

Focus: Our Government's Accomplishments



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A MESSAGE FROM GORDON O'CONNOR

Dear Constituents,

Our Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, has been in power for over five years and we have certainly come a long way. We have increased support for families, seniors, and business. We have supported victims by getting tough on crime. We have stewarded our country through the global economic downturn.

Our work is far from over, however I feel it is important to remember what we have been already accomplished in order to set our priorities for the year ahead. We will soon be tabling the 2011-2012 budget in the House of Commons and will be moving forward with the next phase of Canada's Economic Action Plan.

We have invested heavily in our country over the past two years to combat the global economic downturn. As the situation slowly improves, it is time to start focusing on a new phase of the Economic Action Plan which involves a return to balanced budgets over the next few years.

I hope you will take the time to read this householder and reflect on some of the accomplishments of our government over the past five years.

Sincerely,

Gordon O'Connor, Member of Parliament for Carleton-Mississippi Mills

INSIDE

Message from Gordon O'Connor, M.P.
Investing in Carleton-Mississippi Mills

Focus: Government's Achievements

- The First Five Priorities
- Economic Action Plan
- Building World Class Infrastructure
- Keeping Taxes Low for All Canadians
- Investing in Research & Development
- Building Strong Canadian Families
- Supporting Canada's Seniors
- Tackling Crime & Toughening our Laws
- Promoting Trade & Opening New Markets
- Strengthening Canada's Immigration System
- Delivering Results on the Environment

Out & About

INVESTING IN CARLETON-MISSISSIPPI MILLS

As your Member of Parliament, I have been working to meet the needs of Carleton-Mississippi Mills by delivering over \$50 million in projects for our community:

- Widening Hazeldean Road
- Extending Terry Fox
- Water Treatment Facility for Almonte
- Diefenbunker improvements
- West Carleton docks
- Improvements to Almonte Community Centre
- Rural Road upgrades in Goulbourn, West Carleton, and Mississippi Mills
- Sidewalks in Kanata
- Upgrades to Rosamond Textile Museum
- Extension of waterfront walkway in Almonte
- Funding for the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre
- Supporting the YMCA Outdoor Education Centre in Dunrobin
- Improving the community ballpark in Fitzroy Harbour
- Repaving of Highway 417 eastbound

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Focus: Our Government's Accomplishments

The First Five Priorities

Our government came to power promising change and clear priorities. We set five clear priorities and we delivered on them:

1. Cleaning up government and weeding out corruption by enacting and enforcing the Federal Accountability Act. We delivered. The Federal Accountability Act became law in December 2006.
2. Lowering taxes for working Canadians, starting with the reduction of the GST. We delivered. The GST was reduced to 6% in 2006 and 5% in 2007. And we have reduced taxes 120 times in our five years in government. A family of four is saving nearly \$3000/year as a result of the tax cuts the Harper Government has made since 2006.
3. Protecting Canadian families and communities by strengthening the justice system. We delivered. Our Government passed 12 bills into law to tackle crime, including the Tackling Violent Crime Act and the Truth in Sentencing Act.
4. Support parents' child care choices through direct assistance and by creating more daycare spaces. We delivered. Parents now receive \$100/month for every child under the age of six.
5. Delivering the health care Canadians need, when they need it, by addressing the fiscal imbalance and establishing a patient wait times guarantee with the provinces. We delivered. In Budget 2007, we restored fiscal balance with the provinces and we ensured patients in every province and territory are covered by a Patient Wait Time Guarantee in a priority area.

Since 2006, we have delivered real results for all Canadians and we will continue to do so.

Economic Action Plan

Phase I:

Over the past two years, Canada has weathered the worst global economic downturn since the Second World War — a downturn that was started by the financial crisis on Wall Street and soon spread throughout the world. Our Government met the challenge of the global economic crisis head-on with the Economic Action Plan (EAP).

The EAP was a temporary, targeted and timely plan designed to create jobs and economic growth during the worst of the global downturn. The Plan had five components:

1. Improving Access to Financing and Strengthening Canada's Financial System
2. Action to Help Canadians and Stimulate Spending
3. Action to Stimulate Housing Construction
4. Immediate Action to Build Infrastructure
5. Action to Support Businesses and Communities

As we approach the two-year anniversary of the EAP, it is clear that our plan is working. Funds have been committed to over 23,000 projects and, since July 2009, over 460,000 jobs have been created in Canada. The Canadian economy has grown for the past five quarters and our economy has recovered more jobs than were lost during the global recession.

