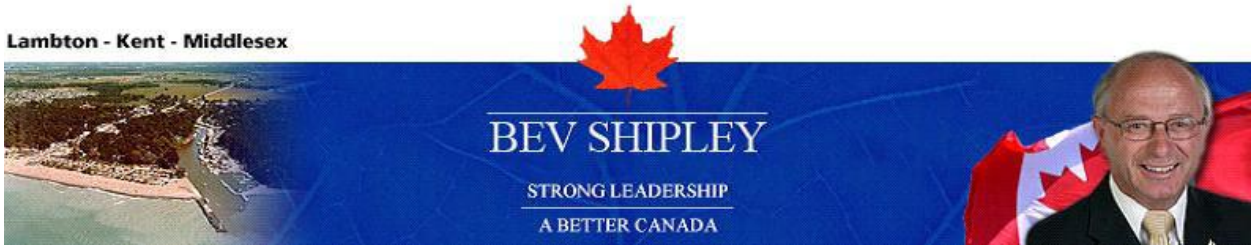

Across the country this Remembrance Day, Canadians bowed their heads in quiet reflection, remembering those who have served our country in the past, and those who still serve. The sacrifices of our brave men and women in uniform will never be forgotten and our government is taking steps to ensure these individuals receive the care and respect they deserve.

Remembrance Ceremonies Across Lambton-Kent-Middlesex

My wife Barb and I have been very busy over the past week, attending many Remembrance ceremonies and banquets. I attended the Arkona Lioness ceremony on Saturday. I was in Granton, Ilderton and Strathroy for Remembrance ceremonies Sunday, while Barb attended Florence, Melbourne and Newbury. We also attended banquets in Strathroy and Newbury last weekend and have another coming up today in Mount Brydges. On Wednesday, I was at the Remembrance service at Wallaceburg District Secondary School. Remembrance Day itself will be very busy as well. I'll be attending services in Thamesville and Poplar Hill and Barb will be in Lucan. Thank you very much to all of the individuals who have represented me at other Remembrance Day services across Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

Support for our Veterans

I feel it is very important at this time to clear up an issue that's recently been reported in the media. Liberal MP Sean Casey is circulating an online petition that claims, falsely, that benefits for Canada's veterans are in jeopardy. This is not true. While our government is looking for efficiencies in all departments, including Veteran's Affairs, all of the benefits enjoyed by veterans will be maintained, including additional benefits introduced by our government last month. Changes at the department of Veterans Affairs are focused on improving efficiency, cutting unnecessary red-tape and **improving** service to veterans. You can find out more about the enhancements to the New Veterans Charter at www.veterans.gc.ca

Bill C-428

This Bill continues to cause frustration for constituents on a daily basis. I'd like to clear up some confusion. Bill C-428 was a Private Member's Bill introduced twice by the Liberal Party, which our party and I opposed. The Bill sought to eliminate the 10-year residency requirement for newcomers to Canada to qualify for Old Age Security benefits. Instead, they'd be entitled to them after only 3 years. With the dissolution of Parliament in March 2011, C-428 was no longer a viable Bill. I continue to oppose a similar new Private Member's Bill (M-141) introduced in June 2011 by Libby Davies with the NDP.

I'd also like to point out there is inaccurate information circulating on the internet tied in to Bill C-428. It suggests the monthly entitlement for single refugees under the Refugee Assistance Program is $1890. In fact, financial assistance under the RAP is provided to a limited number of government-assisted refugees who entered Canada as permanent residents. The RAP allowance mirrors provincial social assistance rates (approximately $580). Refugees who qualify under the RAP are allowed a one-time "start up" amount of $1890 that includes money for basic furniture and household items, in addition to funds for the first month's rent, food and incidentals.

New Auditor General

Last week, Prime Minister Stephen Harper welcomed the appointment of Canada's new Auditor General, Michael Ferguson. The appointment has been approved by the Senate and the House of Commons and is effective on November 28. The Office of the Auditor General is responsible for auditing federal government departments and agencies, most Crown corporations, and many other federal organizations, and reports publicly to Parliament on matters that the Auditor General believes should be brought to its attention.

Helping Canadians with Diabetes

Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq has announced new support to help Canadians with diabetes. The new funding will address screening, early detection and management of diabetes, as well as the prevention of secondary complications from the disease, including hypertension, heart disease and stroke. The funding will support 37 new community-based projects across the country.

Until next time.

Bev Shipley, M.P.

Lambton-Kent-Middlesex