



## **Gregory Sorbara**

Greg grew up in a large family – born of first generation Italian immigrants who came to Canada to pursue the dream of achieving prosperity through hard work and perseverance.

After growing up in Ontario, and living for a number of years in British Columbia, Greg received his bachelor of arts from York University's Glendon College and continued his education at Osgoode Law School earning his law degree (1981). Following the completion of his law degree, Greg started to practice at the firm of Stikeman Elliott Robarts.

Although his family had a history of supporting the Conservative Party, Greg felt that his political home was in the Liberal Party and his career in Liberal politics began in the spring of 1985 with his acceptance of the provincial Liberal nomination in York North.

Following his election victory in a riding that had not elected a Liberal in 42 years, he was sworn into David Peterson's first Cabinet in June 1985. Under the minority government of Liberal Premier David Peterson, Sorbara was appointed Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development.

Greg was subsequently re-elected in 1987 and 1990. During the 1987 election, Greg represented the riding of York Centre and was appointed as Minister of Labour with responsibility for Women's Issues. Following a cabinet shuffle in 1989, Greg became the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Greg's passion and commitment to politics was such that he threw his hat into the race to replace David Peterson following the Liberal defeat. After his unsuccessful effort, Greg shifted his focus onto business activities while continuing in his role as opposition MPP. Greg's vision at the time was to retire from politics by the end of his term in 1995. His political career however was far from over.

Greg returned to the private sector in 1995 as a partner in The Sorbara Group of Companies, an Ontario-based land development and property management company. His time away from politics did not stop him in his continuing efforts to serve the public.

During this new period of Greg's life, he served as a director of the United Way of York Region, director of the Business Development Bank of Canada and has been a member of the board of the York University Alumni Association for several years.

Aside from his commitment to public service and his family, Greg's other life long passions are baseball and tennis. An active tennis and baseball player, Greg decided to transfer this personal interest into business. In 1995, he made the purchase of a minor league baseball franchise playing out of St. Catharines, Ontario, which brought together twenty partners whose only link was a passion for baseball. The franchise was later sold to the New York Mets in 2001.

After forging a strong personal relationship with Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty, Greg returned to the political arena in November 1999 when he was elected President of the Ontario Liberal Party, a position he held until 2004. Working closely with McGuinty, Greg oversaw the creation of the Ontario Liberal Fund, and helped the party develop a fair and effective nominations process. In anticipation of the 2003 election Greg was appointed as Campaign Chair and sought to ensure that the Party had an outstanding slate of candidates across Ontario.

As further evidence of his commitment to the vision of McGuinty and the Liberal Party, Greg agreed to run in the by-election of Vaughan-King-Aurora on June 28, 2001, receiving over 60 percent of the vote.

Greg was re-elected to the riding in 2003 and 2007 serving as Minister of Finance, Chair of the Treasury Board and Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet.

Greg sought to enhance the importance of culture in the province by increasing operating funding for the Ontario Arts Council and funding major arts projects such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Ontario Museum, and even the new Four Seasons Centre. Greg was also an early supporter of Luminato, which is part of the Toronto Festival of Arts and Creativity.

As Finance minister, Greg brought forward many positive reforms to the provinces taxation system. A few examples include the Business Education Tax reduction and equalization, eliminating GTA pooling, welfare rate increases, 25% increase of senior property tax credit, Property Tax Reform, establishing the Harry Arthurs Report on pensions, harmonizing corporate tax collection with the federal government and eliminating capital tax.

Greg stepped down from his position of Finance Minister in 2007 continuing to serve as a backbench MPP in order to spend more time with his family members. During this period Greg served as Chair for two committees: Chair for the Ontario Tourism Competiveness Study, overseeing a taskforce on the revitalization of Ontario Tourism and subsequently as Chair for the Select Committee on Elections, constructing a report to improve the logistics of elections.

Although Greg stood for election again in 2011, he resigned from his seat in the summer of 2012 in order to spend more time with family, children and grandchildren. While Greg's passion for Liberal politics, baseball and tennis are well known; the true centre of his life is his wife Kate, their six children and thirteen grandchildren.

Upon his retirement Greg stated: "Serving as an MPP has been the greatest honour of my life. Through seven elections and four different ridings, always including Vaughan, this parliament and what it stands for has been at the very centre of my working life."