

KENNY

YOUR VOICE YOUR ACTION

Speech of Kenny Wan

Nov 5, 2013

Nomination campaign launch press conference

Thank you for the kind introduction. Good morning everyone and my media friends.

First of all, I want to thank my family, as well as my brother and sisters. And I want to especially acknowledge my wife, Sherry. Without her support and understanding and so much work behind the scenes, I would not be able to stand here and make this announcement today.

I also want to thank my team of volunteers. They are more than supporters, but also my source of inspiration and pusher for reflection.

Like many of you, I was not born in Canada. I remember our former Premier said time after time that he admired the courage immigrants took in leaving their native land with their families, moving to a new country and building their lives from the ground up.

As an immigrant family, I would say I am a lucky guy. After we came to Canada in 1981, I was able to finish my CA training and received my designation two years later. I worked in some of Canada's largest corporations for more than a decade before opening up my own accounting firm 17 years ago. I hope you are not trying to guess my age.

My father said to me ever since I was young, that it is more fortunate to give than to receive. (Say in Chinese: 施比受更为有福) Therefore, I always remember to help others, to contribute positively to the society, and to get involved in the community.

Over the years, I have served as:

- President of Hong Fook Mental Health Association
- President of Centre for Information & Community Services
- President of Richmond Hill & Markham Chinese Business Association

So, why do I take on these leadership positions and the challenges that come with them for various community organizations?

Actually, when it comes to community involvement, a title or position means very little. The true measure is by the actual positive impact one has on the community.

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That is why I also support many other worthy causes without an official portfolio, these organizations include Yee Hong Foundation, Mon Sheong Foundation, Carefirst, Fu Hui Foundation, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Red Cross Society, The United Way of Greater Toronto and recently Mackenzie Health Centre, just to name a few.

I'll tell you what: it takes passion and commitment of your time and resources to continuously be involved in the community. Some may view that as a sacrifice. However, if you do care about the less-advantaged, vulnerable sectors like youth, seniors and new immigrants, key contributors to the economy like entrepreneurs and new start-up businesses, supporting them becomes a sense of mission.

My eldest daughter wrote to me wondering why I would want to serve as a Member of Parliament. I told her that I am proud to be a Canadian and I am also a Chinese. Chinese Canadians carry the values from both Western and Asian cultures. Although Chinese Canadians make up less than 10% of the Canadian population, our contributions to the economy and society as a whole is significant. However, on the political front, we are far less vocal and assertive. It is about time we all stand up and get more representation.

Here I am. I feel obligated that I should carry on a new mission after years of community work. I want to be your voice in the Parliament. As a fully integrated Canadian, I am doing this for all residents in Markham Unionville; I am doing this for all families and businesses; I am doing this for our collective well-being and for our future generations!

Thank you. I intend to run for the nomination as a Liberal candidate. Why Liberal, you may ask? Actually my daughter also asked the same question.

As a Liberal, we stand for inclusion, mutual respect, social justice, peace and humanity. As an active member of the Liberal Party for the past 12 years, I stand up for those same values now and in the future.

I want to acknowledge the support by some of my friends who are present today. Thank you, Doctor Mahmuda Khan, for being here. She is a Southeast Asian and a Muslim. Dr. Khan has been friends with this Christian for almost 15 years.

I am delighted to have Herman here too. He has been my friend for over 24 years and during the 10 years when we were neighbours, he would often cut my grass for nothing...well, may be just a few beers. I would not have as much time for community work without him. We also built our fences together with other neighbours who came from different countries - Macedonia, Trinidad, Jamaica and Pickering. To me, this is inclusion and mutual respect at its best in a community setting.

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This is Canada. I support the Liberal Party because it is the Liberal Party which helped build a Canada that opens its arms to immigrants like you and me, provides universal health care, keeps our finances in check, and maintains an environment where we can make our living and build our family.

Yes. Family is what we hold dear most. Like all of you, I want my children to receive the best education; my parents to be taken care of by the best health care system in the world, and at this stage of my life, I start to worry about the wellbeing of my future grandchildren.

As a professional accountant and community worker, I know how challenging it is to make business go, how hard it is to bring your family over to Canada, how difficult it is to get care for our seniors and take care of our children.

I have the passion and the ability to address these challenges and issues.

With your support, I can win the election for you and go to the Parliament to voice your concern. I am confident that with my education and my background in economics, accounting and tax, my experience in the community and my own experience in life, I am able to continue to help all of you, this time, at the Federal level.

I need your support to make this happen. Please sign up to become a member of the Liberal Party. And come out to the riding's nomination meeting to cast your vote on me.

Together, we can bring the voice of Markham Unionville to the Parliament!
Together we can help build our beautiful country Canada!
Together we can make history!

Thank you very much! Merci beaucoup!