



## **MP Transition Support – Briefing Note**

### **Overview of “transition support” allowance**

Members’ Allowances and Services document (Relevant sections: 14.4 + 14.5):

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/MAS/mas-e.pdf>

MPs who do not seek re-election, or who are not re-elected, are entitled to \$15,000 in “transition support,” which can go towards the following:

- Career training, including “practical strategies to re-enter the marketplace” + “retirement planning” + job search + “update resumes and prepare for interviews” + “evaluate and negotiate job offers.”
- 4 round trips within Canada for job interviews, for education/training, or to sell the member’s house.
- Office supplies, long-distance phone calls.

*“Career transition programs must be started within 12 months following the general election... and completed within 12 months of the start date.”*

*“Costs for these programs are charged to the House Administration central budget and deducted from the \$15,000 transition support allocation.”*

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 12-month window for departing MPs to tap into the transition support allowance was extended:

- MPs who did not seek re-election: extension to Sept. 12, 2022.
- MPs who were not re-elected: extension Oct. 22, 2022.

Statement from comms for Speaker’s office to CTF explaining the extension:

*“Due to the unusual and exceptional situations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board approved, on June 1, 2020, an extension to both the transition period during which Members can receive transition support services, and the time limits for reimbursements. This exception applies to Members who did not seek re-election or were not re-elected in the 43rd general election, for which the respective deadlines have been extended to September 12, 2022 and October 22, 2022.”*

In addition to the transition allowance, former MPs also receive:

- Severance (if served less than six years; [pension](#) if served longer or over the age of 55; can receive both in certain circumstances); current severance: \$97,300 (more if they chaired a committee or were in cabinet).
- Free counselling for them and their families for up to a year, includes personal, financial, legal, addiction, lifestyle, nutritional, and health and wellness services.
- Relocation benefit for up to one year if they moved to Ottawa Capital Region during their time in office — includes: packing and moving costs, shipping of up to two vehicles, insurance premiums, installation/removal services.

### **Overview of transition support allowance findings**

- 12 departing MPs since 2019 have used the transition support allowance for education/training.
- Those 12 departing MPs expensed a total of \$90,303.89 for education/training — an average of \$7,525 per person.<sup>1</sup>
- LPC had six people for a total of \$44,500.43
- CPC had four people for a total of \$27,844.15
- NDP had two people for a total of \$17,959.31

### **Notable cases**

Matt Decoursey — LPC — \$8,690 in expenses for training from the McGill Executive Institute, despite having multiple jobs.

Celina Caesar-Chavannes — LPC (later left caucus) — expensed \$3,983 to The Chopra Centre, a wellness retreat launched by Deepak Chopra that offers ancient/alternative health training and meditation retreats.

Will Amos — LPC — twice exposed himself during Parliamentary proceedings, expensed \$11,500 in courses from the Institute of Corporate Directors.

Murray Rankin — NDP — expensed all \$15K to the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto despite having multiple law degrees and being immediately recruited to the B.C. NDP after leaving federal office, elected soon after.

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<sup>1</sup> This briefing note and research identified former MPs expensing taxpayers for education and training services within the rules set out in the transition allowance. The transition allowance also allows MPs to bill taxpayers for expenses outside of education and training. That means that just because the full \$15,000 wasn't spent on education and training, it doesn't mean it wasn't spent.



Brad Trost — CPC — spent all \$15K on courses from Harvard.

Dan Ruimy — LPC — expensed a yearlong program to CDI College to get trained as an Immigration Consultant, then got elected as Mayor of Maple Ridge.

## **Issues**

- The transition allowance is in addition to an extremely generous severance (and other post-political benefits). The severance is sold to taxpayers as funding to help former politicians transition back to civil life.
- In a number of cases, the former MPs do not seem to have much difficulty finding employment (mayors, provincial ministers, senior advisor).
- Taxpayers are paying for prominent education for former MPs (examples include Harvard, eCornell, McGill, University of Toronto).
- Taxpayers are paying for further education for former MPs who, in a number of cases, are already very well educated.

All details broken down below, separated out by party and MP:

## **LPC**

Overview:

- Six people expensing education/training
- Expenses were for McGill Executive Institute, Institute for Corporate Directors, University of Ottawa, CDI College, The Chopra Centre, etc.
- Total expenses = \$44,500.43

## **Dan Ruimy - LPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Worked for food/beverage companies
- Owned and operated a book cafe

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge from 2015 to 2019
- Lost re-election



Payouts:

- \$94K severance (per past CTF estimate)
- Sept. 10, 2020, expensed \$10,488 to CDI College (appears to be a year-long program to become an Immigration Consultant)
- Total expenses = \$10,488

Post-federal politics life:

- Elected mayor of Maple Ridge October 2022

**Celina Caesar-Chavannes - LPC (later left caucus)**

Pre-political career and education:

