



Ottawa Report

October 1, 2011

The Honourable Lynne Yelich, Privy Council

Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)

Member of Parliament for Blackstrap

Dear friends,

The fall session of the 41st Parliament is now underway and I am looking forward to debates in the House of Commons on several bills such as the long gun registry, Senate Reform, the Canadian Wheat Board, Human Smugglers, and the Safe Streets and Communities legislation to name a few.

Of course, our Government's top priority remains completing the economic recovery. With the global economy still fragile, Canadians gave us a strong mandate to implement our low-tax plan to create jobs and economic growth – a plan that is working.

While our Government has created nearly 600,000 net new jobs since July 2009, and we are the only G-7 country that has regained more than all of the output and the jobs lost during the downturn, we are not immune to the volatile global economic environment, largely due to a problem of confidence in efforts of governments to reduce their deficits.

Our government will continue to stay focused on what matters – creating jobs and economic growth.

Please feel free to contact my office if I can be of any assistance on federal matters.

Best wishes

The Honourable Lynne Yelich, PC
Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification
Member of Parliament for Blackstrap

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Celebrating Canada's First National Seniors Day

Seniors play an important role in communities across Canada. They have shaped our country, raised a generation and fought for our rights and freedoms. Today they continue to share their knowledge, time and expertise.

That is why our Government created National Seniors Day—an official day to recognize the significant ways in which seniors have and continue to contribute to our communities. October 1, 2011 will mark Canada's first annual National Seniors Day.

We understand the importance of supporting seniors and seniors' issues, and we are working hard to ensure that our policies, programs and services are meeting—and will continue to meet—seniors' needs. We are proud of Canada's seniors. We value what they have done for our country, and they deserve our thanks. National Seniors Day is our time to join together as a nation to honour Canadian seniors.

To all the seniors who continue to help build this country, thank you.

To learn more about Government Initiatives for seniors, visit www.seniors.gc.ca or call 1-800 O-Canada.

Legislation Before the House

Bill C-4 - *Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act*
Introduced on June 16, 2011, Bill C-4 is presently being debated in the House.

Our government is taking action to prevent the abuse of our generous immigration system by criminals that traffic in human beings. Human smuggling is a despicable crime: taking advantage of vulnerable people and putting lives at risk. This legislation will strengthen Canada's ability to prosecute human smugglers, deter those who would seek to jump the queue, and maintain the integrity and fairness of our immigration system. Our government will continue to welcome legitimate refugees who respect our laws and play by the rules, while targeting criminals that take advantage of our generous system.

Bill C-7 - *Senate Reform Act* - Introduced and first reading on June 21, 2011.

Our Government received a strong mandate to reform the Senate and we are taking action to make the Senate more democratic, accountable and representative of Canadians. This legislation will encourage provinces to establish a democratic process that will give Canadians a say in who represents them in the Senate. C-7 will also limit all Senate appointments made after 2008 to one, nine-year, non-renewable term ensuring a steady renewal in the Senate.

Bill C-10 - *Safe Streets and Communities Act* - On September 28th, 2011, C-10 passed 2nd reading and was referred to Committee for debate.

We will continue to fight crime and protect Canadians so that our communities are safe places for people to live, raise their families and do business.

The *Safe Streets and Communities Act* re-introduces the following reforms which were debated by Parliament during the previous session but never became law:

- **The Protecting Children from Sexual Predators Act** (former Bill C-54) which proposes increased penalties for sexual offences against children as well as creates two new offences aimed at conduct that could facilitate or enable the commission of a sexual offence against a child;
- **The Penalties for Organized Drug Crime Act** (former Bill S-10) which would target organized crime by imposing tougher sentences for the production and possession of illicit drugs for the purposes of trafficking;
- **Sébastien's Law (Protecting the Public from Violent Young Offenders)** (former Bill C-4) which would ensure that violent and repeat young offenders are held accountable for their actions and that the protection of society is a paramount consideration in the treatment of young offenders by the justice system;
- **The Ending House Arrest for Property and Other Serious Crimes by Serious and Violent Offenders Act** (former Bill C-16) which would eliminate the use of conditional sentences or house arrest, for serious and violent crimes;
- **The Increasing Offender Accountability Act** (former Bill C-39) which would enshrine a victims' right to participate in parole hearings and address inmate accountability, responsibility and management under the Corrections and Conditional Release Act;
- **The Eliminating Pardons for Serious Crimes Act** (former Bill C-23B) which would extend the ineligibility periods for applications for a record suspension (currently called a "pardon") from three to five years for summary conviction offences and from five to ten years for indictable offences;
- **The Keeping Canadians Safe (International Transfer of Offenders) Act** (former Bill C-5) which would add additional criteria that the Minister of Public Safety could consider when deciding whether or not to allow the transfer of a Canadian offender back to Canada to serve their sentence;
- **The Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and related amendments to the State Immunity Act** (former Bill S-7) which would allow victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism, including listed foreign states, for loss or damage that occurred as a result of an act of terrorism committed anywhere in the world; and
- **The Preventing the Trafficking, Abuse and Exploitation of Vulnerable Immigrants Act** (former Bill C-56) which would authorize immigration officers to refuse work permits to vulnerable foreign nationals when it is determined that they are at risk of humiliating or degrading treatment, including sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

DID YOU KNOW ...

... that Canada has an Agriculture Museum located in the heart of Ottawa?

In fact, Ottawa is the only capital in the world that has a working farm at its heart. Canada's unique agricultural heritage is featured at the Canada Agriculture Museum, where you can explore the sights and sounds of typical farm life. If you can't make it to the museum try a visit to their website for a virtual tour and fun activities.



To visit their website go to:

www.agriculture.technomuses.ca/english/indexhpnaqr.cfm



Protecting Our National Flag

On September 27th, Conservative MP John Carmichael introduced a private member's bill (C-288) that will enshrine the right of all Canadians to fly the Canadian flag.

Our flag is one of the most powerful symbols of our identity. It belongs to each and every one of us and remains the most visible reminder of what it means to be Canadian.

This proposed legislation seeks to protect the rights of Canadians to fly our country's flag, the defining symbol of our Canadian identity.

Canadians have always assumed this right. This proposed legislation seeks to legally protect that right.

We encourage Canadians across the country to display the national flag not just on Canada Day, but every day of the year.

Our Government will examine this legislation with the intention to support Canadians' ability to show their pride and display their patriotism.