

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 2013 annual meeting of the
Western Governors' Association (WGA)**

Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Park City, Utah, United States of America
June 28-30, 2013**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From June 28-30, 2013, Senator Wilfred P. Moore, Q.C., Vice-Chair, led a delegation from the Canadian Section of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) to the 2013 annual meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in Park City, Utah. The other member of the delegation was Mr. Jasbir Sandhu, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section.

THE EVENT

The Western Governors' Association includes the governors from 19 U.S. western states (see the Appendix), as well as from American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The Canadian premiers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba also participate in the WGA's activities.

The WGA uses six basic strategies to achieve its goals:

- develop and communicate regional policy;
- serve as a leadership forum;
- build regional capacity;
- conduct research and disseminate findings;
- form coalitions and partnerships in order to advance regional interests;
and
- build public understanding and support for regional issues and policy positions.

Each year, the WGA holds an annual meeting. The 2013 meeting was chaired by Utah Governor Gary Herbert, with "responsible energy development in the U.S. West" as the focus for his year as WGA chair. Governors Steve Bullock (Montana), John Hickenlooper (Colorado), Matthew Mead (Wyoming), Butch Otter (Idaho) and Brian Sandoval (Nevada) attended the meeting, as did Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger and Gary Doer, Canada's Ambassador to the United States and former Premier of Manitoba. Members of the delegation were able to speak with all attending governors except Governors Mead and Sandoval, and with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and T. Boone Pickens.

The 2014 annual meeting will be chaired by Governor Hickenlooper, who has said that the WGA motto for his year as WGA chair will be "We Go Altogether."

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group aims to find points of convergence in respective 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. In addition to regular meetings with their federal counterparts, in

recent years, members of the Canadian Section of the IPG have attended national and regional meetings of governors. At these events, Canadian delegates take the opportunity to engage in conversations that will help achieve the Canadian Section's objectives, and to communicate the nature and scope of the bilateral relationship.

The Canadian Section of the IPG intends to participate at future annual meetings of the WGA and to continue its work in advocating Canadian interests.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

During the 2013 annual meeting, the WGA held the following presentations and discussions:

- Special Remarks by Gary Doer, Canada's Ambassador to the United States;
- Keynote Speaker T. Boone Pickens;
- Keynote Speaker U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell;
- Roundtable Discussion on Public Lands;
- Roundtable Discussion on Endangered Species;
- Roundtable Discussion on Healthcare;
- Roundtable Discussion on Education; and
- Roundtable Discussion on Energy.

This report summarizes the presentations and discussions at the 2013 annual meeting.

SPECIAL REMARKS

Gary Doer, *Canada's Ambassador to the United States*

- Canada and the United States are allies, neighbours and partners, and Canada is the United States' largest customer.
- Security – both domestic and international – is important to Canada.
- Canada and the United States should align their transportation systems.
- The Keystone XL pipeline contributes to North American energy security, sustainability and efficiency.
- Canada sees electricity as a renewable energy source; 63% of Canadian electricity is from renewable sources.
- Oil from North Dakota, Montana, elsewhere in the United States, Canada and Mexico can displace oil from Venezuela, which is associated with higher greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- The Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations are important, and Canada and the United States are partners on the issue of state-owned enterprises.

- Regarding the United States' mandatory country-of-origin labelling requirements, while Canada respects the U.S. right for customers to have information about their food from farm to plate, it is important to recognize that the two countries participate in an integrated livestock industry.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

T. Boone Pickens, *BP Capital Management*

- If the United States buys oil from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), it is supporting the Taliban and – thereby – “supporting both sides of the war”; there is no requirement for the United States to buy oil from OPEC.
- The United States has “plenty” of natural resources, and is moving to natural gas as a transportation fuel.
- A “natural gas plan” is being developed by 22 U.S. states; the states, rather than the federal government, are taking leadership.
- Advancements are expected with respect to drilling and fracking.
- While the United States should not export natural gas, it is the right of companies to export to the market that will provide the highest price; instead, the United States should take advantage of inexpensive natural gas, and not export it unless required.
- The United States has the least expensive fuel in the world, and the U.S. economy will be rebuilt “on the back of” inexpensive energy.
- Regarding the Keystone XL pipeline, Canadians are patient, but there are limits to that patience; Canada may decide, instead, to ship oil east and west, with the result that the United States will “lose out” on oil that is in the United States' “backyard” and is “ready to go.”
- From one perspective, a friend and a neighbour has 250 billion barrels of oil, the same amount as the Middle East; 18 of the 21 terrorists involved in the 11 September 2001 attacks were from the Middle East.
- President Obama supports the Keystone XL pipeline as long as it does not involve any GHG emissions.
- For the United States, Canada is the “best market”; it is better than the collective of European Union countries.
- A North American energy alliance should be formed, and North American energy independence should be the goal; with such independence, there will be no need for more U.S. troops to lose their lives in the Middle East, where democracy will never exist.
- Ethanol is not a good fuel.
- Climate change is not a new phenomenon and while it is real, it is not “moving” as quickly as predicted; climate change should be monitored closely, and parties should “do what they can.”

