

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 U.S. Congressional
Meetings
Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
Washington, D.C., United States of America
March 1-2, 2011**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From March 1-2, 2011, the Honourable Wilfred Moore, Q.C., Senator, the Honourable John McKay, P.C., M.P., Vice-Chair and Mr. Brent Rathgeber, M.P. represented the Canadian Section of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group at meetings with their U.S. Congressional counterparts (see the Appendix). The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Angela Crandall, the Group's Executive Secretary, and Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Group.

THE EVENT AND DELEGATION OBJECTIVES

During their meetings with U.S. Senators and members of the House of Representatives, Canadian parliamentarians focused on a range of issues that are thought to be important to the Canada-U.S. relationship, including the U.S.' economic recovery, the American approach to competitiveness, management of the shared border and North American energy security. The meetings were similar in intent to previous U.S. Congressional meetings in respect of such issues as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), trade in softwood lumber, "Buy American" provisions, energy and border issues, including the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI).

Congressional meetings enable members of the Canadian Section to meet with U.S. federal legislators, particularly those who do not attend the Group's annual meeting, and thereby to inform them about – and gain their support on – critical issues affecting both countries. More generally, members of the Canadian Section believe that Congressional meetings are an invaluable opportunity to share Canadian views about bilateral issues of common concern, and they intend to undertake such meetings in the future as the need arises.

Since the meetings with U.S. federal legislators are designed to be "off the record," the discussion below summarizes the general nature of the issues that were raised by Canadian and American legislators.

ISSUES RAISED BY THE CANADIAN SECTION OF THE CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The U.S. Economic Recovery and the American Approach to Competitiveness

- although the United States continues to be the world's largest economy, it continues to be affected by the global financial and economic crisis that started in 2008
- in the United States, the unemployment rate continues to be high, economic growth is less robust than has historically been the case, and the federal debt is nearing the statutory debt ceiling

- the state of the U.S.' economy has a significant impact on the Canadian economy

Management of the Shared Border

- on February 4, 2011, Prime Minister Harper and President Obama announced a shared vision for perimeter security and economic competitiveness as well as the creation of the bilateral Regulatory Cooperation Council
- in the context of the perimeter security and economic competitiveness initiative, four areas of cooperation exist: early attention to threats; trade facilitation, economic growth and job creation; integrated cross-border law enforcement; and critical infrastructure and cyber security
- a smoothly functioning, secure shared border is important for the prosperity and security of both Canada and the United States
- an estimated 8 million American jobs and 3 million Canadian jobs depend on bilateral trade
- bilateral trade in goods and services is estimated to have a value of \$1.9 billion daily
- Canada places a high priority on security, and threats to the United States are threats to Canada
- trusted traveller and trader programs are important, and their use should be encouraged
- many sectors and industries are integrated in the North American "economic space"
- the \$5.50 entry fee proposed in the Administration's budget would harm the bilateral relationship

North American Energy Security

- energy relations between the United States and Canada are important to the economic prosperity of both countries
- Canada is the most important, safest, and most secure and stable foreign supplier of energy to the United States
- Canadian exports of oil and natural gas to the United States have more than doubled since 1994, when the *North American Free Trade Agreement* came into force
- North American energy markets, like the economies, are integrated
- Canada and the United States work together on energy issues in a number of ways, and cooperate through the Clean Energy Dialogue established in February 2009
- bilateral cooperation on energy issues also occurs in multilateral fora
- oil from Canada's oil sands is not "dirty" oil

ISSUES RAISED BY AMERICAN LEGISLATORS AND THEIR STAFF

- the United States has no more faithful and benevolent ally than Canada, with the result that Americans sometimes take Canadians for granted

- Canada is an important trading partner and energy source for the United States as well as a key supporter in the war on terror
- Canada should update its copyright legislation as soon as possible
- the United States and Canada should find mutually beneficial solutions to the problems that arise in the bilateral relationship
- Canadian banks are relatively better regulated
- the \$5.50 entry fee proposed in the Administration's budget will not be implemented
- taxes hurt the economy
- Canadian investment in the United States is significant
- it is not an accident that problems with immigration occur at the U.S.' southern border with Mexico
- a country cannot borrow its way into prosperity
- to recover, the United States needs to: produce more goods and services; spend less and save more; and undertake tax reform

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Janis G. Johnson, Senator
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Gord Brown, M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Appendix

Members and Staff of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives with Whom the Delegation Met

U.S. Senators

Sen. Mark Begich

Sen. Saxby Chambliss

Sen. Mike Crapo

Sen. Daniel Inouye

Sen. Johnny Isakson

Sen. Mike Lee

Sen. Jack Reed

Sen. Richard Shelby

Sen. Roger Wicker

U.S. Representatives

Rep. Sandy Adams

Rep. Steve Austria

Rep. Michelle Bachmann

Rep. Spencer Bachus

Rep. Tammy Baldwin

Rep. Roscoe Bartlett

Rep. Dan Benishek

Rep. Brian Bilbray

Rep. Diane Black

Rep. Anne Marie Buerkle

Rep. John Carter

Rep. Emanuel Cleaver

Rep. Geoff Davis

Rep. Phil Gingrey

Rep. Louie Gohmert

Rep. Bill Huizenga

Rep. Doug Lamborn

Rep. Cynthia Lummis

Rep. Carolyn Maloney

Rep. Kenny Marchant

Rep. Gregory Meeks

Rep. Candice Miller

Rep. Sue Myrick

Rep. Richard Neal

Rep. Bill Owens

Rep. Chellie Pingree

Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger

Rep. James Sensenbrenner

Rep. John Shimkus

Rep. Albio Sires

Rep. Louise Slaughter

Rep. Lee Terry

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	U.S. Congressional Meetings
DESTINATION	Washington, D.C., United States of America
DATES	March 1-2, 2011
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Wilfred P. Moore, Q.C., Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. John McKay, P.C., M.P. Mr. Brent Rathgeber, M.P.
STAFF	Angela Crandall, Executive Secretary June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$Ø
ACCOMMODATION	\$5,167.59
HOSPITALITY	\$4,903.34
PER DIEMS	\$Ø
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$Ø
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$197.32
TOTAL	\$10,268.25