

Canada - United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada - États-Unis
Section canadienne

Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation to the Democratic National Convention

Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Denver, Colorado, United States of America
August 24 - 28, 2008**

Report

From 24-28 August 2008, Senator Jerry Grafstein and Mr. Rob Merrifield, M.P., Co-Chairs of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), attended the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Denver, Colorado as part of the National Democratic Institute's International Leaders Forum.

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) was formed in 1984, and first hosted international visitors to the Democratic convention in that year. With involvement in democratic transitions in more than 100 countries, the NDI operates consistent with the belief that: democracy cannot be separated from human dignity and development; the desire for freedom is universal; and a more democratic world is more peaceful, secure and prosperous.

At the convention, the National Democratic Institute held a number of sessions:

- The 2008 Campaign: The Role of Primaries, Nominating Conventions and Presidential Debates
- Democratic Politics and Policy Forum: Analysis of the 2008 Presidential Campaign – A View from the Press
- Domestic Politics and Policy Forum: Campaign 2008 in Ads and Anecdotes
- Domestic Politics and Policy Forum: How They Would Govern
- International Affairs Forum: Ensuring Democracy Delivers Real Dividends – A Perspective from Former Presidents and Prime Ministers
- Domestic Politics Forum: Strategies for Winning in November – Reading the Polls and Political Tea Leaves
- International Affairs Forum: Enhancing the US Role Around the World
- International Affairs Forum: Combating Global Poverty
- International Affairs Forum: Building a Better, Safer World – What Would an Obama Presidency Do?

While at the convention, Senator Grafstein and Mr. Merrifield had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the more than 100 countries that participated in the Forum. As well, they spoke with:

- Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Senator Joe Biden
- Governors Brian Schweitzer (Montana) and Bill Richardson (New Mexico)
- US Senators Amy Klobuchar (Co-Chair of the US Section of the Group), Patrick Leahy, Daniel Akaka, Tom Harkin and Jeff Bingaman

- Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, and US Representatives Louise Slaughter and Ed Markey.

Finally, they were also able to speak with:

- former US Vice President Walter Mondale
- NDI Chairman and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright
- former Governor and DNC Chairman Howard Dean
- former Senator Gary Hart
- current Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and former New York Mayor David Dinkins
- T. Boone Pickens, who was invited to Canada in order to speak about alternative energy.

Two former Canadian Prime Ministers – Joe Clark and Kim Campbell – also attended the DNC.

At the convention, Senator Grafstein and Mr. Merrifield spoke with the Governors, US Senators and members of the US House of Representatives, as well as with state legislators, mayors and others, about:

- the importance of the bilateral trade and tourism relationship as well as of rules-based trade and trade agreements
- the consequences of inefficiencies at the shared Canada-US border, the need for reform of the US Department of Homeland Security and – with changes in the Department and the US Administration – opportunities to make the border more effective and efficient than is currently the case
- energy issues, including alternative energy, energy independence and security of energy supply
- a growing sense of isolation and the rising importance of multilateralism.

More generally, the interaction with Governors, state legislators and federal counterparts enables members of the IPG to achieve better the aim of finding points of convergence in respective policies, initiating dialogue on points of divergence, encouraging exchanges of information and promoting better understanding on shared issues of concern. Moreover, the meetings provide the members of the IPG with an important means to provide input to, and gather information about, state- and federal-level issues that affect Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Jerahmiel Grafstein, Senator
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Dean Del Mastro, M.P.
Acting Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Democratic National Convention
DESTINATION	Denver, Colorado, United States of America
DATES	August 24-28, 2008
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Jerry Grafstein, Q.C., Senator, Co- Chair
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Rob Merrifield, M.P., Co-Chair
STAFF	Ø
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,966.88
ACCOMMODATION	\$1,156.22
HOSPITALITY	\$Ø
PER DIEMS	\$788.37
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$Ø
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$870.58
TOTAL	\$4,782.05