



**HERE FOR  
CANADA**

 **Conservative**

**Stephen Harper's  
Low-Tax Plan for Jobs  
and Economic Growth**

## MESSAGE FROM STEPHEN HARPER

In this election, Canadians will choose between principled leadership and opportunism; between a stable government and a reckless coalition; between a low-tax plan for jobs and growth and a high-tax agenda that will stall our recovery, kill jobs, and set you and your family back. It's a clear choice, a real choice – and it couldn't be more important.

Our Conservative Government has been consistent – we're Here for Canada. We're taking action on the priorities of Canadians who work hard and play by the rules, and we're steering our country through the worst global economic recession since the 1930s.

We're creating jobs now, and building a bright future for our children and grandchildren. We're supporting our men and women in uniform by providing the equipment they need to do their jobs. We're defending our national sovereignty, and standing up for our history and traditions. We're putting the rights of victims and law-abiding citizens ahead of the rights of criminals. And we're taking action on issues of concern unique to each region of the country.

Canada is emerging from the global recession as one of the world's top-performing advanced economies; throughout the crisis of the past two years, the world has looked to Canada as a model and inspiration. Through our Economic Action Plan we're making the necessary investments to protect Canadians and to create jobs now, while laying a strong foundation for long-term economic growth.

Our low-tax plan is helping businesses create jobs in our communities. And we're reducing taxes on hard-working Canadian families, because we understand that household budgets are tight.

But there is more to be done. Now is not the time for instability, or for reckless, opportunistic experiments. The global economy remains fragile; and Canadians remain concerned about their jobs and their children's future. Our Government has a plan to meet these challenges – a plan that is working – and we need to stay the course.

Immediately prior to this election, on March 22<sup>ND</sup> we presented to Canadians our 2011 Budget, the Next Phase of Canada's Economic Action Plan. Our low-tax plan for jobs and growth included practical measures to complete our recovery and strengthen the financial security of Canadian workers, seniors, and families.

Unfortunately Michael Ignatieff and his Coalition partners, the NDP and the Bloc Québécois, chose to reject our Budget and force an unnecessary and opportunistic election. If re-elected, our Conservative Government will re-introduce and implement the Next Phase of Canada's Economic Action Plan.



**HERE FOR  
CANADA**

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**MESSAGE FROM STEPHEN HARPER**

We will provide the steady hand needed to keep protecting and creating jobs and to complete our recovery from the global recession. We will eliminate the deficit and return to balanced budgets, without cutting transfer payments to individuals or to the provinces. And we will take the next steps to secure our borders and keep our cities and communities safe. We will focus on five priorities:

- **create jobs**, through training, trade, and low taxes;
- **support families**, through our Family Tax Cut, and more support for seniors and caregivers;
- **eliminate the deficit** by 2014-15, by controlling spending and cutting waste;
- **make our streets safe**, through new laws to protect children and the elderly; and
- **stand on guard for Canada**, by cracking down on human smuggling and strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces.

Canadians face a clear choice in this election: between, on one hand, the opportunistic and reckless Michael Ignatieff-led Coalition, with its high-tax agenda that would stall our recovery, kill jobs, and set hardworking families back; and, on the other hand, principled leadership and stable, national government with our low-tax plan for jobs and growth.

Our Conservative Government is Here for Canada – a Canada strong and free, a country of opportunity for all, proud of its history and confident of its future. We ask you to support and join us in taking the next steps forward in building this great country, for our children and grandchildren.



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**MESSAGE FROM STEPHEN HARPER**

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**HERE FOR  
CANADA**



**HERE FOR  
JOBS AND GROWTH**

# HERE FOR JOBS AND GROWTH

## OUR GOAL

Since we were first elected in 2006, Stephen Harper's Government has been implementing a low-tax plan for **jobs and growth**.

Our goals are to protect and create jobs, improve the **financial security** of Canadians, and ensure a future of **hope and opportunity** for our children and grandchildren.

## OUR RECORD

Stephen Harper's Government has **reduced the tax burden on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians**. Among many other things, we:

- reduced the federal income tax rate for businesses of all sizes;
- increased the amount of income small businesses can claim under the small business income tax rate; and
- eliminated the federal capital tax and the corporate surtax, to encourage businesses to invest, expand, and hire more workers.

