn't want to be there but my recent surgery made that impossible. For those who may not be aware, I underwent hip surgery on September 8th and am recuperating at home. While it makes maintaining my normal work schedule impossible because of the loss of mobility, I want to reassure you, my constituents, that I am still fully accessible, thanks to the many communicating options available to us in this electronic age. In fact, I'm very grateful to have that ability because without it, the days would seem much longer than they do.

While not being able to get out to join in at riding events is frustrating, I know I must be patient. Pushing too hard, too soon, would only jeopardize my long term recovery. I did, however, make it out for two events last Saturday, September 27th. Both were 90th birthday celebrations. One was for Mercedes Conway, a remarkable lady from Barry's Bay and the other was for Alvin Layman, a fine gentleman from Killaloe. I have to admit that while I was only out and about for around an hour and a half, I was certainly feeling it. It was great to get out however.

Let me take this opportunity to extend a sincere thank you to everyone at the Ottawa General Hospital for the great care I received during my surgery and stay. Also, to all those who have extended their best wishes to me for a speedy recovery. Your visits, phone calls, cards and prayers are most sincerely appreciated. It is my hope that slowly but surely, I will get back to full speed over the next couple of months.

Back to Politics. While the Federal Election and all the news surrounding it is dominating the media coverage - as it should - the provincial legislature should not be ignored. While there was more news of lay-offs and plant closures last week, the McGuinty Government continues to play politics by trying to blame the federal government. They refuse to show any willingness to examine their own policies which are continuing to cause plant after plant to ask themselves whether or not they can operate under the current taxation and regulatory situation. Ontario is affected more than any other province when the manufacturing sector is hurting. It is incumbent on the government to be willing to do more than just play the blame game. They must examine their own structures and be ready to adjust their policies in order to stem the tide.

The week before the legislature returned, John Tory and other caucus members held an economic round table to get feedback from a mix of stakeholders to bring forth ideas that might help Ontario weather the storm. The group included people from the manufacturing and financial sectors, union leaders and members of academic institutions. Six recommendations were made to the McGuinty government suggesting steps that could be taken to help reverse what's been happening over the past couple of years. The Premier's plan sadly amounts to announcing a cabinet shuffle, blaming someone else and hoping it goes away. Real leadership demands so much more. It's time for his government to step up to the plate.

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