

Canada – United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada – États-Unis
Section canadienne

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the
Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (Can/Am BTA)
Conference**

Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Washington, D.C., United States of America
2–4 October 2016**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 2–4 October 2016, Mr. Brian Masse, M.P., Vice-Chair of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), represented the IPG’s Canadian Section at the fall meeting of the Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (Can/Am BTA) in Washington, D.C.

THE EVENT

The Can/Am BTA holds two meetings each year: in the spring in Ottawa and in the fall in Washington, D.C. As a coalition of businesses, public-sector organizations and individuals with an interest in bilateral trade and tourism, its mission is to maximize commercial activity and ensure continued growth in cross-border trade, as well as efficient and productive border-crossing capabilities.

Attendees at the event included private-sector representatives involved in a number of tourism, transportation and trade-related activities, as well as representatives of a variety of federal departments.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES

The IPG’s Canadian Section has a long association with the Can/Am BTA, and often attends both its fall and its spring meetings. Given the Can/Am BTA’s focus, attendance at the meetings provides members of the Canadian Section with an important opportunity to gain insights about problems being experienced by businesses and individuals in respect of trade and tourism, as well as about efforts and actions by governments in both countries to address these problems.

As well, attendance at the Can/Am BTA’s meetings enables members of the Canadian Section to interact with, and learn from, private- and public-sector organizations and individuals who deal with border issues on a daily basis. It also provides the Canadian Section with an opportunity to inform others about the range of actions taken by it in respect of shared bilateral goals, especially through the invitation that is typically given to the Canadian Senate and House of Commons IPG Co-Chairs and/or Vice-Chairs to make remarks at the meeting. At the Can/Am BTA’s 2016 fall meeting, Mr. Masse spoke to attendees about the Canadian Section’s recent and future activities.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

At the Can/Am BTA’s fall 2016 meeting, sessions with the following titles were held:

- Customs and Border Protection: Trade Relations, Expediting Low-Risk, Beyond the Border CBP Priorities and Initiatives
- View from Quebec: Updates and Insights

- RFID for Product Identification and Traceability
- Federal Highway Administration: Transportation & Border Related Priorities/Initiatives
- Canada/U.S. Inter-Parliamentary Group: Canada/U.S. Relations and Cooperation Activities
- The Canadian Perspective
- Customs and Border Protection—Overview of new CBP Approaches, Technology and Initiatives
- Trusted Known Employer Update and SAGE (Strategies. Advocacy. Gateways. Engagement) U.S./Canada Summit Update
- View from the Hill and White House on Canada/U.S.
- Beyond the Border—What It Can Do: Insight on needs, progress and challenges
- Insights and Opportunities: Fireside Chat with Can/Am BTA Senior Advisory Board
- Border Insights Discussion
- Current Western Hemisphere Energy Status and Outlook.

This report summarizes the main points made by Mr. Masse when he addressed Can/Am BTA participants. The Can/Am BTA's [website](#)¹ contains a summary of some of the points made by other presenters.

CANADA/U.S. INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP: CANADA/U.S. RELATIONS AND COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

Brian Masse, M.P., *House of Commons and Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group*

- The first activity of the IPG's Canadian Section following the May 2016 meeting of the Can/Am BTA was the IPG's annual meeting; three Canadian Senators and six members of the House of Commons travelled to Washington, D.C. in June to meet with U.S. Senators and members of the House of Representatives.
- At the IPG's June 2016 annual meeting, members discussed a range of issues, including energy production and transportation, Chinese dumping of steel, North American economic concerns, the Arctic, bilateral water challenges, international security and softwood lumber.

¹ The summary is available in English only

- One outcome of the 2016 annual meeting was a [letter](#)² signed by members of the U.S. Senate and of the House of Commons about Chinese steel; the letter was delivered to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and President Barack Obama during the North American Leaders Summit that was held in Ottawa, Ontario in June 2016.
- In 2016, the first regional governors' meeting attended by members of the IPG's Canadian Section was that of the governors from the U.S. West; Montana Governor Steve Bullock, who is the incoming chair of the Western Governors Association (WGA), was very interested in ensuring that Canadian premiers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba are active participants in the WGA's 2017 summer meeting.
- Some of the topics that are frequently discussed at the WGA's meetings are challenges faced in the western region of both Canada and the United States, including species conservation and wildfires.
- Similarly, the topics that were discussed at the summer meeting of the National Governors Association (NGA) also have relevance for Canada; in particular, presentations were made on such issues as the opioid crisis, the implications of demographic change and cyber challenges.
- In relation to conferences of state legislators, in summer 2016, the IPG's Canadian Section attended the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the regional meetings of the Council of State Governments' (CSG's) southern, eastern and western regions, the latter two of which include representatives from various Canadian provincial legislatures.
- At the CSG's Southern Legislative Conference, the issues that have Canada–U.S. implications included substance abuse, energy, the environment, transportation systems and tools to promote economic development.
- At the meeting of the CSG's Eastern Regional Conference, the bilateral issues that were highlighted included Canada–U.S. relations, energy, the environment, agriculture and prescription drug costs.
- A key feature of the Council of State Governments-WEST's annual meeting is its North American Summit and – like the Eastern Regional Conference – the activities of the committee that is focused on relations with Canada.
- Every four years, the Canadian Section sends delegates to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, both of which provide an opportunity to learn more about the United States' political process and about some of the issues that are important to Americans at this time; as well, Canadian delegates are able to speak with U.S. federal and state legislators, as well as governors, at various sessions and at the convention site.

² The letter is available in English only

- At the Republican National Convention, a delegate from the IPG's Canadian Section spoke with Representative Bill Huizenga, who is the IPG chair in the U.S. House of Representatives, and Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchison; the Canadian Section's delegates who attended the Democratic National Convention were part of an international leaders forum, which enabled them to meet legislators from around the world.
- In terms of the future activities of the IPG's Canadian Section, Canadian parliamentarians will attend the CSG's annual national meeting in December 2016, an activity that will involve state legislators from throughout the United States, and the NGA's February 2017 winter meeting in Washington, D.C., which will be held after the United States has elected a new president.
- Like millions of Americans, many Canadians are focused on the United States' November 2016 elections and, more specifically, on who will become the U.S. president; that said, the "down ballot races" for the U.S. Congress and state legislatures are also important to Canada, and the choices that Americans make will have a significant impact on Canada, and on Canadians and Canadian businesses.
- An issue that is increasingly topical is Canada–U.S. trade in softwood lumber; with the expiration of the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement between Canada and the United States, there have been indications that some in the U.S. softwood lumber sector are lobbying for the imposition of duties, a situation that would be harmful for a number of Canada's softwood lumber producers.
- As well, integrated supply chains and production platforms, border infrastructure and border security, among other issues, continue to be important to members of the IPG's Canadian Section; Canadian parliamentarians continue to monitor those issues, and to identify ways in which Canada and the United States can work together.
- Bilateral cooperation on a full range of issues is a major focus for members of the IPG's Canadian Section, and they are always looking for opportunities to ensure that Americans know about Canada, the scale and scope of the bilateral relationship, and the need to work together cooperatively.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald,
Senator, Co-Chair
Canada–United States

Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada–United States

Inter-Parliamentary Group

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Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (Can/Am BTA) Conference
DESTINATION	Washington, D.C., United States of America
DATES	2–4 October 2016
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Brian Masse, M.P.
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 1,264.52
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 740.69
PER DIEM	\$ 259.53
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 851.24
TOTAL	\$ 3,115.98