As a result, among major advanced economies Canada now has the lowest overall tax rate on new business investment (previously we had one of the highest); and by 2012, we will have the lowest statutory corporate income tax rate.

Together these changes are **providing a significant advantage for Canada in the global economy, supporting jobs and opportunity right here at home, now and for the long term**. We are helping Canadian businesses to invest and innovate, to grow and create new jobs.

In response to the global recession, we have taken **strong action to protect and create jobs**, and to **help those who have lost their jobs to find good new positions**. We:

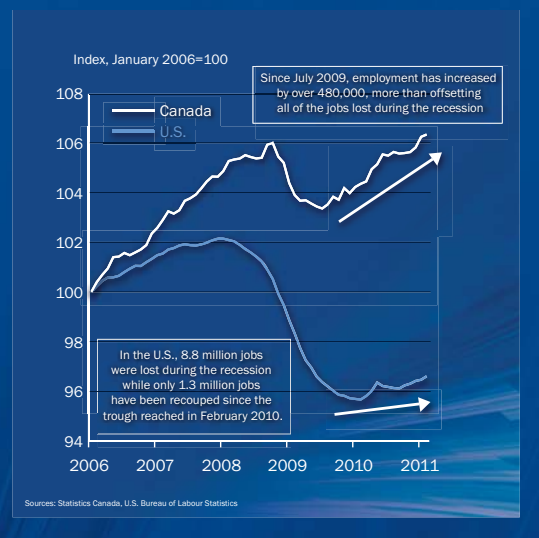
- helped keep Canadians working, by enhancing the Work-Sharing program – over the last two years, almost 280,000 Canadian jobs were protected as a result;
- made major investments in skills upgrading and new opportunities for older workers, apprentices, and youth;
- helped create new jobs through the largest federal investment in infrastructure in more than 60 years, and put Canadians to work on more than 28,500 projects from coast to coast to coast; and
- encouraged businesses to keep hiring, by freezing Employment Insurance premiums for two years.

**Since July 2009, the Canadian economy has created more than 480,000 new jobs** – more than were lost during the recession. Approximately 75 percent of these are full-time jobs. <sup>1</sup>

The unemployment rate in Canada is now a full percentage point lower than in the U.S., the largest gap in Canada's favour in nearly three decades. <sup>2</sup>

But we remain concerned about the number of Canadians looking for work. We need to keep protecting and creating jobs now, and

## 1 JOBS CREATED SINCE JULY 2009



## 2 Job creation and unemployment rate figures current as of April 1, 2011.

laying the foundation for long-term prosperity and economic growth.

## OUR PLAN

Stephen Harper's Government has a **low-tax plan for jobs and growth** – a plan that is working.

A re-elected Stephen Harper Government **will not raise taxes on Canadian consumers and families, and we will not raise the tax rate on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians.**<sup>3</sup>

We will **stay the course** with our low-tax plan for jobs and growth. We will **keep helping create jobs**, through:

- **training** – providing skills training for Canadians who are out of work;
- **trade** – expanding opportunities for Canadian businesses in the world's fastest-growing markets; and
- **low taxes** – keeping taxes low, to allow businesses to invest, expand, and hire more workers.

Here is what a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will do to achieve these goals.

### HIRING CREDIT FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Canada's unemployment rate is now a full percentage point lower than in the U.S., the largest gap in Canada's favour in nearly three decades.<sup>4</sup>

But we remain concerned about the number of Canadians looking for work. The global recovery remains fragile, and many businesses are reluctant to invest and to hire.

Small businesses are the engine of job creation in Canada. To encourage them to hire new employees, we will provide a Hiring Credit for Small Business – **a one-year EI break for some 525,000 Canadian small businesses.**<sup>5</sup>

### KEEPING TAXES LOW TO CREATE JOBS

Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to encourage long-term job creation and economic growth. As a result of our tax-relief measures to date:

- Canada now has the lowest overall tax rate on new business investment among major advanced economies;
- we are well on our way to making Canada the best place in the world in which to do business – and that means more good new jobs for Canadians; and
- by 2012 Canada's statutory corporate income tax rate will be the lowest in the G-7 – a significant advantage for Canada in the global economy, supporting jobs and opportunity right here at home for our children and grandchildren.<sup>6</sup>

To preserve this advantage for Canada, **a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will not raise the tax rate on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians.**

### 3 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION'S HIGH-TAX AGENDA

In stark contrast to Stephen Harper's low-tax plan for jobs and growth, the Ignatieff-led Coalition with the NDP and Bloc Québécois has a high-tax agenda that would stall our recovery, kill jobs, and set hard-working families back.

