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Dear Fellow Liberals:

In response to many respected friends and colleagues across the country, I have taken the past several weeks to think very carefully about running for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada.

I am grateful for all the personal encouragement I have received, but I have decided not to enter the race.

I am certain than an excellent campaign could be mounted – building on a strong initial base that would include a significant portion of our National Caucus, as well as rank-and-file Liberals in every part of the country, who have spontaneously volunteered their support. The necessary national organization and financing are “do-able”.

But I am concerned about the skills required in both of Canada’s official languages, and I had to weigh the implications – personal and otherwise – of potentially assuming leadership responsibilities with all the unrelenting demands such a role necessarily entails.

That being said, I intend to be intensively engaged in advancing Liberal ideas that I think will be important to the rejuvenation of our Party and its early return to office. For example:

We must reinvigorate our Liberal commitment to Canada’s unity and cohesion with a compelling, 21st century view of our nationhood – one that will resonate in contemporary Quebec and across the land, including in my home region on the Prairies.

We must cherish and stand up for Canadian pluralism and our sense of human inclusion – that unique talent (all too rare in today’s troubled world) to make diversity and tolerance positive and successful attributes of our national character.

We must stand firm as the unmistakable champions of balanced budgets, fiscal responsibility and declining debt – so Canadians will continue to enjoy the benefits of a sound economy and broad-based prosperity, more employment, higher disposable incomes, better standards of living, purposeful social investments and a steadily rising quality of life.

We need to invest in Canadian talent, brainpower and creativity, pushing advanced learning and innovation to a whole new level – not only for economic reasons, but also to ensure that every Canadian has the opportunity to experience the freedom, the fulfilment and the empowerment that flow from higher skills, knowledge and understanding.

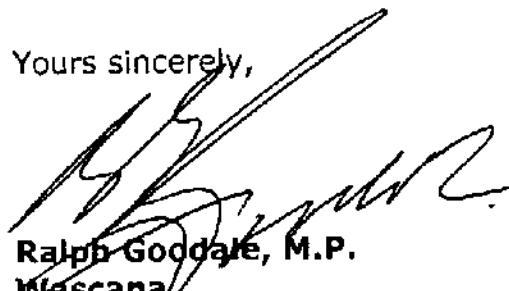
And we must achieve the smartest possible “marriage” between Canada’s economic success and environmental sustainability – demonstrating that the two can and must be mutually reinforcing and that Canada can and must be a model as to how to do it right.

These things are, I believe, an expression of values integral to liberalism.

I will be following each of our leadership candidates with great care. In the end, I will support the person who best embodies the values that so many of us hold dear and for which we have worked very hard over many years.

And all to what end? Yes, to win the next election. But more importantly, to build an ever greater country – the Liberal way!

Yours sincerely,



Ralph Goodale, M.P.
Wascana