



BROOKS BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2022

Busy beach!



Hot-weather this summer brings out hundreds of beachgoers to Kinbrook Island Park on Lake Newell. The park was packed on Saturday and Sunday. | BULLETIN PHOTO

UCP candidate for leadership stops in Brooks, Bassano

SANDRA M STANWAY

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UCP leadership candidate Travis Toews, MLA Wapiti-Grande Prairie and former finance minister, hosted a pair of meet-and-greets in the area where he spoke to about 50 people in Brooks and about 40 in Bassano.

The UCP members will elect a leader in October to replace Jason Kenney.

Hosted at the CPR Engineer's House, Toews touted the recurring theme of party unity as the only way to defeat NDP leader Rachel Notley.

"It's not been an easy three years," he said.

"We've made great progress in spite of the fact we inherited a fiscal train wreck from the previous government," he said.

Despite many challenges the province faces, Toews does not believe that separation is the way to go.

He said Alberta should take a page from Quebec's playbook in how they managed to improve their place in Confederation, by using their political influence strategically.

He said provinces worked with Alberta to move up the caps on fiscal stabilization.

"We did that with an obstructionist government," he said.

He acknowledged that Alberta doesn't have to wait for a Conservative government before changes are made but when one is voted in, Alberta has to make good on it.

Recognizing that there are many different views of issues by party members, Toews said if the focus remains on the differences, the party will remain divided and he urged people to work together.

"The problems we have are here today because of

division."

His said the health care system needs to be repaired.

"Health care right now in rural Alberta, in many locations, is failing," he said.

He said Alberta Health Services needs to be decentralized.

Toews said he's been asked if he is Jason Kenney 2.0 based on the fact that he was a member of Kenney's cabinet to which he says no.

"But not all Albertans know that," he said.

He explained the differences between him and Kenney, including this private sector work and he is a rural Albertan.

Speaking to media, Toews said he is not in favour of a provincial sales tax but is in favour of a provincial police force.

He said he believes Alberta should take their rightful place in Confederation but "You

need to know I am not a fan of the Sovereignty Act approach.

"I believe when you ask Albertans and Alberta businesses to disregard the laws of the land, that creates an element of anarchy that will chase billions dollars of investment out of this province."

A resident asked Toews how he would deal with linear assessment - the tax collected by municipalities that have oil and gas pipelines and power lines.

The resident explained that Rachel Notley wanted to pool the tax and distribute it across the province.

Toews said he knows of municipalities that are wealthy because of the assessment but their neighbours, who share some of the activity, do not collect as much assessment.

"It's an issue that warrants a look. I don't have

a back pocket solution," he said.

When asked about pastors who were jailed during COVID19, Toews said it was an overreach by AHS.

"I believe places of

worship and the freedom of worship needs to be held in the highest regard. Anytime there are decisions taken, they need to be taken under that principal. That's my view," he said.



UCP candidate for leader Travis Toews was in Brooks last week. | SANDRA M STANWAY PHOTO

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