

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 (BTA) Conference**

Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Washington, D.C., United States of America
4–6 October 2015**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 4–6 October 2015, Senator Wilfred Moore, Q.C., Vice-Chair of the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), led a delegation to the fall meeting of the Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (Can/Am BTA) in Washington, D.C. The other delegate was Senator Jane Cordy. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section.

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 U.S. and Canadian federal departments, including the Canadian Embassy in Washington.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The Canadian Section of the IPG has a long association with the Can/Am BTA, and members of the Canadian Section sometimes attend 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 insight 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 challenges.

Attendance at the Can/Am BTA's meetings 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 Co-Chairs and/or Vice-Chairs of the Canadian Section to make remarks at the meeting. At the Can/Am BTA's 2015 fall meeting, Senators Cordy and Moore spoke to attendees.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

Members of the Canadian Section were able to speak with attendees about the efforts being taken by them to ensure the existence of an efficient, cost-effective and secure common border, and about selected other aspects of the Canada–U.S. relationship. In particular, Senators Cordy spoke about the Canadian Section's activities since the BTA's 2015 spring meeting, while Senator Moore's focus was the Canadian Section's expected future activities.

Sessions with the following titles were held:

- Customs and Border Protection: Trade Relations, Expediting Low-Risk, Beyond the Border CBP Priorities and Initiatives
- The Canadian Perspective
- RFID for Product Identification and Traceability
- Federal Highway Administration: Transportation & Border Related Priorities/Initiatives
- View from Trucking
- Customs Border Protection: Single Window Initiative
- Field Operations: Customs and Border Protection – Overview of New CBP initiatives, U.S. Canada Border Issues and Priorities
- Montreal–U.S. Rail Pre-clearance
- View from the Hill and White House on Canada/U.S.
- Beyond the Border – What It Can Do: Insight on Needs, Progress and Challenges
- Canada/U.S. Parliamentary Group: Observations and Priorities
- View from Quebec: Update and Insights
- Trusted Known Employer Update
- View from Congress: Issues Affecting the U.S./Canada Border
- Insights and Opportunities.

This report summarizes presentations at the meeting, including the remarks made by Senators Cordy and Moore.

CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION: TRADE RELATIONS, EXPEDITING LOW-RISK, BEYOND THE BORDER CBP PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES

Todd Owen, *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*

- In March 2015, the United States and Canada signed a pre-clearance agreement in respect of the movement of people by land, rail, water and air; the agreement, which requires the enactment of legislation, does not automatically apply to cargo.
- The United States' goal is to have 30% of air passengers pre-cleared by 2024; in addition to its existing agreement with Canada, the United States is pursuing air pre-clearance agreements with nine countries that would cover 10 airports in the following cities: Brussels (Belgium); Punta Cana (Dominican Republic); Narita (Japan); Amsterdam (the Netherlands); Oslo (Norway); Madrid (Spain); Stockholm (Sweden); Istanbul (Turkey); and Heathrow and Manchester (United Kingdom).
- Having U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) personnel overseas leads to enhanced security and easier travel for air passengers.
- Efforts should be directed to ending the processing of paper copies of forms; required information should be submitted electronically.

- U.S CBP officers should not be collecting cash; the collection of cash adds 25-30 seconds at primary inspection points, thereby introducing delays.
- Radiofrequency identification (RFID) technology should be used to a greater extent than is currently the case.
- Regarding the new bridge at Detroit, Michigan–Windsor, Ontario, the United States and Canada are identifying the facilities that are needed by border security personnel in each country, as well as situations in which facilities could be shared; for example, the two countries could share a NEXUS enrollment facility.
- Traders need to experience tangible benefits when they participate in the United States' Customs–Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and Canada's Partners in Protection (PIP) programs; whenever possible, inspections and costs should be reduced.

THE CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE

Gary Doer, *Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada*

- Canada and the United States have a very good relationship, including in relation to the Beyond the Border (BTB) Action Plan initiatives; the countries have developed a trusting relationship and a degree of credibility with each other.
- Canada and the United States are friends, neighbours, allies and partners.
- A threat to either Canada or the United States is a threat to both countries.
- The pre-clearance agreement signed by Canada and the United States in March 2015 in relation to the movement of people by air, land, water and rail should result in reduced costs, greater efficiency and other benefits; the agreement establishes responsibilities and liabilities for both countries.
- A legal agreement between Canada and the United States, as well as financing, is in place for the new bridge at Detroit, Michigan–Windsor, Ontario; toll revenues will be given to Canada, which is financing the bridge and the U.S. customs plaza.
- Implementation of a single window initiative will result in the establishment of one e-portal.
- To date, there has been some harmonization of rail regulations between Canada and the United States.
- The Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement is important for trade and investment in Canada.

