

Lambton - Kent - Middlesex



November 25, 2011

There's a chill in the air, Santa Claus parades have begun across the riding, and we're anxious to get some very important bills passed before the House of Commons adjourns for Christmas. One of the top items on my agenda in these final weeks is the Safe Streets and Communities Act which focuses on strengthening legislation for sexual child predators, illegal drug traffickers, organized crime and violent criminals. The Abolition of the Long Gun Registry is also working its way through the House of Commons and Senate. The opposition parties are using stall tactics to delay its passing but it will pass in the spring and the registration will be gone. I will be sure to keep you up to date.

Because of the Federal election in May 2011, there are still parts of our budget to get passed so it can be implemented. There have been many hours of debate but getting this part of the budget finalized is critical for jobs and the economy including: extending the work share agreement by up to 16 weeks so companies can avoid layoffs; enhancing the Wage Earner Protection Plan to cover more workers when a company goes bankrupt or into receivership and supporting young entrepreneurs to get started in business through Canadian Youth Business Foundations. These are only a few segments that need to be implemented.

2012 Budget Input

Have **your say**. Budget 2012 is just a few months away and I'm looking for your input. In the coming weeks, I'll be writing to you and asking some questions. They focus on what you think our government can do to promote job creation, spur economic growth, return to balanced budgets and cut down on wasteful government spending. The survey should only take a couple of minutes and I truly appreciate your feedback.

Improving Retirement Security for Canadians

Our Government is introducing changes to Canada's Pension landscape that will make saving for retirement easier for millions of Canadians. Incredibly, over 60% of Canadians do not have a workplace pension plan. That is why, last week, we introduced legislation implementing **Pooled Registered Pension Plans (PRPPs)**. PRPPs will offer millions of Canadians in particular those who own small businesses or are self employed, a new, low-cost and accessible pension option to help meet their retirement goals. For more information about PRPPs, head to www.fin.gc.ca

Sand Plains Funds Still Available

Access to **capital** funding through the Sand Plains Community Development Fund is still available. Funding support, available in the Sand Plains Region which includes the Counties of Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Norfolk and Brant, is targeted at projects that foster entrepreneurship. Loans of up to \$250,000 are available for small business start-ups and expansions in priority sectors including tourism, manufacturing, agribusiness and food, green products, renewable energy and food processing. Eligible applicants can include community organizations, not-for-profit organizations, co-operatives, social service institutions, business organizations, municipalities and private enterprise. Applications are currently being accepted but funding for this program ends March 31st, 2012. For more information, head to www.sandplains.ca

Extraordinary Opportunities in Ottawa:

House of Commons Page Program

This is a wonderful program that allows bilingual students who are interested in Canada's Parliament to become part of Canadian history. Students who are beginning their studies at a University in the National Capital Region in the fall of 2012 are eligible to apply. Pages assist Members of Parliament and other House of Commons staff with their daily functions in conjunction with their academic studies. Please visit www.parl.gc.ca/hocpage for additional information and requirements for the application process. Applications can be completed online or in print and must be postmarked no later than December 22, 2011.

The Guide Program

The Library of Parliament has begun its recruitment process for Parliamentary Guides, searching for bilingual, full-time university students from across the country to participate in an unforgettable program next summer. From Victoria Day to Labour Day, the Parliamentary Guides welcome and provide tours to hundreds of thousands of visitors, helping them to understand and appreciate the history and functions of our country's national legislature. Information regarding the position is available at www.parl.gc.ca/guides. The deadline to apply this year is January 13, 2012.

Writing to Santa!

If your children or grandchildren would like to write to Santa Claus -and get a response!- Canada Post can help. Over 10-thousand postal elves help out in Santa's post office. Last year they answered over a million letters in 30 different languages, including Braille.

Sent letters for Santa to:

**SANTA CLAUS
NORTH POLE H0H 0H0
CANADA**

(don't forget your **return address**)

Also, if you're wondering about mailing your Christmas cards and packages, you can find out more about suggested mailing dates so your items make it to their destinations on time at canadapost.ca/Holiday or by calling your local postal outlet.

Until next time.



Bev Shipley, M.P.
Lambton-Kent-Middlesex