Phase II:

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Government has also begun implementing a three-point plan for returning to budgetary balance:

- ✓ Winding down the temporary measures in the EAP.
- ✓ Restraining growth in spending through targeted measures, including \$17.6 billion in savings over five years committed to in Budget 2010.
- ✓ Undertaking a comprehensive review of government operations and costs in order to identify opportunities for additional savings and improve service delivery.

Building World Class Infrastructure

Stephen Harper's Government knows that the construction of public infrastructure such as roads, bridges and water systems creates jobs and helps our businesses prosper now and into the future.

Since 2006, our Government has invested heavily in infrastructure. The Harper Government has:

- ✓ Created the Building Canada Fund of \$33 billion in long-term funding and made the Gas Tax transfer to municipalities permanent.
- ✓ Invested an additional \$5.5 billion in infrastructure funding through the Economic Action Plan.

Our Government will continue to invest in world class infrastructure projects that will improve the lives of Canadians while creating jobs and economic growth.

Keeping Taxes Low for All Canadians

Since forming Government, Stephen Harper's Government has reduced taxes over 120 times and saved an average family of four nearly \$3000/year including:

- ✓ Reduced the lowest personal income tax rate from 16% to 15%.
- ✓ Increased the basic personal amount to \$10,527.
- ✓ Introduced a number of tax credits, including:
 - The **Children's Fitness Tax Credit** (2006) for parents who enroll their children in sports.
 - The **Public Transit Tax Credit** (2006) to encourage people to use public transit.
 - The **Canada Employment Credit** (2006) to give a tax break to working Canadians.
 - The **Home Renovation Tax Credit** for the 2009-2010 tax year.
- ✓ Increased the spousal and eligible dependant amounts to equal the basic personal amount, effective 2007.
- ✓ Introduced a number of savings plans including:
 - The **Registered Disability Savings Plan** (2007)
 - The **Tax-Free Savings Account** (2008)
 - The proposed **Pooled Registered Pension Plan** (2010)
- ✓ As part of the Economic Action Plan, froze **Employment Insurance** premium rates at \$1.73 per \$100 of insurable earnings for two years (2009 and 2010). And in the fall of 2010, we reduced the planned increase by two thirds.
- ✓ Improved the allocation of child benefits between parents who share custody of a child.
- ✓ Reduced **corporate taxes** from 22% to 16.5% for job creation. On January 1, 2012 the tax rate will be further reduced to 15%.

For more information on what your government is doing for you and your family, please visit www.canada.gc.ca

Supporting Canada's Seniors

Stephen Harper's Government is committed to enhancing the well-being of Canada's seniors during the retirement they have earned. That is why since elected, we have:

- ✓ Established **Pension Income Splitting** for over 800,000 couples
- ✓ Raised the **Age Credit** amount by \$2000
- ✓ Removed 85,000 pensioners from the federal tax rolls
- ✓ Increased the **Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)** exemption from \$500 to \$3500
- ✓ Doubled the **Pension Income Credit**, which has benefited 2.7 million pensioners
- ✓ Taken a strong stand against elder abuse, raising awareness to recognize the signs of elder abuse and deal with those who abuse seniors physically, financially, and mentally
- ✓ Increased the age limit from 69 to 71 for converting to a **Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)** to strengthen incentives for older Canadians to work and save
- ✓ Created a dedicated Minister of State for Seniors and a Seniors Advisory Council.

Building Strong Canadian Families

Stephen Harper's Government supports working families and children to improve the quality of life of all Canadians.

