

Malalai Halimi launches Liberal bid in Dufferin-Caledon, takes aim at incumbent MP

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES

As the federal election campaign gets underway, Liberal candidate Malalai Halimi is officially launching her bid to represent Dufferin-Caledon, challenging incumbent Conservative MP Kyle Seebach for the riding.

Amid a crowd gathered at her campaign office in Orangeville, Halimi greeted friends, family, and political allies to welcome them to her campaign and express gratitude for their support.

"I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to all of you for being here," she said. "Here today at our new campaign office, surrounded by so many supporters, friends, MPs and our past candidates."

Halimi's campaign is centred on a message of unity, something she says is a contrast to the Conservative platform, which has dominated Dufferin-Caledon. Since the riding's creation, it has held a Conservative seat that has gone unbroken since 2004.

"We know that our community is strong, we are not broken," she said. "While the Conservatives have voted against programs like \$10 a day child care, a national food program, dental care, PharmaCare and more, the Liberals have and will continue to introduce policies to support the middle class and protect the environment, build more homes and keep Canada strong."

She voiced strong support for Liberal Party leader Mark Carney, citing alignment on key priorities such as affordability, housing, and international trade.

"I have been very pleased to hear some of the priorities Mister Carney is focused on," Halimi said. "Standing up against Donald Trump and his threats, cutting taxes for the middle classes, saving families up to \$825 a year and building 4 million homes across Canada. Mark Carney and I are focused on growing the economy, diversifying industries, uniting our Canadian economy, and growing trade partnerships with international allies."

Halimi emphasized that now more than ever, Canada needs leadership that can bring people together during uncertain times.

Halimi, who lives in Dufferin-Caledon with her family, says it was her experience in the community that inspired her to run for office. She made an emotional appeal to voters about the need for strong leadership in the face of global and national challenges.

"Dufferin-Caledon is my home. It's where I'm raising my 3 teenagers, and where I hope to build a better future for them and our residents,"

"It will take strong, experienced leadership, not slogans, to get us through the challenges we face in the years ahead."

Currently, Halimi has focused her time on community events and reaching out to voters. She has visited events across the riding to better connect, and said that she is grateful for the experience it brought.

"I have met thousands of incredible people all over Dufferin-Caledon and I have been able to hear from so many different Caledon residents about their priorities and concerns here at home," she said. "And one message that keeps ringing through is Mister Carney's statement that markets don't have value, people do."

She said that this election will be critical for the future of Canada, and echoing Mark Carney's statement, she said the people are the most important part.

"Everything we love about Canada is at stake in this election because of Donald Trump's threats," she said. "I'm confident that Canadians recognize that and will come out to elect a strong government that will stand up for our economy, our sovereignty, and keep Canada strong."

Among the guests at the campaign launch was Brampton East MP Maninder Sidhu, who voiced strong support for Halimi.

"It was very important for me to be here tonight to show my support," Sidhu said. "You've got a wonderful candidate here, in Malalai. We've been knocking doors in Brampton, you've been knocking doors here. The energy is very real, people want real change,"

"When we come together, when we unite, we stand for Canada," he said. "So let's keep building."

Let's turn this riding red. I'm so delighted, so excited for Malala and the whole team here."

Until the polls close, Halimi plans to continue campaigning, and hosting events to connect further with Dufferin-Caledon residents. Next up, she will be hosting a Barbeque on Saturday at 12:30 p.m.