RFID FOR PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION AND TRACEABILITY

Ryan Eickmeier, *GS 1 Canada*

- Business process problems at shared borders could be resolved with a single source of data.
- In accordance with one of the BTB Action Plan's initiatives, Canada and the United States will provide commercial traders with a "single window" through which all

information that is required to comply with customs and other governmental regulations can be submitted; in Canada, import information will be submitted electronically to the Canada Border Services Agency, which will transmit the information to the appropriate department or agency for an assessment of the information and any required decisions.

- The integrated import declaration form enables traders to submit information in relation to, and obtain release for, commercial goods regulated by participating government agencies; these forms contain multiple identifiers, and manual entry of data for each declaration is time consuming and increases the risk of data errors.
- Use of the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) could improve the process for sharing product data between and among regulatory agencies and importers; in particular, use of the GTIN could contribute to faster clearance and easier trade compliance, reduced delays, lower administrative costs, more effective and efficient deployment of resources, increased transparency and predictability of government processes, consistent application of regulatory requirements and improved identification of illegal operations.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION: TRANSPORTATION & BORDER-RELATED PRIORITIES/INITIATIVES

Greg Nadeau, *U.S. Federal Highway Administration*

- Borders can divide countries, or they can unite them; in a similar vein, transportation systems can be chokepoints or “enablers” of growth and prosperity.
- Transportation systems unite the United States and Canada.
- Transportation systems link people to jobs, health care, education, leisure activities, etc.; they also connect businesses to markets.
- Transportation systems need to operate safely and efficiently.
- Transportation-related needs always exceed the funds available.
- The U.S. Congress has not passed a long-term bill to fund transportation; transportation funding is critically important, and a long-term plan enables planning by states.
- In the future, demand to move people and cargo will rise; as current transportation systems can barely meet the needs, a long-term funding bill is required.
- Data-driven strategies and the rapid deployment of appropriate technology help to enhance transportation safety.
- Congestion and delays have significant economic impacts, and compensation and profits are relatively lower.
- Transportation investments that the United States fails to make will affect all of North America.

VIEW FROM TRUCKING

Martin Rojas, *International Road Transport Union*

- Many trucking issues continue to be unresolved.
- Truckers face many security threats along the U.S.–Mexico border.
- Infrastructure is needed to ensure that a “FAST lane” really is fast.
- The World Trade Organization’s (WTO’s) *Agreement on Trade Facilitation* is designed to facilitate the movement of cargo into and out of countries.
- The United States’ International Trade Data System (ITDS) is an important initiative through which required data will be provided to relevant governmental agencies.
- Questions exist about the possibility of using technology to replace customs officers at inspection booths; if there is no need to interact with a human being, then inspections could occur 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and border infrastructure could be used to its capacity.

CUSTOMS BORDER PROTECTION: SINGLE WINDOW INITIATIVE

Amy Magnus, A.N. Deringer

- Electronic documents, the provision of information in advance and similar measures have radically altered the inspection of cargo.
- If paper documents are replaced by electronic documents, efficiency is increased; automation is a game changer.
- It should be noted that, even if all data are transmitted electronically, errors can exist if the information is entered manually.

FIELD OPERATIONS: CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION – OVERVIEW OF NEW CBP INITIATIVES, U.S. CANADA BORDER ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

Rich DiNucci, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

- The United States’ ITDS will enhance efficiency; 47 governmental agencies are implicated at U.S. border crossings.
- Automation and technology can be used to address staffing challenges.
- Ending the practice of customs officers collecting cash at border crossings would increase efficiency.
- Customs officers should not be required to act as cashiers; having them collect cash is not an efficient use of their time, and it is inconsistent with the tasks that they were hired to perform.
- Time is wasted when there are “unproductive” inspections; inspections should occur if there is a reasonable probability that something will be found to be “amiss.”
- The United States’ C-TPAT initiative has existed for about 14 years; changes need to be made, as the manner in which businesses operate has evolved.
- Trusted traders have been determined to be trustworthy; as such, time should not be wasted inspecting them.

