

Why does David Tilson oppose making Remembrance Day a national holiday?

Dear editor:

In the lead up to Remembrance Day, Private Member's Bill C-597 (An Act to Make Remembrance Day a National Statutory Holiday) was debated and voted on at 2nd reading. In an unprecedented display of multi-partisan support, C-597 passed with near unanimous consent: 258 MPs voted in favour, 2 MPs opposed. David Tilson was one of the MPs who opposed.

Here are some statements in of support of C-597:

?Our country has been blessed by the courage and dedication of generations of armed forces personnel who have stood and fought and died, or come home broken, to defend Canada. I believe that it is time to make November 11, Remembrance Day, a national statutory holiday,? said NDP MP Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest), Sponsor of Bill C-597, November 3, 2014.

?I proudly support the bill because I believe it is the start of a much greater conversation,? said Liberal MP Frank Valeriote (Guelph), November 3, 2014.

?I hope this legislation reminds Canadians that they need to wear a poppy. They need to get to a cenotaph. They need to make sure they remember the people who fell for our country and hold the significance of the date dear to their hearts,? said Conservative MP Erin O'Toole (Durham), Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, November 3, 2014.

In fact, this initiative isn't unique. In 2010 Ontario MPP and candidate to lead the Ontario Progressive Conservatives, Lisa MacLeod, introduced a Private Member's Bill in Queens Park to make Remembrance Day a statutory holiday in Ontario.

The question is simple: Why does David Tilson oppose a reasonable measure to respect our veterans while most of his Conservative colleagues support it?

Canadians deserve better and the voters of Dufferin-Peel do too.

Dan Harris

NDP Member of Parliament for Scarborough Southwest