#### MICHAEL IGNATIEFF HAS:

- refused to rule out raising the GST,
- supported a tax on iPods;
- will raise EI premiums by 35 percent – more than \$ 4 billion per year – to pay for the Coalition's "45-day work year"; and
- has vowed to impose a \$6-billion tax hike on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians.

Experts estimate Michael Ignatieff's \$6-billion tax hike alone would kill 200,000 Canadian jobs. His \$4-billion EI premium increase will kill thousands more, and prevent small businesses, the engine of our economy, from creating new jobs.

But the Ignatieff-led Coalition would impose these burdens regardless, to implement reckless policies that failed Canada decades ago, raising taxes to pay for government spending we can't afford.

<sup>4</sup> Current as of April 1, 2011.

### 5 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION

with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help create jobs for Canadians**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

### 6 KEEPING TAXES LOW TO CREATE JOBS

As a result of our tax-relief measures to date, by 2012 Canada's statutory corporate income tax rate will be the lowest in the G-7 – a significant advantage for Canada in the global economy, supporting jobs and opportunity right here at home for our children and grandchildren.

Stephen Harper's government has built this advantage for Canada in collaboration with the provinces – including Liberal, NDP, and Conservative provincial governments. This achievement is based on a strong consensus: that reducing taxes on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians is necessary for our long-term prosperity and economic growth.



## PROTECTING JOBS AND HELPING OLDER WORKERS

When the global recession hit, Stephen Harper's Government took strong action to:

- protect and create jobs; and
- provide new skills-training opportunities to help Canadians who lost their jobs to find good new employment.

But workers in some communities and industries remain concerned about the risk of layoffs. And we remain concerned about the number of Canadians who are out of work – especially older workers in transition who may need special help to upgrade their skills and re-enter the workforce.

To address these concerns, we will:

- continue helping businesses to retain employees and to keep Canadians working, by **enhancing the Work-Sharing program** once again, and <sup>7</sup>
- continue helping workers in transition, by **extending the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers** – the program has proved successful in helping participants find new jobs, and most important, in helping older workers regain the dignity of employment and continue providing for themselves and their families.

Also, to respect the right of older workers to decide the course of their careers, we will **prohibit federally-regulated employers from setting a mandatory retirement age.** <sup>8</sup>

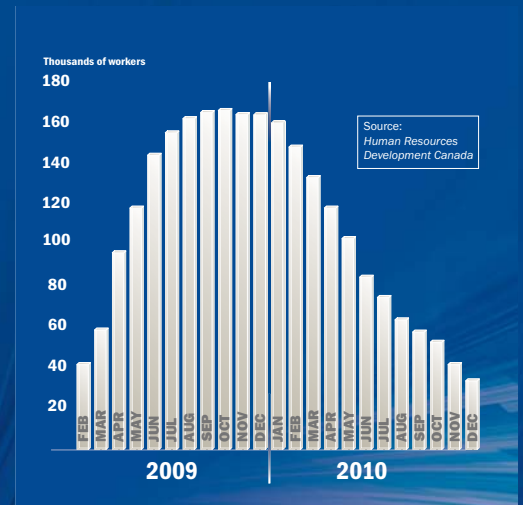
### SKILLS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

While the previous Liberal government slashed transfer payments for higher education, Stephen Harper's Government has increased transfer payments substantially.

We have also taken action to provide greater support for Canadian students. Among other things, we:

- established the Canada Student Grants Program for low- and middle-income students, part-time students, students with dependents, and students with permanent disabilities;
- made scholarships and bursaries tax-free, introduced a tax credit for textbooks, and increased investments in the Canada Graduate Scholarships Program;
- introduced greater flexibility in the repayment of student loans;
- established the Tradesperson's Tool Deduction and the Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit;
- provided a number of enhancements to Registered Education Savings Plans; and
- increased support for the Canada Summer Jobs Program.