MONTREAL–U.S. RAIL PRE-CLEARANCE

Raymond Chretien, *Quebec Department of Transportation*

- Management of the border that the Province of Quebec shares with the United States is a top priority for the province.
- The Province of Quebec supports air and rail pre-clearance.
- Pre-clearance results in faster and easier crossing of shared borders, as well as improved safety.

Brian Searles, *Vermont Transportation Agency*

- Mass transportation has environmental benefits, and efforts are being directed to re-establishing some rail services, particularly the Vermonter and the Adirondack.
- Pre-clearance is important.
- Vermont is a small state, and it is not a destination; transportation benefits would occur because of a transportation link between and/or among Boston, New York City and Montreal.

VIEW FROM THE HILL AND WHITE HOUSE ON CANADA/U.S.

Peter Friedmann, *Lindsay Hart LLP*

- Both the Democrats and the Republicans are positioning themselves for the 2016 elections; following those elections, the House of Representatives is expected to have a majority of Republicans, while the Democrats have a number of opportunities to win additional seats in the Senate.
- While President Obama may be seen by some as a “lame duck” internationally, he is not a “lame duck” domestically.
- President Obama is taking action through Executive Orders; presidents generally do not use Executive Orders in respect of “big” issues that would normally come into being through the passage of legislation by the U.S. Congress.
- During the presidential campaigns, much time is likely to be spent on the actions that the United States should be taking in the Middle East.
- The “tilt to Asia” has implications for the flow of cargo.
- Regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), many details have yet to be finalized in respect of such sectors as dairy, automobiles, sugar and pharmaceutical drugs; as well, organized labour, environmentalists, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump and Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders appear to be opposed to a potential TPP agreement.
- Current bilateral trade irritants between the United States and Canada include the United States’ country-of-origin labelling (COOL) requirements, in respect of which retaliation is likely, and different weight limits for trucks.

BEYOND THE BORDER – WHAT IT CAN DO: INSIGHT ON NEEDS, PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

Alan Bersin, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

- It is hard for Canada and Mexico to live next to the “colossus” that is the United States; national sovereignty must be respected, and each country’s culture must be allowed to develop in its own way.
- The modern world is characterized by the rise of China, the integration of Europe and the emergence of North America as a bloc.
- China has had the most remarkable transformation in human history, but it is facing significant challenges and obstacles.
- Europe is currently experiencing some economic challenges, and is developing the notion of shared sovereignty.
- In North America, there is respect for national sovereignty, the shared production platform provides certain benefits, and North American energy independence is “in sight.”
- The “story” of the next 50 years is not China or Europe; rather, it is North America.
- In North America, the focus is the north-south, rather than the east-west, flow of goods and people.
- Pre-clearance of passengers and cargo moving by air, rail, water and land is critical to the future of North America as a bloc, and this clearance should occur as far away from the border and as early in time as possible.
- There are 127 ports of entry at Canada’s southern border with the United States.
- The need for additional border infrastructure will always exist; public-private partnerships are one option for ensuring the existence of adequate infrastructure.
- Infrastructure is about “space”; real gains are to be made regarding “time,” as “time is money.”
- The Internet is a significant enabler for small businesses, and border regulations must accommodate this reality; one consideration in this regard is the *de minimis* amounts in each country, including the three North American countries.

CANADA/U.S. INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP: OBSERVATIONS AND PRIORITIES

Senator Jane Cordy, Senate of Canada

- The summer always marks the beginning of a very busy time for the Canadian Section of the IPG, as members of the Canadian Section embark on a series of conferences with two primary goals: speak with U.S. governors and state legislators about the nature and depth of the Canada–U.S. relationship and the relationship that Canada has with their state; and learn from very insightful presentations about a range of policy issues that have relevance for both Canada and the United States.
- At some of the Canadian Section’s summer events, members also have the opportunity to interact with people from the private sector, which can be quite informative and extremely important.

