

[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Canada](#) > [Housefather wins Mount Royal Liberal nomination](#)
[NEWS](#) [CANADA](#)

## HOUSEFATHER WINS MOUNT ROYAL LIBERAL NOMINATION

 By [Janice Arnold, Staff Reporter](#) - December 1, 2014 > 4260 > 0

[Subscribe to the CJN](#)
[SUBSCRIBE](#)
[RSS Feed](#)
[VIEW](#)


**MONTREAL** — Israel is already an issue in Mount Royal even before a federal election has been called.

Anthony Housefather, who was elected the riding's Liberal candidate on Nov. 30 after defeating Jonathan Goldbloom, said he will not take a back seat to anyone when it comes to support for Israel.

"As the MP for Mount Royal, I understand I have a special responsibility to speak out against anti-Semitism, intolerance and xenophobia, and to stand four-square in solidarity with the people of Israel," he said in his speech to delegates before the vote.

In an interview after his victory, Housefather said the Conservatives "may try to make Israel a wedge issue in next year's election, but it is my job and the job of the [Liberal] party to prevent that, to show that we are second to no one in support of Israel."

However, he promised not to run "a U.S.-style negative campaign."

Housefather, 43, mayor of Côte St. Luc for the past nine years and a lawyer, took the majority of the 1,948 ballots cast at the nomination meeting held, because of its size, at two venues: the Côte St. Luc Gymnasium and the Côte des Neiges Sports Centre.

Elections chair Marc Laperrrière said party policy is to not disclose the breakdown of the vote, which took place over 3-1/2 hours.

Irwin Cotler, Mount Royal's MP since 1999, announced in February that he would not run again. This was the first contested Liberal nomination in Mount Royal since 1984 when Pierre Trudeau resigned.

About one-third of the population is Jewish.

Despite Housefather's outspoken pro-Israel stance, Goldbloom, 59, a public relations specialist, had the support of many prominent Jewish community members, as well as high-ranking Liberals. Retired senator Yoine Goldstein, Sen. Joan Fraser and former cabinet minister Donald Johnston were wearing Goldbloom buttons at the meeting.

Supporter Joseph Gabay said Goldbloom is "the closest to the official Jewish community – he was on the board of CIJA [Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs]."

Housefather, who announced his candidacy in March, has a higher profile among the grassroots after 20 years in municipal politics, and before that, the presidency of Alliance Quebec.

Housefather also played up the fact that he, unlike Goldbloom, lives in the riding and is endorsed by many suburban mayors and councillors, and by school board members.

He said he signed up more than 3,000 party members by the Nov. 5 deadline. Mount Royal's Liberal membership is now about 4,500, one of the largest in Quebec, said Mount Royal Liberal Association president Mark Leiter.

Cotler did not support either candidate "publicly or privately," describing both as "excellent candidates."

Sidney Margles, Housefather's campaign manager, said he is "a trusted, experienced individual who knows the people and how to work with them after 20 years in public life. And he's a workaholic – whatever he does, he does 24/7."

Margles said he resented an "outside establishment" trying to "influence" the campaign.

Delegates apparently were not swayed by Goldbloom's argument that municipal politics is not a preparation for handling "complex national issues," as he has done for 30 years as a Liberal strategist.

Housefather, who has a relaxed, informal style, countered that, as mayor, he deals daily with MPs and MNAs on federal and provincial matters.

Both Housefather and Goldbloom agreed that the Conservatives are going to fight hard to wrest Mount Royal from the Liberals, who have held it for 74 years.

Liberal support has been slipping from over 90 per cent 15 years ago to about 40 per cent in the 2011 election.

Housefather pointed to his track record of winning six elections: three for council and three for mayor in three municipalities. He also took a swipe at his potential Tory rival Robert Libman, a former Côte St. Luc mayor, without naming him.

Housefather boasted that he successfully fought three municipal de-merger referendums. "I beat him then and I can beat him now."

Housefather, who sits on the island-wide agglomeration council, pledged as MP to make Montreal's economic development a priority.

He said Israel is "only one of many, many issues in the election," noting that Mount Royal is very multicultural today. He intends to make himself better known among all of its 105,000 residents, outside his base in Côte St. Luc and Hampstead, by knocking on every door.

In his concession remarks, Goldbloom called for party unity in the common goal of ousting the Conservatives. "The Harper government does not pay attention, does not listen to the people. It does not represent our values, and certainly not the values of our riding."

SHARE AND ENJOY !

0 SHARES


[TAGS](#) [ADVOCACY](#) [CANADA-EAST](#) [JEWISH ORGANISATION](#) [LIBERAL](#) [MONTREAL](#) [POLITICS](#)

Janice Arnold, Staff Reporter