## 7 PROTECTING JOBS DURING THE GLOBAL RECESSION: NUMBER OF JOBS PROTECTED EACH MONTH THROUGH WORK-SHARING



**8 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to protect jobs and help older workers**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

Canadian students are the future leaders of our country. Stephen Harper's Government will take further action to support them in their education. We will:

- **extend support for the Canada Youth Business Foundation**, which provides loans and mentoring to young entrepreneurs;
- **enhance the Canada Student Loans Program for part-time students**, to respond to increased demand for assistance in career transition through post-secondary education;
- **double the work exemption for Canada Student Loans**, to allow students to benefit more from part-time employment;
- **establish 30 Industrial Research Chairs at colleges and polytechnics**, to provide new opportunities for college students to interact with cutting-edge researchers; and
- **support research partnerships between college and university researchers and students**, through Canada's research granting councils. <sup>9</sup>

As Quebec does not participate in the Canada Student Loan Program, a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will work closely with the Government of Quebec to implement these measures in a manner that respects its jurisdiction.

#### **FOREIGN CREDENTIALS LOANS FOR NEW CANADIANS**

Canada is fortunate to attract hard-working immigrants from around the world, eager to earn a better life for their families and to contribute to Canadian society.

But obstacles in the recognition of foreign credentials can make it hard for them to find a suitable job. And for those who need to upgrade their skills for use in Canada, it's difficult to qualify for existing programs or private loans.

Stephen Harper's Government has invested new funds to implement a common approach to foreign credentials recognition across Canada, and established the Foreign Credentials Referral Office.

But more is needed. To build on our actions so far, we will **provide loans for recent immigrants to help pay for skills training and accreditation**. <sup>10</sup>

This new measure will make it easier for new Canadians to find jobs that take full advantage of their experience and expertise, and help them to contribute fully to the growth of the Canadian economy. <sup>11</sup>

#### **CANADA-EUROPE FREE TRADE**

Canada is one of the world's great trading nations. One in three Canadian jobs is directly or indirectly dependent on exports.

The North American Free Trade Agreement has benefitted Canada enormously, but the continuing economic challenges in the U.S. show the need to keep expanding our access to foreign markets.

To create more jobs and opportunities for Canadians, Stephen Harper's Government has:

<sup>9</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to help Canadian students**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

<sup>10</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help new Canadians find good jobs**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

#### <sup>11</sup> **WELCOMING NEW CANADIANS**

Stephen Harper's Government has welcomed the highest levels of immigration to Canada in more than 50 years, to help keep our economy strong. We are:

- attracting more skilled economic immigrants better matched to our labour-market needs; and
- welcoming more government- and privately-sponsored refugees.

To help new Canadians, among other things we have:

- cut the Right of Landing Fee for new immigrants in half, saving a family of four more than \$2,000;
- passed a law to crack down on crooked immigration consultants who exploit prospective immigrants and undermine the integrity of our immigration system;
- increased support for new immigrants to get settled in Canada;
- invested new funds and collaborated with the provinces and territories to implement a common approach to foreign credentials recognition across Canada; and
- established the Foreign Credentials Referral Office, to provide integrated and authoritative information on foreign credentials for newcomers.

- signed new trade agreements with eight countries – Panama, Jordan, Colombia, Peru, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland – and we are in negotiations with many more; and
- made major steps forward in trade relations with China. <sup>12</sup>

We aim to build on this with an historic new trade agreement between Canada and the European Union, the world's largest single market. We will aim to **complete negotiations on a Canada-EU Free Trade Agreement by 2012.**

### CANADA-INDIA FREE TRADE

Canada is well positioned to benefit from increased trade with India – one of the world's fastest growing and largest economies, with one billion customers – building on the personal ties and business expertise of our large Indo-Canadian community.

Since taking office in 2006, Stephen Harper's Government has made it a priority to revitalize Canada's relationship with the great nation of India. For example, to help Canadian businesses gain greater access to this crucial, growing market, we have:

- opened three new trade offices in India;
- signed a Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement; and
- in 2010 Prime Minister Stephen Harper and India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh launched negotiations on a comprehensive economic partnership between Canada and India.

We will aim to **complete negotiations on a Canada-India Free Trade Agreement in 2013.**

These two Free Trade Agreements between Canada and the EU and Canada and India will give Canadian businesses greater access to markets totalling more than 1.7 billion people with a combined GDP of \$20 trillion, creating thousands of jobs for Canadians.

### CANADA-U.S. PERIMETER SECURITY AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

To protect and create jobs for Canadians, we must protect and strengthen our trade relationship with the United States.