Supporting Hard-Working Families

- ✓ Our Government is supporting families through the **Universal Child Care Benefit** by providing all parents with \$100 per month/\$1,200 per year for each child under six and provides a **Child Tax Credit** for each child under 18.
- ✓ We have enhanced the **National Child Benefit** and the **Canada Child Tax Benefit** to enable low-income families to earn more and still be able to receive the benefits.
- ✓ We increased the amount families in the two lowest personal income tax brackets can earn before paying income taxes.
- ✓ We are increasing the annual **Canada Education Savings Grant** amount, and expanding RESP access to part-time and apprenticeship students.
- ✓ Providing 2.6 million self-employed Canadians with access to EI special benefits on a voluntary basis.
- ✓ We improved the **Work-Sharing program** which has helped protect over 260,000 Canadian jobs since February 2009.
- ✓ We introduced the **Working Income Tax Benefit** which helped close to one million Canadians in its first year.
- ✓ We capped EI premiums for 2011, meaning employers are able to maintain and create jobs.
- ✓ Introduced the **Wage Earner Protection Program**, which guarantees payment of unpaid salary up to the equivalent of four weeks of insurable Employment Insurance (EI) earnings in the event that their employer goes bankrupt.

Enhancing Healthcare

- ✓ Committed \$25.4 billion to support the health care system in 2010-11 with an annual increase of 6%
- ✓ Provided funding to help provide medical services in remote and rural communities across Canada
- ✓ Legislated tougher federal government regulation of products through the *Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan*
- ✓ Launched a landmark cancer study entitled *The Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project*
- ✓ Developed initiatives to improve knowledge on Autism
- ✓ Compensated Hepatitis-C victims previously excluded
- ✓ Acted to ban dangerous chemicals from baby bottles
- ✓ Established a *Patient Wait Times Guarantee* for cataract surgery in Ontario and invested in a *Patient Wait Times Guarantee* pilot project for children in need of surgery
- ✓ Ensured that "Made in Canada" means made in Canada
- ✓ Provided \$300 million for a vaccine program to protect women and girls against cervical cancer
- ✓ Provided \$110 million for the Mental Health Commission
- ✓ Committed \$33 million for access to Natural Health Products

Investing in Research & Development

The Harper Government is committed to building a competitive advantage for Canada based on excellence in science and technology. Our Government understands that investing in science and technology is crucial for developing highly-skilled people and improving the long-term competitiveness of Canada's economy.

- ✓ The government invested over \$11.7 billion in R&D in the year 2010-11
- ✓ Launched Canada's **science and technology strategy**, mobilizing Science and Technology to Canada's Advantage, which is helping to create an entrepreneurial advantage, a knowledge advantage and a skills advantage.
- ✓ Invested significant funding in research and development through the granting councils and other organizations.
- ✓ Launched the **Canada Excellence Research Chairs Program** to attract and retain the world's top researchers.
- ✓ Launched the **Research and Development Review Panel** in 2010, which will conduct a comprehensive review of all existing federal support for business research and development to look for ways to better support innovation.

Stephen Harper's Government recognizes that to create better jobs for all Canadians we must invest in the talented, skilled and creative people whose research and innovative ideas will lead to those better jobs.

Tackling Crime & Toughening Our Laws

Our Government is committed to making our streets and communities safer by getting tough on crime.

Over the past five years we have passed 18 laws (12 Justice, 6 Public Safety) that have toughened the rules and made our streets and communities safer. As a result of our legislation, there are tougher laws to crack down on:

- Gun and gang crime
- Violent and repeat offenders
- Identity theft
- Sex offenders
- Street racing, impaired driving and car thieves
- Eliminated the outrageous practices of routinely giving convicted criminals two-for-one credit for time served prior to trial and Old Age Security payments to prisoners.

There are currently 22 bills before Parliament to crack down on crime. We will continue our efforts to pass this legislation to toughen our laws to make our communities safer while at the same time, enhancing our efforts to rehabilitate offenders.

Promoting Trade & Opening New Markets

Stephen Harper's Government is committed to opening new markets for Canadian goods and services and avoiding protectionism. We know that the free flow of goods and services creates jobs and economic growth for all Canadians.

Since 2006, our Government has made promoting trade and opening markets for Canadian businesses a priority. We have signed free trade agreements with eight countries and have launched negotiations with over forty-five countries.

The Prime Minister himself has launched negotiations towards trade agreements with two of the leading economies in the world, the European Union and India. We have signed numerous bilateral air, foreign investment, and science and technology agreements with countries around the world.

When the global financial crisis hit, Canada led the charge worldwide calling on countries to avoid the mistakes of the Great Depression and reject the urge towards protectionism.

We will continue to promote trade, avoid protectionism and open markets for Canadian businesses because we know it is the key to long-term growth and prosperity for Canada.

