

MP Mahoney obtains post in Cabinet

By JOHN STEWART *MN* April 12-13, 2003
Staff

For the first time in 24 years, Mississauga has a federal Cabinet minister.

Steve Mahoney, the Liberal member for Mississauga West, was sworn in as secretary of state for selected crown corporations at a special ceremony in Ottawa early Friday.

"It feels great," an elated Mahoney said shortly after he took the oath of office with his wife, Ward 8 city councillor Katie Mahoney, at his side. "I think this is, to a certain amount, about a recognition of experience."

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien said he is looking to Mahoney to cut through the disagreements that have stalled a proposed national housing program.

"Steve will look into that. He has a lot of political experience," the PM said.

Mahoney, a former city and regional councillor (1978-87) got a telephone call in Mississauga from the Prime Minister's office Thursday telling him to be in Ottawa for the ceremony at 9 a.m. Friday. There were no other changes in the Cabinet.

Mahoney served as an MPP at Queen's Park from 1987-95, but never made it to the Cabinet in the 95-member caucus of the David Peterson Liberal government.

The promotion doesn't change Mahoney's job description, just his title and pay.

He will be carrying out essentially the same duties he has for the last year serving first as parliamentary assistant to Deputy Prime Minister John Manley and then to Minister of Transport David Collenette.

Those include responsibility for five major crown corporations: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Canada Post, the Royal Canadian Mint, the Canada Lands Company and the Queen's Quay West Land Corporation.

His main duty will be kick-starting the national housing program, for which the Liberals have earmarked nearly \$1 billion in their past two budgets. Although they have agreements with all but three provinces, little of that housing has hit the market because of difficulties in getting agreement with the provinces on how the implementation should occur.

"This is a real clear signal that the government wants to get the housing file going," Mahoney told *The News*.



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