

## JAMIE MALONEY

*Vice President, Organization, LPC(O)*

Welcome to the 2012 Annual General Meeting in Toronto. This weekend is another important step on the path to the 2015 federal election. Our Party has been through quite a bit since the last Annual General Meeting in Windsor. The federal election results of 2011 have left us in unfamiliar territory.

Many have (and continue to) predicted the demise of our party. Anyone who attended the January convention in Ottawa knows that the Liberal Party is very much alive and well. The convention set a **record attendance** of over 3000 Liberals who are ready to move forward. However, the next few years are perhaps the most critical in the future of our Party and we must build on the enthusiasm from the Ottawa convention. Nothing can be taken for granted.

Organizationally, there are three critical issues to be addressed between now and 2015.

First of all, next year we will be holding a leadership race which is the next big step towards rebuilding for the next election. The process and selection of our new Leader will set the stage for 2015. The rules for the leadership have not been determined and Ontario must have a strong voice in the process. The leadership process itself will be new as we are electing a leader in a way that our party has never done before. At the Ottawa convention, we opened the process to include a new "supporters" category. It is important that we develop a process to not only include these supporters in that process, but we must do so in a way that encourages retention rates higher than we have done in the past. This is an opportunity for a fresh start and allows us to focus on the future.

Second, after we have selected our new Leader, I believe that we should immediately begin the process of nominating candidates. If we wait until 2015 to select candidates, we will be at a disadvantage to the other parties. The new leader should be committed to an early selection process and work with the Party. If candidates have two years to build a strong local team, we stand a much better chance of winning.

Finally, we must remember that Ontario will have more seats in the next election. Redistribution will have an impact on the new ridings but on many existing ridings. The challenge of working to see that these ridings are ready for the 2015 election should start early. I am currently working on a plan to be prepared for redistribution, to roll out early in 2013.

I would like to thank the outgoing members of the Management Committee - Bardish Chagger, Paul Mulligan, Meredith Caplan, Rob Jamieson and Eileen Shuchat. It has been a pleasure working with each of you and LPC(O) is in a better position because of your contribution.

I congratulate and look forward to working with all the incoming members of the Management Committee who have been acclaimed and those who will be elected. Thanks to all those who have put their names forward to stand. It shows your strong commitment to our Party. Win or lose, I hope you will continue to be engaged in our great Party.

In closing, I would like to pay a special tribute and thank Judi Longfield and her team at LPC(O). Judi's leadership and dedication is remarkable. Simply put, LPC(O) would not run without her.

Enjoy the weekend.