- The first major activity for the IPG's Canadian Section following the Can/Am BTA's May 2015 conference was the eighth annual meeting of the Southeastern United States–Canadian Provinces Alliance (SEUS-CP), which is comprised of six U.S. states and seven Canadian provinces; the group, which is very trade- and investment-focused, brings together people from the private sector and high-level governmental representatives, including governors and premiers or their designates, to discuss a variety of ways in which Canada and the United States could work together more closely, primarily through strengthening economic ties.
- At the SEUS-CP meeting, which was held in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, more than 600 business-to-business “matchmaking” meetings were held among business people, and informative discussions occurred about such issues as building the economy of tomorrow, best practices in making the Canada–U.S. relationship “work” and developing clusters as a tool for economic development.
- Another private-sector/public-sector conference that the IPG's Canadian Section attended was the 25th annual summit of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER); PNWER is similar to SEUS-CP except that it is focused on the Pacific Northwest and typically does not involve participation by governors or premiers, other than the governor or premier in whose jurisdiction the summit is taking place.
- Like SEUS-CP's meeting, at PNWER's meeting, a broad range of topics that are relevant to both Canada and the United States were discussed, including issues in relation to the shared border, the environment, trade, agriculture, energy, water, economic development, innovation, invasive species, workforce development, tourism, transportation and the Arctic.
- From the perspective of the IPG's Canadian Section, it was notable that – at the PNWER meeting – Senator Dan Lang, who chairs the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, was able to speak about the Committee's recent study on the topic of terrorism; terrorism is an issue that is relevant for both Canada and the United States, and a threat to either country is a threat to both countries.
- Members of the IPG's Canadian Section also attended the summer meetings of the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Western Governors Association (WGA).
- The NGA's winter and summer meetings provide the IPG's Canadian Section with an unparalleled opportunity to speak to state governors – who are, essentially, the chief executive officer of the state – about the nature and depth of the relationship between Canada and their respective states, and about ways in which the countries can work together more closely for joint benefit.
- This year, the main topics that were discussed at the NGA's summer meeting included innovative strategies for economic development, transforming health care so that there is a greater focus on patients and on paying for results rather than the number of treatments, and ensuring that individuals have the skills to meet the future needs of businesses.
- Economic development, high-quality health care and having the right employment skills are also important issues for Canada, and it would be beneficial if Canada and the United States could share best practices in these and other areas; for example,

prescription drug abuse exists in both countries and, in the United States, more people die of an overdose of prescription drugs than die as a result of car accidents, with 70% of the prescription drugs sourced from families and/or friends.

- The sessions at the WGA's meeting were also very informative, including those addressing drought, transportation networks and a range of energy issues.
- The IPG's Canadian Section also attended meetings of state legislators, including the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL's) annual legislative summit, as well as regional meetings of the Council of States Governments (CSG), notably the Southern Legislative Conference (SLC), the Council of State Governments-WEST (CSG-WEST) and the Eastern Regional Conference (ERC).
- The NCSL's legislative summit typically attracts more than 6,000 participants each year, and – as one of its components – has an international program that usually involves legislators from about 25 countries; the Canadian Section was grateful to have the opportunity to address attendees in the international program on the topic of the “mechanics” of trade, or the infrastructure and other supports that make trade “work.”
- Regarding the CSG's SLC meeting, it is often the case that Canadians – especially those who are not snowbirds – do not necessarily have a very good idea of what is happening in the U.S. South; from that perspective, the Canadian delegates were fortunate to hear about a range of issues, including some that replicate concerns within Canada, such as attracting beginning farmers, using and regulating drones, and ensuring that countries have a workforce that will meet the evolving needs of employers.
- Members of the IPG's Canadian Section also attended the annual meeting of CSG-WEST, where Senator Percy Downe – the Vice-Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade – spoke during the North American Summit about the Committee's recent report on North America, entitled *North American Neighbours: Maximizing Opportunities and Strengthening Cooperation for a More Prosperous Future*.
- CSG-WEST is one of the CSG's three regional groups that have a “Canada” committee, the other two being its Midwest and Eastern components; at CSG-WEST's Canada Relations Committee, the three topics examined were controlling aquatic invasive species, oil and gas pipeline maintenance, and cross-border labour mobility.
- As noted earlier, the CSG's ERC also has a Canada-focused committee, and topics discussed at the committee this year included diplomatic relations between Canada and the United States, bilateral trade, the challenges and opportunities associated with land-rail border pre-clearance, the need for further regulatory cooperation, information sharing and investment in border-management technology, services and infrastructure.

