

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 U.S. Congressional Meetings**

**Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group**

**Washington, D.C., United States of America  
February 26-27, 2013**

# Report

## DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From February 26-27, 2013, Senator Janis G. Johnson, Co-Chair and Mr. Gord Brown, M.P., Co-Chair of the Canadian Section of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) led six of their colleagues in meetings with members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, as well as their staff (see the Appendix). These meetings were held following the Canadian Section's attendance at the winter meeting of the National Governors Association (NGA) in Washington, D.C.

Other members of the Canadian delegation were Senators Jean-Guy Dagenais, Terry M. Mercer and Wilfred Moore, Q.C., Vice-Chair, the Honourable Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Vice-Chair, Mr. Mark Adler, M.P. and Mr. Brian Masse, M.P., Vice-Chair. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Angela Crandall, the Canadian Section's Executive Secretary, and Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section.

## 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, as outlined below. 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.

Congressional meetings enable members of the Canadian Section to meet with U.S. federal legislators, particularly those who do not attend the IPG'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

### History and Mission of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

- The IPG was formed more than 50 years ago.
- The IPG aims to find points of convergence in Canadian and American national policies, to initiate dialogue on points of divergence, to encourage

the exchange of information and to promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern.

- One means by which the IPG attains its goals is through an annual meeting at which federal legislators from both Canada and the United States participate.
- In addition to an annual meeting, the Canadian Section of the IPG attends national and regional meetings of governors and state legislators.

### **The Bilateral Trade Relationship and the Shared Border**

- Canada and the United States have the largest bilateral trade relationship in the world, and the nations and their inhabitants are important to each other for additional reasons as well.
- At least 70% of U.S. states have Canada as their primary foreign export destination.
- An estimated 8 million U.S. jobs depend on trade with Canada.
- A seamless, yet secure, shared border helps to ensure the prosperity of both countries.
- Progress is being made regarding a new international crossing at Detroit-Windsor, and the presidential permit was an important development in this regard, as was the funding provided by Canada's federal government.
- The border that the United States shares with Canada differs, in fundamental ways, from the border that it shares with Mexico; the differences between the United States' two shared borders mean that different policies, practices, etc. are required at the two borders.
- Since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, security requirements have led to a "thickening" of the shared border; "thickening" makes both countries less competitive.
- The movement of goods and people across the shared border is facilitated by such measures as NEXUS and FAST.
- Cross-border tourism falls when the documentary requirements associated with crossing the border rise.
- Inconsistent regulations between the two countries can increase costs and have other negative consequences.
- Border-related fees affect the competitiveness of integrated companies.
- "Buy American" provisions are a trade barrier; with provisions such as these, Canada may be "collateral damage."
- The United States' mandatory country-of-origin labelling requirements are harming both Canada and the United States, and are inconsistent with a North American livestock market.

## **Energy**

- Energy trade between the countries is significant in value and volume.
- Canada is the most stable and reliable supplier of a range of energy sources to the United States, and the United States should prefer Canadian oil to Venezuelan or Middle Eastern oil.
- For energy security and other reasons, it is important that the Keystone XL pipeline application is approved; failure to approve the application would harm the bilateral relationship.
- The Keystone XL pipeline application is the “victim” of environmental politics in the United States.
- Ongoing efforts are directed to improving the “environmental record” of Canada’s oil sands.

## **ISSUES RAISED BY U.S. SENATORS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

### **Energy**

- The proposed Keystone XL pipeline is important to meeting the energy needs of the United States.
- What is occurring in the United States in relation to the Keystone XL pipeline application is related to environmental politics, not scientific or economic considerations; after all, there are already a great many pipelines between Canada and the United States, as well as within each country.
- The “tar” sands are a “geological miracle.”

### **Trade and Economic Prosperity**

- There is much that the United States could learn from Canada regarding “economic measures.”
- “Buy American” provisions are not always directed toward Canada.
- In the context of the twin pillars of security and trade, it is important to recognize that homeland security is important and that “bad actors” cross the border in each direction; that said, there is a need to facilitate bilateral trade.
- The U.S. Midwest would be less strong “if Canada did not exist.”
- Some American exports destined for Europe transit through the Port of Montreal.
- Delays and problems at the border shared by the United States and Mexico are linked to Mexican politics.

- There should be more pre-clearance agreements reached by Canada and the United States.
- With “just-in-time” inventory systems, it is important that the shared border function smoothly.
- There is some concern about whether there is adequate funding to implement the measures included in the Beyond the Border Action Plan.

### **Prescription Drugs**

- A number of Americans continue to cross the shared border, physically or electronically, to purchase prescription drugs.

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 OF THE U.S. CONGRESS AND THEIR STAFF WITH WHOM THE CANADIAN SECTION OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP MET

#### Senators:

Senator Mark Begich (D-AL)

Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA)

#### Members of the House of Representatives:

Justin Amash (R-MI)

Spencer Bachus (R-AL)

Joyce Beatty (D-OH)

Dan Benishek (R-MI)

Diane Black (R-TN)

John Carter (R-TX)

Steve Daines (R-IL)

Charlie Dent (R-PA)

Sean Duffy (R-WI)

Elizabeth Esty (D-CT)

Phil Gingrey (R-GA)

Richard Hanna (R-NY)

Brian Higgins (D-NY)

Bill Huizenga (R-MI)

Daniel Kildee (D-MI)

Peter King (R-NY)

Doug Lambourn (R-CO)

Rick Larsen (D-WA)

Daniel Lipinski (D-IL)

Tom Marino (R-PA)

Jim McDermott (D-WA)

Mark Meadows (R-NC)

Bill Owens (D-NY)

Gary Peters (D-MI)

Collin Peterson (D-MN)

Thomas Petri (R-WI)

Chellie Pingree (D-ME)

David Price (D-NC)

Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD)

Aaron Schock (R-IL)

Albio Sires (D-NJ)

Glen Thompson (R-PA)

Peter Welch (D-VT)

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	U.S. Congressional Meetings
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Washington, D.C., United States of America
<b>DATES</b>	February 26-27, 2013
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Janis G. Johnson Hon. Wilfred P. Moore, Q.C. Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais Hon. Terry M. Mercer
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Gordon Brown, M.P. Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P. Mr. Mark Adler, M.P. Mr. Brian Masse, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Angela Crandall, Executive Secretary Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 2,772.04</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 7,102.94</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 1,409.64</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 48.05</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,332.67</b>