- B.Sc. in Biology from University of Toronto
- Online MBA in Healthcare Management from the University of Phoenix + an “executive MBA”
- Worked as an international research consultant
- Served on U of T’s governing council
- Named Business Entrepreneur of the Year by the Toronto Region Board of Trade in 2012

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Whitby from 2015 to 2019
- Did not seek re-election
- Left LPC Caucus in 2019

Payouts:

- \$89K severance (per past CTF estimate)
- Dec. 20, 2019, she expensed \$2,094.08 to Northcentral University
- May 19, 2022, she expensed \$3,983.35 to the Chopra Center (affiliated with the writer + spiritual/health guru Deepak Chopra, the Center characterises itself as “integrative health experts” who “blend modern well-being practices with Ayurveda - a centuries-old system of health and healing”)
- Total expenses = \$6,077.43



Post-federal politics life:

- Wrote a 2021 memoir
- Contributor to the Canadaland podcast The Backbench

### **Amarjeet Sohi – LPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Worked as taxi driver in Edmonton, later as bus driver
- Actor and playwright
- Elected to Edmonton city council in 2007
- Criticized for accepting \$46K severance from City of Edmonton after he was elected MP

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Edmonton Mill Woods from 2015 to 2019
- Spent time as Minister for Infrastructure and Communities, as well as Minister for Natural Resources
- Defeated in 2019 election

Payouts:

- \$89K severance
- Expensed the SCIC e-Academic five times between June 2020 and March 2021 for a total of \$4,995
- Total expenses = \$4,995

Post-federal politics life:

- Elected Mayor of Edmonton in October 2021

### **Matt Decoursey – LPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Master's Degree in Public Relations from Mount St. Vincent University



- Worked for Fredericton MP Andy Scott from 2005 to 2006
- Worked for Labrador MP Todd Russell
- Taught a class at Saint Thomas University
- Director on the board of the Fredericton YMCA
- Director of comms for New Brunswick Child and Youth Advocate

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Fredericton from 2015 to 2019
- Was appointed to the special committee on electoral reform
- Last day in office Oct. 21, 2019

Payouts:

- Severance: \$89,450
- Jan 21, 2022, expensed \$4,895 to the McGill Executive Institute
- July 31, 2022, expensed \$3795 to the McGill Executive Institute
- Total expenses = \$8,690

Post-federal politics life:

- January 2020 to September 2020 he was Senior Advisor to the Minister of Finance
- November 2020 he was named a fellow at The Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy, a position he still holds
- December 2020 he's named a Senior Advisor to the President (Strategic Engagement) at the University of New Brunswick, a position he still holds
- In July 2022 he's named a Mentor at Action Canada, a position he still holds

**Denis Paradis – LPC**

**Pre-political career and education:**

- Two degrees from the University of Ottawa
- Admitted to the Quebec Bar Association in 1976
- Worked as a partner at a law firm
- Named president of the Quebec Bar Association in 1993
- At one point owned his own winery

Career in federal politics:



- MP for Brome-Missisquoi from 1997-2006, and again from 2015-2019
- Last day in office Oct. 21, 2019

Payouts:

- Dec. 21, 2021, he expensed two courses at the University of Ottawa
- Total expenses = \$2,750

### **Will Amos – LPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Two degrees from UBC, one from McGill
- Admitted to both the Ontario + Quebec bar
- Worked for a Montreal law firm
- Advisor to former cabinet minister David Anderson
- Worked in then-PM Jean Chrétien's office

Career in federal politics:

- Elected MP for Pontiac in 2015
- Twice exposed himself during online Parliamentary proceedings
- Took a leave of absence in May 2021
- Announced he would not seek re-elected in August
- Last day in office Sept. 20, 2021

Payouts:

- Severance: \$92,900
- \$11,500 in courses from the Institute of Corporate Directors, which is self-styled as the "definitive resource and voice for Canada's directors and boards."
- Total expenses = \$11,500

### **CPC**

Overview:



- Four people with expenses/training
- Expenses for Harvard University, eCornell, the Professional Development Institute at the University of Ottawa, George Brown College, etc.
- Total expenses = \$27,844.15

### **Brad Trost – CPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Worked as an exploration and mining geophysicist
- B.SC in Geophysics + B.A. in Economics from the University of Saskatchewan

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Saskatoon-Humboldt from 2004 to 2019
- MP for Saskatoon-University from 2015 to 2019
- Lost CPC nomination for his riding in the lead-up to the 2019 federal election

Payouts:

- \$89K in severance + \$78K annual pension + \$4.04M lifetime pension (per past CTF estimates)
- Aug. 10, 2020, he expenses \$4,042.60 to Harvard
- Sept. 3, 2021, he expenses \$7,768.34 to Harvard
- Sept. 3, 2021, he expenses \$3,189.06 to Harvard (paperwork not filed until the Jan. 1 2022 – March 31 2022 quarterly report)
- Total expenses = \$15,000