Senator Wilfred Moore, *Senate of Canada*

- In mid-October 2015, a delegation from the IPG's Canadian Section will be attending the annual meeting of the Southern Governors Association; the focus of this year's meeting is the future of work in the U.S. South, but such other topics as renewable energy and rural health care, which are also important issues for Canada, will be addressed.
- Regarding meetings of governors, members of the IPG's Canadian Section intend to be at the NGA's winter meeting in Washington, D.C. in February 2016; Utah Governor Gary Herbert will be chairing that meeting, and the theme for his year as chair is "States: Finding Solutions, Improving Lives."
- The Canadian Section often meets with U.S. Senators and members of the House of Representatives following the NGA's winter meeting or at some other point in the spring; although the exact timing and agenda of the next set of Congressional meetings on Capitol Hill have not been determined, members of the Canadian Section will be educating new legislators, and re-educating existing lawmakers, about Canada's trading relationship with the United States, which is valued at \$2 billion each day and involves Canada supplying 23% of the United States' energy needs, and about the main bilateral issues of the day.
- During past Congressional meetings, members of the Canadian Section have discussed such topics as the Keystone XL pipeline proposal, "Buy American" provisions in U.S. legislation and the United States' COOL requirements; regarding COOL, the World Trade Organization has repeatedly found in favour of Canada and Mexico and, with the United States failing to act, it seems increasingly likely that retaliation may occur.
- The 2015 annual meeting of the IPG will be hosted by the U.S. Congress, and planning for that meeting is likely to begin following Canada's federal election on 19 October; the meeting is expected to include intensive discussions on a range of issues that are important for both Canada and the United States, including trade, economic prosperity, cross-border cooperation in a variety of areas, and international issues, including the work that the two countries do together in parts of the world when fighting side by side.
- In December 2014, an inaugural meeting was held among North American federal legislators, and representatives of Canada, the United States and Mexico discussed actions that would enable greater prosperity for individuals and businesses in all three countries, with a focus on border infrastructure and trade, North American competitiveness, a variety of security issues and North American energy.
- Since the December 2014 inaugural meeting among North American federal legislators, Canada's federal Parliament has continued to focus on North America, with parliamentary committee reports released in both the Senate and the House of Commons in June 2015.

- The report by the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade is entitled *North American Neighbours: Maximizing Opportunities and Strengthening Cooperation for a More Prosperous Future*; the report's three most substantive chapters focus on the growing potential of the Canada–Mexico relationship, the United States as the neighbour that Canada and Mexico have in common, and actions needed to build a new North American relationship.
- The House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs' report, entitled *North America: Giving the Continent the Attention It Deserves*, made recommendations for the next North American Leaders' Summit, which Canada is expected to host; one of the report's main conclusions is that a revitalized North American partnership is needed, with all relevant stakeholders – provinces and states, legislators, businesses, regulatory bodies, academics and civil society – playing a role in building relationships and devising innovative solutions to common challenges.
- Both of these parliamentary committee reports mention the inaugural meeting of North American governors and premiers, which will be held 30–31 October 2015 in Colorado and at which discussions will occur on such critical issues as infrastructure investments, economic innovation, and jobs and investment in North America; in light of the Canadian Parliament's recent work on the topic of the North American relationship, and following on the inaugural meeting of federal legislators from the North American countries that was held in December 2014, it is entirely appropriate that a delegation from the IPG's Canadian Section will likely attend that meeting.
- The three North American countries can achieve more when they work together, and trilateral cooperation is occurring at many levels: national leaders, federal legislators, and – soon – governors and premiers.
- In December 2015, the IPG's Canadian Section intends to attend the annual national meeting of the CSG; in addition to the presentations on public policy issues, which are always very interesting, delegates are certain to benefit from the reception that Canada will be hosting, as the reception provides a prime opportunity to discuss the relationship that Canada has with the various states.

VIEW FROM QUEBEC: UPDATE AND INSIGHTS

Jean-Claude Lauzon, *Quebec Department of International Relations*

- Pre-clearance is important for the United States and Canada, including Quebec; pre-clearance should become part of the “DNA” of how Canada and the United States “operate.”
- Investments in pre-clearance should occur as part of investments in the “fluidity” of the borders that Canada shares with the United States.
- Because of the Canada–U.S. trade relationship, the countries need shared borders that are open, secure, accessible, fluid and responsive to the needs of businesses.
- About 4,500 Quebec companies do business in the United States.
- The Province of Quebec has abundant natural resources.

- The Province of Quebec has clean and reliable hydroelectricity, and partners with New York and the New England states in relation to hydroelectricity.
- Water is the “oil” of tomorrow.