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Secretary Sally Jewell, *U.S. Department of the Interior*

- In the U.S. West, land and water resources – and the management of those resources – are important.
- Development should be “clustered” in order to leave green space; wildlife need green space to migrate, and habitat must be protected.
- Each year, land that is equivalent in size to the state of Delaware is being lost to development.
- There is a need to ensure the existence of undeveloped land for future generations to enjoy.
- Active outdoor recreation is important to the economies of states in the U.S. West; these states have natural assets that are “economic drivers,” including in rural and urban areas.
- It is “hard to operate” during a time of sequestration; it is beneficial to have a “predictable” budget.
- Climate change is upon us, and each person must “do his or her part.”
- The federal and state governments, Native American tribes and the private sector must collaborate and cooperate to solve issues.
- Energy is important, and President Obama supports an “all of the above” energy strategy.
- Energy production is not always co-located with energy demand.
- There is a need to nurture an understanding of, and a connection to, nature in children.
- Federal lands can benefit local communities.

PUBLIC LANDS

Representative Rob Bishop, *U.S. House of Representatives*

- All stakeholders should be involved in decisions about public lands.
- The U.S. National Park Service has park land in all states except Delaware.
- States, which often do a relatively “better job,” should play a greater management role regarding federal lands.
- In some states, the federal government has created impediments to outdoor recreation; for example, there are some bodies of water on which paddling is prohibited.
- Wilderness should not be created just for the sake of creating wilderness; wilderness is good if it can be combined with recreation.

- Protecting recreation results in the creation and preservation of recreation-related jobs.
- Local communities need certainty for their future.

Neil Kornze, *U.S. Department of the Interior*

- The U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has many fruitful partnerships.
- The BLM manages about 50% of the tundra in the United States.

Jamie Williams, *The Wilderness Society*

- "Wild" public lands are a defining characteristic of the United States.
- Local communities care about protecting public lands.
- "Intact" landscapes in the U.S. West attract people and businesses that create jobs; they also contribute to a high quality of life.
- Recreation is an "economic driver."
- It is important to plan, to recognize the need for multiple uses on public lands and to take a balanced approach; for example, it is possible to develop energy resources while avoiding "vulnerable" areas.

Ronald Jibson, *Questar Corporation*

- A successful "formula" for energy development on public lands must include collaboration among all stakeholders.
- Pipelines are key in moving the supply of natural gas to meet demand.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Samuel Rauch III, *U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*

- Partners need to work together to achieve goals.
- By working with the states, the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is able to make better decisions.
- As the health of salmon goes, so too goes the health of ecosystems.

Dan Ashe, *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

- The term "balance" means different things to different people.
- As the size of the population grows, more will be required of the land base, with the result that there will be less land for endangered and threatened species.
- Although sage grouse are not facing immediate extinction, the species is declining across the U.S. West.

- The *Endangered Species Act* needs to be strict, and it should enable authorities to “step in” and prevent the extinction of species.
- The states have a role to play in working with the federal government to delist species.

HEALTHCARE

Mike Leavitt, *Leavitt Partners*

- States have far more influence than might initially be thought regarding health care solutions.
- Although the U.S. Affordable Care Act is federal legislation, the states are implementing it.
- States have responsibility for insurance and workers compensation; they also regulate medicine and the scope of services that can be provided by nurses.
- States are generally a large employer, and health care for state employees can be costly.
- Health care costs are a significant problem, and all stakeholders need to work together to “bend the cost curve” within a state.
- New ways must be found to deliver health care affordably and consistent with human compassion.

Greg Poulsen, *Intermountain Healthcare*

- From a global perspective, the United States has the best technical capabilities regarding health care.
- In a number of ways, the United States provides health care inconsistently, inefficiently and ineffectively; as well, intervention and prevention are done relatively badly.
- The provision of unnecessary medical care puts people at risk, so it is important to eliminate unnecessary care; the challenge is to identify what is unnecessary.
- There is geographical variability regarding medical procedures, and certain procedures are more prevalent in some locations than in others.
- As patients, the “doctor population” uses less intensive treatments at the end of life than does the “non-doctor population.”
- “Informed” patients use less health care.
- The incentives in the health care system are wrong, as health care providers get paid for “doing things to people.”
- Patients have developed unrealistic expectations about what the health care system can do for them.

