

# The Canadian Region

## New NWT Speaker

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On October 24, Mackenzie Delta MLA **Frederick Blake Jr.** was acclaimed as Speaker of the Northwest Territories' Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Blake said he planned to promote the value of NWT's consensus style of government by aiming to travel more to smaller communities and particularly by focusing on visiting youth in schools.

"Everyone has a voice in this legislature," Speaker Blake said in an interview with local media. "It's not like parties where you have to toe the line." He contended that a non-partisan system gives members a better position from which to represent community interests and that he hoped to support this system as Speaker.

Mr. Blake vowed that his door would always be open and that he would work to support the Assembly's members any way he could.

First elected in 2011, prior to serving as an MLA, Speaker Blake was the Chief and Mayor of Tsiigehtchic from 2007-2011. He also served as the President of the Gwich'ya Gwich'in Council in Tsiigehtchic, on the Board of Directors for the Gwich'in Tribal Council, and on the Board of Directors for the Gwich'in Development Corporation and the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation.

## New Newfoundland and Labrador Speaker

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On November 2, St. George's-Humber MHA **Scott Reid** was elected Speaker of the Newfoundland and Labrador Assembly in a secret ballot victory over former Speaker **Perry Trimper**, who was attempting to regain the position after stepping down from cabinet.

Mr. Reid, who had previously vied for the role in 2016, told reporters "it is a great honour to be in this position."

Raised in Jeffrey's on Newfoundland's West Coast, Mr. Reid earned degrees at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), before receiving his PhD at



**Frederick Blake Jr.**



**Scott Reid**

the University of Ottawa. He worked as a researcher in the Government Members' Office in 1989, before advancing to senior positions in government including director of communications and director of research. He also worked for the federal government and taught courses at MUN in the Department of Political Science and the Faculty of Business.

First elected in a 2014 by-election, Mr. Reid was re-elected in 2015 and 2019.

Lewisporte-Twillington MHA Derek Bennett was named deputy speaker in a motion put forward by Premier **Dwight Ball**.

### **New House of Commons Speaker**

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Nipissing-Timiskaming Liberal MP Anthony Rota was elected the 37th Speaker of the House of Commons on December 5, 2019. He was selected after achieving majority support in the Commons on a preferential ballot that also included incumbent Speaker Geoff Regan, and MPs Joël Godin, Bruce Stanton, and Carol Hughes.

Noting he is the first MP of Italian descent to hold the position, Speaker Rota told MPs: "I'm here to serve you and make sure that everything runs well for all of us, so that we can conduct the business of Parliament and make sure that it works well. My promise is to be fair... to be nonpartisan, and to do my best in this House, at your service."

First elected in 2004, Speaker Rota noted he had experienced three minority parliaments as an MP and vowed to be available to all his colleagues. He also intends to regularly invite small groups of MPs to



**Anthony Rota**

meet to better get to know each other and promised to install a suggestion box to encourage members to submit ideas to improve the House of Commons.

Prior to his time in Parliament Speaker Rota served as a North Bay city councillor. After being defeated in the 2011 election, he became a sessional lecturer in Nipissing University's political science department and served as Director of Governmental Relations.

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Sandra Barnes, Secretary

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Tim Mercer, Secretary

### **NUNAVUT**

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\*As of December 30, 2019

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