Out&About

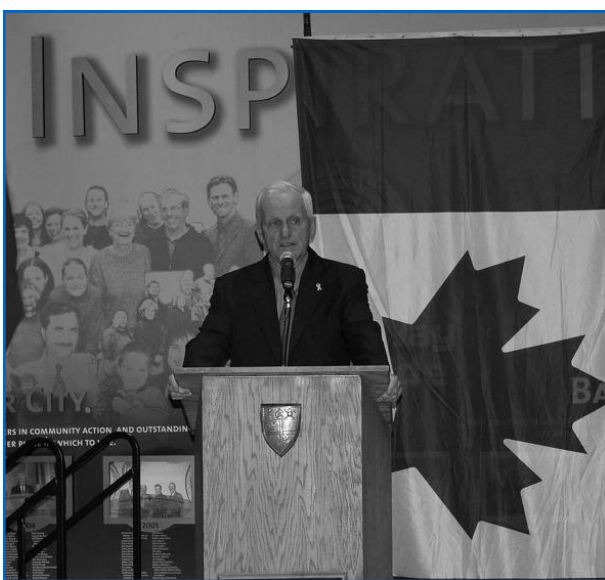


Prime Minister Harper and Minister of Finance Flaherty asked government Ministers to hold economic consultations across the country. Pictured above, MP Dick Harris and MP Gordon O'Connor host a roundtable in Prince George, BC.



MP Gordon O'Connor, Mayor Jim Watson, Councillor Allan Hubley, and MPP Norm Sterling attended the Kanata Santa Claus Parade

Photo Courtesy of Councillor Allan Hubley



MP O'Connor spoke to the Ottawa Chinese community for their annual Autumn Moon Festival at Ottawa City Hall

Photo Courtesy of Lily Bong



Gordon attended an event in Carp with a number of constituents to show his support for the Private Member's Bill to abolish the wasteful, ineffective long-gun registry

Strengthening Canada's Immigration System

Stephen Harper's Government appreciates that we are a country of immigrants whose identities are bound up in the stories of ancestors from hundreds of lands. The success of Canada's economy depends on a skilled and educated workforce. Our objective is clear: we must combine the best of our intellectual and natural resources to create jobs, growth and opportunity.

We have introduced a number of measures to help newcomers to Canada and to better protect Canada's immigration system such as:

- ✓ Cut the Right of Landing Fee for new immigrants in half, saving a family of four more than \$2,000.
- ✓ Reformed our refugee system, so that real refugees fleeing persecution get protection faster, while bogus asylum seekers are deported before they become a burden on taxpayers.
- ✓ Brought in a new citizenship study guide, *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship*, that includes more meaningful content than its predecessor.
- ✓ Stood tall against racism by boycotting the irredeemably anti-Semitic Durban 2 and Durban 3 conferences.
- ✓ Increased protection for caregivers and nannies
- ✓ Cracked down on crooked immigration consultants who victimize those who dream of immigrating to Canada.
- ✓ Introduced tough measures to prevent human smugglers from abusing our immigration system.
- ✓ Responded quickly to humanitarian and natural disasters in Haiti, the Philippines, and elsewhere with generous special measures programs to reunite families quickly.

Delivering Results on the Environment

The Harper Government's first priority is the economy. We understand that as a nation rich in natural resources, tens of thousands of Canadian jobs depend on our thriving energy sector. That said, we also understand that we are stewards of Canada's rich natural history and that a healthy environment and a strong economy go hand in hand.

That is why we have delivered landmark investments to boost Canada's clean energy sector, strengthen Canada's record on conservation and deliver good Canadian jobs for today and in the future. The Harper Government is taking action to deliver results on energy and the environment by:

- Boosting Clean Energy investments to secure Canada's position as the world's foremost clean energy superpower.
- Combating greenhouse gas emissions, and aligning our target of 17 per cent below 2005 levels by 2020, a target which is aligned with the Obama Administration.
- Protecting and conserving Canada's natural heritage and treasures, including preserving record amounts of precious parkland for future generations to enjoy.
- We have tabled legislation to enhance the prohibition against bulk water removals.

The Harper Government has introduced regulations and taken action to clean our water, our soil, and our air.