



Spotlight on Monique Taylor: Hamilton Mountain

The last Ontario provincial election produced 31 new MPPs. With almost 30 per cent of Ontario's 107 MPPs new to the legislature, it is challenging to learn who these members are and what issues are most important to them, their constituents and their parties.

In today's minority-government situation, having broad relationships across all three parties is critical. H+K Insight's interview series continues to introduce you to some of Ontario's new political players.

Monique Taylor: New Democratic Party MPP for Hamilton Mountain



Monique was elected MPP for Hamilton-Mountain in October 2011, defeating Liberal Minister of Revenue Sophia Aggelonitis. She was subsequently appointed NDP Critic for Children and Youth Services. A long-time community activist, Monique is a Toronto School of Business graduate and, prior to becoming an MPP, worked with Hamilton Councillor Scott Duvall.

1. What do you anticipate life will be like as MPP?

I expect to be very busy at Queen's Park and in my riding. My work at the Legislature requires me to get up-to-speed on many issues, especially in my critic area Children and Youth Services, and become more familiar with various stakeholders to better understand their issues and concerns. While Committee responsibilities are still undetermined, I expect that will also require quite a bit of my time.

From my previous work, I am aware of some of the struggles and challenges people on Hamilton Mountain face every day; and as their MPP, I know I'll be called on to help my constituents deal with the many situations they encounter.

There are also numerous meetings and social events to attend, and people are so welcoming. I don't want to miss any of it and I certainly don't want to let anyone down so I have a pretty full calendar.



2. What are your key priorities?

Making life better for everyday people; we need more jobs in our community, better social housing, programming, and resources to try to stop people falling through the cracks when they are not able to keep up. We need to take a good look at how we spend our healthcare dollars, and focus on proven frontline services we can count on.

3. Most surprising / unexpected moment so far?

The overwhelming emotion that came over me the first time I walked into the Chamber as an elected official is a feeling I will never forget. Once we got down to business, I was also quite taken aback by the heckling and behavior in the House, particularly during question period. I knew it could be boisterous but it was more disruptive than I expected it to be.

4. What was your first month like?

It was both interesting and odd to realize that wherever I go, whatever I do, people are watching. Even just going to the grocery store I run into people who recognize me, are happy to see me and have such high hopes for what can be done.

It's a really great feeling but also a little daunting. Being in the House and being able to stand and speak on behalf of so many people is a big part of the job. I'll admit I felt somewhat intimidated and thought it was going to be really difficult but I was actually very comfortable and look forward to speaking in the House on a regular basis.

5. Biggest difference between your Queen's Park duties and your constituency duties?

Listening and speaking. Obviously there's a bit of both wherever I am but there's much more of the former in the constituency and more of the latter at Queen's Park. Constituency duties, to a large extent, drive my Queen's Park duties. Listening to my constituents, including the many local organizations that work with them, and taking their concerns back to Queen's Park is my role here on Hamilton Mountain.

6. What is your specific role at Queen's Park?

First and foremost, my role is to speak and act on behalf of the people of Hamilton Mountain. As I said, constituents bring their issues and concerns to me and I bring their voices to Queen's Park.

Andrea [Horwath] has also asked me to be the Critic for Children and Youth Services – a role that puts me on the frontline with some of our most vulnerable families who face very challenging situations every day. It involves dealing with issues from across Ontario and also building relationships with province-wide organizations working in the area of services for children and youth.

Next week's interview will be with Liberal Michael Coteau, MPP for Don Valley East.