- In an effort to get better health care at lower cost, states can:
 - change the payment mechanism, so that health professionals are paid for keeping people healthy;
 - “ramp up” educational programs and get people to take responsibility for their health; and
 - get people to make their intentions clear through advance indications.

Christopher Drumm, *AmeriHealth Caritas*

- Many groups and individuals are focused on changing, modifying, streamlining and improving health care in the United States.
- Each state needs to develop and implement a vision for health care policy.
- In the United States, incentives in the health care system are not correct; the focus should be on incentives that support prevention and patient-centred care.

EDUCATION

Roy Romer, *The College Board*

- Common core educational standards are an effective tool; they help to identify what is needed in order to compete and have a good life.
- Quality of life is affected partly by education.
- Now, the world is “driven” by ideas rather than by resources.
- Education is a 20-year process; investments made in the fourth grade will not manifest themselves until many years later.
- “What” is the common core standards; “how” is the responsibility of each state.

Daniel Greenstein, *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

- In the United States, education is in a state of crisis, and there is a need to “do” education differently.
- Competency-based education gives “credit” for prior learning.
- The students of today “juggle” jobs, family and education.
- There are a number of “promising” areas to consider:
 - Turn students into consumers by providing them with information about costs and the likely return on their investment in education.
 - Coordinate the higher education system, such as high school and a two-year college diploma, and a two-year to a four-year college diploma.
 - Emphasize access to, and completion of, education in public policy.
 - Sponsor and promote innovation.

Bob Mendenhall, *Western Governors University*

- Technology can be used to change the way in which education is delivered; in particular, technology has the potential to individualize education and enable teachers to provide individual assistance to students.
- A change to competency-based education ensures that students have the competencies needed by employers.
- Students come to higher education knowing different things and they learn at different rates.
- Educational standards should be set, and students should be provided with as much time as they need to meet those standards.

Neil Ashdown, *iSchool*

- Technology is transforming education, and is giving teachers additional tools to teach; teachers must be taught how to teach with technology.
- Technology provides instantaneous access to the most current information.
- It is important to prepare children for a world that includes the digital economy.

ENERGY

Daniel Poneman, *U.S. Department of Energy*

- President Obama will be looking to the states for leadership and innovation; federal and state governments are natural partners, and the federal-western state “template” should be replicated in other regions.
- The states in the U.S. West are pivotal to the United States’ energy “present” and its energy “future.”
- Doing things that are “smart” for the environment can create jobs and other opportunities.
- A low-carbon, clean-energy economy can be an “engine of growth” for decades to come.
- The United States is the world’s leading supplier of natural gas; natural gas is helping the nation to “build a bridge” to a low-carbon future.
- Wind and solar energy are increasing in the United States.
- Intermittent sources of power need to be integrated into the grid.
- Smart meters are “tremendously empowering” to consumers.

Bob Perciasepe, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- Everyone has a responsibility to try to work together.
- The focus should be smart, steady, collaborative “steps” to reduce GHG emissions, as well as energy efficiency and preparing for ongoing climate change.
- Carbon emissions from the energy sector are at one of the lowest levels in the last 20 years; a focus is how to continue to accelerate the reduction in emissions.
- The United States should continue to focus on reducing its dependency on foreign oil; at present, this dependence is at a 20-year low.
- To the extent possible, guidelines and regulations should be consistent with what the states are already doing.
- State leadership is important; the focus should be building on state leadership, rather than duplicating it.

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

U.S. STATES REPRESENTED IN THE WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Alaska

Arizona

California

Colorado

Hawaii

Idaho

Kansas

Montana

Nebraska

Nevada

New Mexico

North Dakota

Oklahoma

Oregon

South Dakota

Texas

Utah

Washington

Wyoming

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	2013 annual meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA)
DESTINATION	Park City, Utah, United States of America
DATES	June 28-30, 2013
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Wilfred P. Moore, Q.C.
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Jasbir Sandhu, M.P.
STAFF	June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 3,944.12
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1,383.03
HOSPITALITY	
PER DIEMS	\$ 839.86
OFFICIAL GIFTS	
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 1,519.35
TOTAL	\$ 7,686.36