

Marie Goldman



POINTS OF VIEW

MP for Chelmsford

End of summer means it's time to start our parliamentary business

ONE of my favourite songs is The Boys Of Summer by Don Henley. It's a nostalgic tale about a summer romance from long ago.

That's probably something most of us have had the joy and the heartache of experiencing, especially thinking back to our teens and early twenties.

But that's not why I love it. For me, it perfectly captures that end-of-sea-side-holidays, end-of-summer feeling. (There's an eerie but beautiful section in the intro when the guitar elegantly mimics a lone seagull flying overhead.) The lyrics say it all: "Nobody on the road, nobody on the beach. I feel it in the air, the summer's out of reach."

It's that back-to-school feeling, familiar to all parents and children. Packing your bag the night before the start of the new term, checking your pencil case, ironing the school uniform. It's an ages-old ritual that never feels quite the same at any other time of the year.

That's how I feel right now as I write this just ahead of Parliament returning after the summer recess.

As a new MP, I feel a little bit like the Year 7 child starting at the 'big school', or perhaps the first-year university student. I've been for a look round, maybe had a few taster sessions, but now it begins in earnest and things get real.

And there's a lot coming up. The first week in Parliament includes the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill, which is about bringing passenger trains back into public ownership instead of being franchised out to private companies, such as Greater Anglia. I'm hoping to make my Maiden Speech during the debate on this Bill, although because of the antiquated way that Parliament works, I may have to spend several hours bobbing up and down in the House of Commons Chamber proving to the Speaker/Deputy Speaker that I really am keen to speak. Even then, there's no guarantee that will happen.

If I don't get called, I'll try again during the Budget Responsibility Bill on Wednesday. This Bill is about requiring the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) to produce an assessment of the fiscal impacts of any fiscal measures announced by the Government without HM Treasury asking them to do so. Think about Liz Truss's disastrous 'Mini Budget' of 2022 and you'll get an idea of why the new Government

Marie Goldman visited the Janmashtami Festival Celebration in Springfield recently



thinks this Bill is a good idea.

I'm keen to give my Maiden Speech on Tuesday or Wednesday because on Thursday, there's a Westminster Hall debate about SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Provision. As many of you know, this is a subject that is close to my heart. The system for SEND provision in this country is utterly broken, with devastating, long-lasting consequences for children and their families. I'm very keen to speak in this debate, BUT the rules say that I can't do so unless I've already given my Maiden Speech in the House of Commons. Fingers crossed, but with 196 out of the record 335 new MPs still to make their Maiden Speeches, competition for a speaking slot may be fierce. I'll

try my best.

I'm pleased to be able to say that over the summer, I recruited staff to join the small but growing team in my constituency office. As I type this, I'm about to hold interviews for staff to join me in my office in Westminster.

There is still a very large backlog of emails and casework to respond to so I thank you for your patience if you have contacted me over the past few weeks. We are working our way through them all, but it is a very big task made much harder by the lack of transition phase from an outgoing MP to an incoming one.

It's a poor experience for new MPs who are inundated with communications in their first few weeks and months but don't have any staff to

help them. But it's an appalling experience for constituents, especially those with urgent and serious casework that they need their MP to help them with. It's something I am keen to see addressed in Parliament through the Modernisation Committee and I certainly intend to raise it as I am sure there is a better way to run a country than this.

Finally, I'd like to thank the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) for inviting me to the Janmashtami Festival Celebration in Springfield last weekend, celebrating the birth of Lord Krishna, a significant event in the Hindu calendar. As I watched the performances re-enacting scenes from scripture, I spoke with members of the community about their mission

of peace and love. It's hard to argue that the world doesn't need more of that. It was lovely to hear about the community work they are already doing and plan to do more of. Thank you for your very kind hospitality and for sharing your delicious food with me.

If you would like to share with me what you are doing in and for the Chelmsford community, please do let me know. In a world where there is often a lot of negativity, it's so important to talk about the positive things that are happening too. I know there are lots of great things happening in Chelmsford - I'm always keen to find out more and to tell you, dear reader, about them.

Keep well,
Marie