Post-federal politics life:

- Sought nomination for riding of Moose Jaw-Lake Centre-Lanigan in the runup to the 2021 federal election

### **Bruce Stanton – CPC**

Pre-political career and education:





- Ran a family business in the tourism industry
- Served as a board member on various tourism-related organizations in Ontario
- One-term municipal councillor

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Simcoe North from 2006 to 2021
- Did not seek re-election

Payouts:

- \$92,500 annual pension + \$2.94M lifetime pension (per past CTF estimates)
- Dec. 22, 2021, he expensed \$1,070.05 to eCornell
- March 1, 2022, he expensed \$2,140.10 to eCornell
- Total expenses = \$3,210.15

Post-federal politics life:

- Named a member of the Board of Governors for Georgian College in September 2022

## **Nelly Shin – CPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Two degrees from University of Toronto
- Worked as a high school teacher

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Port Moody-Coquitlam
- Elected Oct. 21, 2019
- Lost re-election Sept. 20, 2021

Payouts:

- \$92,900 severance (per past CTF estimate)
- Expensed \$950 for language training at the École Québec Monde April 12, 2022



- Expensed \$995 to the University of Ottawa's Professional Development Institute May 26, 2022
- Expensed \$995 at the University of Ottawa's Professional Development Institute June 6, 2022
- Expensed \$995 at the University of Ottawa's Professional Development Institute June 14, 2022
- Total expenses = \$3,935

Post-federal politics life:

- She's working on a novel and studying national security, according to her website
- She was on the CPC's 2022 Leadership Election Organizing Committee

### **Steven Blaney – CPC**

Pre-political career and education:

- Worked in Quebec's engineering sector for 15 years
- Started two companies that specialize in environmental technology

Career in federal politics:

- MP for Levis-Bellechasse from 2006 to 2015
- MP for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis from 2015 to 2021
- Spent time as Minister for Veteran Affairs and Minister of Public Safety

Payouts:

- Annual pension \$101K + lifetime pension \$4.4M (per past CTF estimates)
- Jan. 19, 2022, he expenses \$341 to George Brown College
- Feb. 3, 2022, he expenses \$197 to George Brown College
- Feb. 7, 2022, he expenses \$795 to Événements Les Affaires
- March 31, 2022, he expenses \$315 to Canadian Nuclear Association
- May 31, 2022, he expenses \$301 to George Brown College
- June 21, 2022, he expenses \$3,750 to the Collège des administrateurs de sociétés
- Total expenses = \$5,699

## **NDP**

### Overview:

- Two people with expenses for training/education.
- The expenses were for Amazon, the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management, and the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- Total expenses = \$17,959.31.

### **Murray Rankin – NDP**

#### Pre-political career and education:

- Undergrad degree at Queen's University + Université de Montréal
- Law degrees at University of Toronto + Harvard
- Worked as law professor, lawyer, managing partner of law firm

#### Career in federal politics:

- MP for Victoria
- Elected in November 2012 during by-election
- Re-elected in 2015
- Did not seek re-election in 2019
- Trudeau appointed him the Chairman of the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency on July 24, 2019, a position he held until Sept. 17, 2020.

#### Payouts:

- When he left office, he got a \$34K annual pension + a \$830K lifetime pension (per past CTF estimates).
- On July 13, 2019, he expensed \$15K to the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto.
- Total expenses = \$15,000

#### Post-federal politics life:

- In October 2020, he was elected as B.C. NDP MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head, and he currently serves as the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation of British Columbia



## **Christine Moore – NDP**

### Pre-political career and education:

- College diploma + bachelor's degree + trained as a medical technician
- Worked as a field medic in the Canadian military

### Career in federal politics:

- MP for Abitibi-Témiscamingue 2011 to 2019
- Did not seek re-election

### Payouts:

- When she left federal office, she got an \$89K severance + a \$43K annual pension + a \$2.48M lifetime pension (per past CTF estimate)
- On Sept. 17, 2019, she expensed \$792.49 to the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- On Dec. 11, 2019, she expensed \$1,142.10 to the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- On Jan. 15, 2020, she expensed \$57.28 to Amazon
- On Feb. 12, 2021, she expensed \$967.44 to the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- Total expenses = \$2,959.31

### Post-federal politics life:

- In 2022, she ran as a candidate for the Parti Québécois in the Quebec Provincial Election for the riding of Ungava
- According to an election profile, since leaving federal office, she has “gone back to working as a nurse and pursuing a master’s degree.”

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CTF estimates for severances and pensions following the 2019 election can be found here:  
<https://www.taxpayer.com/newsroom/taxpayers-federation-releases-pension-and-severance-figures-for-2019-federal-election>



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