TRUSTED KNOWN EMPLOYER UPDATE

Daniel Ujcz, *Dickinson Wright*

- Trade between the United States and Canada is at an unprecedented level; although the primary problem in the bilateral relationship is the movement of professionals across the Canada–U.S. border, this issue is mentioned in only one line in the BTB Action Plan.
- It is important for professionals to be able to move across shared borders in a safe and efficient manner; this requirement has given rise to a request for a known employer program.
- Consideration should be given to requiring a NEXUS card as a condition of employment; if approved for a NEXUS card, an individual is criminally admissible.
- The list of *North American Free Trade Agreement* (NAFTA) professionals has not been updated since the agreement came into force more than 20 years ago.

Laurie Tannous, *Cross Border Institute*

- Some employers encounter difficulties in moving their employees across borders for business reasons; in certain cases, these employees have a “driving under the influence” conviction.
- Because of difficulties in crossing the border, employers need to plan ahead when their employees must cross the border.

VIEW FROM CONGRESS: ISSUES AFFECTING THE U.S./CANADA BORDER

Bill Owens, of Stafford, Owens, Piller, Murnane, Kelleher & Trombley, posed questions to – and moderated the discussion among – the following three members of the U.S. House of Representatives: Brian Higgins, Bill Huizenga and Elise Stefanick.

Question: Do Americans understand the Canada–U.S. relationship?

Representative Brian Higgins

- Canada has been uniquely loyal to the United States.
- Although Canada and the United States have an extraordinary relationship, there is a need to do much better.
- The U.S. Congress needs to understand the distinction between the United States’ northern and southern borders.

Representative Bill Huizenga

- Michigan understands the economic connectedness of the United States and Canada; that said, it is stunning how little Americans truly know about Canada.

- The U.S. Congress has a responsibility to explain the nature and importance of the Canada–U.S. relationship; this task is ongoing.

Representative Elise Stefanick

- In Washington, D.C., there is a lack of understanding about the relationship that the United States has with Canada.
- The issues at the United States’ border with Mexico differ from the issues that the country has at the borders with Canada.

Question: What is the message that needs to be delivered to the United States about the nature and importance of the Canada–U.S. relationship?

Representative Elise Stefanick

- Americans need to be reminded that Canada is the United States’ primary trading partner, and that what is good for Canada is also good for the United States.

Representative Bill Huizenga

- Americans need to be reminded about the integrated transportation systems that exist throughout North America.

Representative Brian Higgins

- The importance of predictable and reliable movements of goods and people across the Canada–U.S. border needs to be communicated in a clear and compelling way.

Question: What is the likelihood that the U.S. Congress will pass a transportation funding bill, and what is the probability of infrastructure investments along either the United States’ northern or southern borders?

Representative Elise Stefanick

- The U.S. Congress may pass a three-year transportation funding bill this year.
- The lack of certainty about transportation funding has a negative impact on jobs and job creation.

Representative Bill Huizenga

- Michigan’s infrastructure is crumbling.
- Any transportation funding bill that is passed by the U.S. Congress would likely be for a period of less than five or six years.

Representative Brian Higgins

- There is a need to invest in U.S. infrastructure.
- In the United States, many bridges are structurally deficient.
- Investments in infrastructure result in economic growth.

Question: What would be the impact of the TPP on NAFTA?

Representative Bill Huizenga

- Those who oppose free trade agreements should be taken seriously.

Representative Elise Stefanick

- There is a great deal of misinformation regarding free trade, and this misinformation exists among both those on the far left and those on the far right.

Representative Brian Higgins

- The United States has 5% of the world's population and 24% of the world's economy.
- With the TPP, some areas of the United States would do well, while others would do less well.

INSIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Tom Winkowski, *Formerly with U.S. Department of Homeland Security*

- Borders are important in terms of economic security and national security.
- Borders are complicated, and can be hard to “fix.”
- The world is shrinking, and the flows of goods and people are changing; a North American strategy that includes integrated approaches is required.
- There is a need to educate and influence decision makers; priorities should be established, and decisions should be informed by data.
- In an effort to improve profitability, efforts should be directed to making it less expensive to do business.
- If operating properly, the existence of “trusted” programs for goods and people should enable a greater focus on goods and people who are unknown.
- Infrastructure challenges must be resolved, and “trusted” people and goods must be directed to the correct lanes.
- User fees are “here to stay,” and there will always be efforts to raise the levels of such fees.

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

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (BTA) Conference
DESTINATION	Washington, D.C., United States of America
DATES	4–6 October 2015
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Jane Cordy, Senator Hon. Wilfred P. Moore, Q.C., Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	
STAFF	Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$2,431.01
ACCOMMODATION	\$2,326.17
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 505.08
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$2,374.02
TOTAL	\$7,636.28