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*As of December 15, 2015

The Canadian Scene

New Senate Speaker

On December 3, Governor General **David Johnston** appointed **George Furey** as Speaker of the Senate, replacing Conservative Senator **Leo Housakos**.



George Furey

Furey, who sits as an independent Senate Liberal, is a lawyer from St. John's who was appointed to the Senate in 1999 to represent Newfoundland and Labrador on the advice of Prime Minister **Jean Chretien**.

Earning a B.A., a B.Ed. and a Masters of Education from Memorial, he became a school teacher

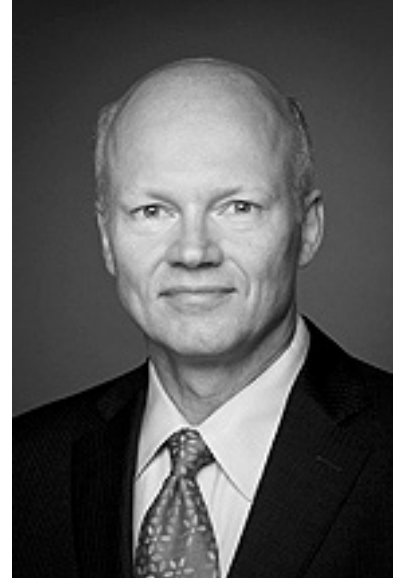
and administrator before attending Dalhousie Law School. A respected community leader and frequent volunteer, Furey has also been a member of many professional boards and provincial commissions, including Newfoundland and Labrador's Provincial Police Complaints Commission.

Furey has served on many Senate committees during his tenure in the upper chamber and is a past chair of the Budget Sub-committee of Internal Economy, the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs and the Senate Standing Committee of Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration.

Addressing his colleagues, Furey noted the Senate was "entering uncharted waters, in which we are invited by the government to reinvent ourselves in a less partisan way and fulfil our roles as envisioned under the constitution as an independent chamber of sober second thought. I know uncertainty can be unsettling, but I have confidence that working together, with respect and commitment to this institution, we can meet the challenges ahead."

New House of Commons Speaker

Also on December 3, Members of Parliament elected Halifax West Liberal MP **Geoff Regan** as the new Speaker of the House of Commons and Chair of the Board of Internal Economy. Liberal MPs **Denis Paradis** and **Yasmin Ratansi**, and Conservative MP **Bruce Stanton** also stood for election, which was the first to use a ranked ballot over the previous system of rounds of voting. Regan replaces Conservative MP **Andrew Scheer** in the role.



Geoff Regan

Prior to his parliamentary career, Regan completed a B.A.

at St. Francis Xavier University and a law degree at Dalhousie University. In addition to practicing law, he volunteered within his community and held leadership roles at the Bedford Board of Trade, the Metro Food Bank and Beacon House.

First elected as an MP in 1993, Regan lost his bid for re-election in 1997, before returning to the House of Commons in 2000. He has been re-elected in each subsequent general election and has served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Regional Minister for Nova Scotia.

"My role as your Speaker is to be fair," Regan said upon taking the Speaker's Chair. "I want to tell you I will be fair, and I will be firm." Regan also spoke of the Canadians who lost their lives in two World Wars defending a system that allows parliamentarians and all Canadians to "speak freely and express our different opinions."

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