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WRLA Advocacy Bulletin Ottawa Hill Days May 30-June 1, 2022

WRLA President Liz Kovach was back in Ottawa for a series of meetings with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, then undertook direct meetings with the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) as well as three Members of Parliament.

The Hill Day meetings organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce were focused on variety of topics. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (where the WRLA participated) had several meetings, including with the Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, as well as Transport Opposition Critic Melissa Lantsman, MP George Chahal, and representatives of Transport Canada to discuss wealth-generating infrastructure investments and a competitive transportation sector.

There is an opportunity for greater collaboration as they are pushing for the federal government to create a housing roundtable, which would pull together stakeholders, such as the WRLA, to properly understand the true housing need in Canada. A three-year timeline would be requested, to hear from and work with industry partners. This roundtable could research the number of housing units required. Thus far, there is limited data on the need, though housing scarcity is patently obvious.

In meetings with the Opposition Shadow Minister for International Trade and Supply Chain Resilience, Randy Hoback, and Deputy Shadow Critic for Natural Resources Larry Maguire, a variety of items were discussed including:

- Emphasizing the skilled trades to younger workers and current students, and the abundant opportunities in the lumber materials industry.
- The labour shortage in all sectors.
- MP Hoback noted labour mobility agreements contained in CUSMA, which Canada needs to leverage, and Liz Kovach is following up on this issue.
- Rail constraints and port congestion.

Another meeting was held with Saskatchewan MP Gary Vidal Opposition Shadow Minister for Crown-Indigenous Relations. Items discussed include:

- How the WRLA wants to be a resource to government and to elected officials, to build a partnership.
- Liz noted that the WRLA is working to ensure more vocational training in high schools and raising awareness through outreach.
- Vidal noted the need to match unemployed people to available jobs.
- Vidal provided recommendations on engagement opportunities with First Nations communities.

This was a vital day to share WRLA's message and to stress to decision-makers the importance of

working together to solve challenges that are hindering Canada's economic recovery and growth.

Following these meetings, the WRLA will continue to engage parliamentarians, public servants and other industry organizations to advance our shared objectives.

Stay tuned for more information and opportunities to engage in these discussions.
Any questions please reach out to Liz at lkovach@wrla.org

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