Each country is the other's largest export market, and our two economies are highly integrated. One in five Canadian jobs is linked to trade with the U.S.; and the U.S. depends on Canada as its largest, most secure, most stable, and friendliest supplier of energy.

In addition to our economic partnership, in the post-9/11 world Canada and the United States face common security threats.

To protect our economy and our country, Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to make our borders more secure, while keeping them open to legitimate trade and travel. But more is needed.

For this reason, earlier this year Prime Minister Stephen Harper and President Barack Obama announced that **Canada and the United States will work together to find new ways to cut regulatory barriers to cross-border trade and travel to improve competitiveness, while excluding terrorists and criminals who pose a threat to both countries**, focusing on shared information, joint planning, and compatible procedures and inspection technology. <sup>13</sup>

## 12 EXPANDING CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE

In the five years since we were first elected to office, Stephen Harper's government has signed new trade agreements with eight countries, and we are in negotiations with many more.

In contrast, during its 13 years in power, the previous Liberal government signed only three new trade agreements.

Fortunately, under Stephen Harper's government, we are quickly making up for lost time, opening new markets for Canadian businesses and creating good new jobs for Canadian workers.

## 13 PERIMETER SECURITY AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

On February 4, 2011, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and President Barack Obama announced the Declaration on a Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness.

The Declaration outlines the development of a joint plan of action in four areas:

- addressing threats early;
- trade facilitation, economic growth, and jobs;
- integrated cross-border law enforcement; and
- critical infrastructure and cyber-security.

To begin realizing the goals of the Declaration, Prime Minister Harper and President Obama also announced two high-level bilateral groups:

- the Beyond the Border Working Group, to propose a joint plan of action and oversee its implementation; and
- the Regulatory Cooperation Council, to reduce red tape for businesses.

As sovereign countries, we will take action to advance our common interests. We will not replace or eliminate the border; but where possible we will streamline and decongest it.

The result will be greater security, continued economic growth, and more jobs for Canadians in the years to come.

### **STRATEGIC GATEWAYS AND TRADE CORRIDORS**

Stephen Harper's Government has worked hard to open new markets for Canadian businesses, to help create jobs and long-term economic growth.

At the same time, we are ensuring Canada is ready to make the most of these new opportunities, and to take advantage of our position in global supply chains, by investing in trade and transportation infrastructure. We are developing strategic gateways and trade corridors in Canada to provide the best links between North America and Asia, South America, Europe, and South Asia, and within the North American market itself.

Here are some examples of our actions so far in support of Canada's strategic gateways:

- twinning the Simon Fraser Bridge in Prince George, B.C.;
- twinning the Trans-Canada Highway through Banff;
- opening the Pitt River Bridge to traffic in B.C.'s Lower Mainland;
- investing in repairs to the Champlain Bridge and other key bridges and related infrastructure;
- supporting the expansion and renewal of Quebec City's Jean-Lesage International Airport;
- providing substantial support for the Windsor-Essex Parkway, the extension of Highway 401 in Windsor;
- working to advance the construction of a new international bridge in the Windsor-Detroit trade corridor — among other things, by extending financing to project components in Michigan;
- making possible the removal of tolls on the Saint John Harbour Bridge, and pledging support for the refurbishment of the Bridge;
- investing in runway improvements/extensions at Fredericton International Airport, Greater Moncton International Airport, and Halifax Stanfield International Airport; and
- investing in improvements to the Trans-Canada Highway on PEI, the expansion of the Charlottetown Airport terminal, and measures to enhance safety and improve traffic flow on the Confederation Bridge.

To build on our actions so far, we will:

- **complete the implementation of our Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative;**
- build on the Memorandum of Understanding to **develop an Ontario-Quebec Continental Gateway and Trade Corridor Strategy;** and

- **implement the Atlantic Gateway and Trade Corridor Strategy**, to promote and strengthen this crucial part of Canada's trade and transportation infrastructure.

### **CUT RED TAPE: A ONE-FOR-ONE RULE**

Small and medium-sized businesses are crucial to our economy – they employ the majority of Canadians and create more jobs than any other sector. But the more time and money they're forced to spend on government paperwork, the less time and money they have to create jobs in our communities.

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to cut red tape. We have:

- reduced the paperwork burden on small businesses by 20 percent; and
- launched the Red Tape Reduction Commission, made up of entrepreneurs and Members of Parliament, to identify additional measures to reduce bureaucratic obstacles to job creation.

