



Biographical notes

Eleni Bakopanos

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development

In July 2004, the Right Honourable Paul Martin, Prime Minister of Canada, appointed the Honourable Eleni Bakopanos Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development with special emphasis on Social Economy. Prior to this, on December 12, 2003, she was appointed to the Queen's Privy Council and to the position of Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development with special emphasis on Social Economy. Ms. Bakopanos is the Member of Parliament for Ahuntsic, where she was elected in 1997 and re-elected in 2000 and 2004. She was first elected to the House of Commons in the October 1993 federal elections, as the Member of Parliament for Saint-Denis, and is the first Greek-born woman to be elected to the House of Commons of Canada. She has been a dedicated and tireless representative of her constituents and an advocate of issues including child poverty, youth at risk, and domestic and international human rights.

From January 2001 to December 2003, Ms. Bakopanos served as Assistant Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. Ms. Bakopanos also held the position of Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada from July 1997 to September 1999. During her mandate as Parliamentary Secretary, she was a member of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and served on the Special Joint Committee on Child Custody and Access. She was a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, an associate member of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and member of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Development. Ms. Bakopanos was also a member of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Unions Executive Committee, Councillor on the Executive Committee of the NATO Parliamentary Association, and Vice-Chair of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Executive Committee.

Ms. Bakopanos has also served as Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration and as Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. She served on the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Other responsibilities have included Vice-Chair of the Quebec Liberal Caucus, Secretary of the National Liberal Caucus, member of the Liberal Social Policy Caucus, and member of the Liberal Women's Caucus.

A former policy advisor for the Quebec government, Ms. Bakopanos began her political involvement over 30 years ago as a volunteer in a federal election campaign. After working on the 1980 Quebec referendum, she assumed the position of provincial coordinator for the Ethnic Groups Commission for the Quebec Liberal Party and regional co-ordinator for the ridings in the western part of Montréal. Subsequently, from 1986 to

1990, she was policy advisor to various Quebec ministers responsible for Cultural Communities and Immigration. From 1990 until the 1993 federal election, she was Vice-President for Cultural Communities at the Conseil des communautés culturelles et De l'Immigration.

Ms. Bakopanos has also been a member of many non-governmental organizations, including Centraide of Greater Montréal, where for over 10 years she served as member of the Board of Directors.

In June 1997, Ms. Bakopanos was decorated Grand Officer of Infante D. Henrique, which is the highest honour given to a civilian by the Portuguese government. In February 2000, Ms. Bakopanos received the Golden Cross of the Order of Phoenix , awarded by the President of the Hellenic Republic. She was also presented with the Nike and Artemis Awards by the Euro-American Women's Council in May 2002, during the 7th annual Global Women's Forum held in Greece . In June 2002, Ms. Bakopanos was awarded the Golden Anaglyph of St-Mamas by the Morphou District Association of Great Britain for her work on the Cyprus issue.

Ms. Bakopanos holds a Bachelor of Arts with honours in political science and history from McGill University, where she also studied law. She is married and the mother of two daughters.