Now we'll take the next steps. We will legislate a **One-for-One Rule – every time the government proposes a new regulation, it must eliminate an existing one**; and we will give the Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism responsibility to ensure departments follow the new rule.

The rule will be designed to maintain the highest standards in all areas, including health and safety, while promoting a culture shift in government, in favour of the needs of Canadian small businesses.

### **THE ONE-STOP SHOP FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND SMALL BUSINESSES**

Stephen Harper's Government has made it easier for entrepreneurs to start or expand their businesses, through our strong support for BizPaL – an online service providing streamlined, customized “one-stop shopping” for information on all permits and licences that may be required by the federal, provincial, and municipal governments.

Because of our support, BizPaL is now available in the majority of Canadian municipalities, making it easier for small businesses to get started and to grow, and to create jobs for Canadians.

We will **provide permanent support for BizPaL**, to help extend this useful tool to even more communities across the country. <sup>14</sup>

### **HELP MANUFACTURERS INVEST AND CREATE JOBS**

Since 2006, Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to protect and create manufacturing jobs in Canada.

In 2009 and 2010 we took action to eliminate tariffs on machinery and equipment and on production inputs. This will give Canada the status of being the first G20 country to become a tariff-free zone for manufacturers.

It will help our manufacturers to invest and innovate, especially small- and medium-sized manufacturers. It will help keep jobs in Canada, and create new jobs for Canadians for years to come.

In addition, before the global recession Stephen Harper's Government allowed accelerated Capital Cost Allowance treatment for

<sup>14</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help Canadian small businesses**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

investments in machinery and equipment, to encourage manufacturers to retool and stay competitive.

When the recession hit Canada, we extended the measure, to help businesses grow and create jobs. But the global recovery remains fragile, and many Canadian businesses are reluctant to invest and to hire.

We will help address this problem, by **extending the 50-percent straight-line accelerated Capital Cost Allowance rate** for manufacturing or processing machinery and equipment, by an additional two years. <sup>15</sup>

### **SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Stephen Harper's Government has provided strong support for research and development. Our goal is to promote innovation – and ultimately to help create good new jobs and foster long-term economic growth.

Among other things, we have:

- made substantial new investments in research and development through Canada's research granting councils;
- established the Canada Excellence Research Chairs Program, to attract and retain the world's top researchers;
- established the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships and the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships, to attract and retain the brightest minds from Canada and around the world;
- provided new funds to the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program, to expand its initiatives for small- and medium-sized enterprises;
- established the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative to support excellence in Canadian research and development in aerospace and defence; and
- supported leading-edge Canadian scientific endeavours through organizations such as the Canadian Space Agency, the Rick Hansen Foundation, and the Institute for Quantum Computing.

Building on our support for world-class research, a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will make new investments to:

- **establish 10 additional Canada Excellence Research Chairs;**
- **support the outstanding work of the Institut national d'optique** in the fields of optics and photonics;
- **invest in strengthening the Perimeter Institute's** position as a world-leading research centre for theoretical physics; and
- leverage funding to **support Brain Canada's** efforts to develop new diagnostics, treatments and cures for brain disorders, including Alzheimer's disease. <sup>16</sup>

In 2010 we launched an independent expert panel to conduct a comprehensive review of all federal business research and development initiatives and to recommend ways to ensure our investments deliver results.

**15 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help Canadian manufacturers**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**16 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to support research and development**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

We will **take action on the findings of the Research and Development Review Panel**, when it submits its report later this year.

### **DIGITAL ECONOMY STRATEGY**

In 2007 Stephen Harper's Government announced the Science and Technology Strategy.

The Strategy is designed to build on Canada's advantages in the global economy by encouraging private-sector investment in research and development and enrolment in university science and engineering programs – with the goal of creating good new jobs and a higher quality of life for Canadians.

In 2010 we consulted experts and businesspeople on positioning Canada to seize the opportunities presented by new information and communications technologies. Our purpose is to build on our actions so far in this area – for example:

- our plan to extend broadband coverage to 200,000 additional households in rural and remote regions; and
- our successful efforts to increase competition and choice and to lower costs for wireless consumers.

Later this spring, a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will **announce and begin implementing a Digital Economy Strategy**, focused on five priorities:

- building world-class digital infrastructure;
- encouraging businesses to adopt digital technologies;
- supporting digital skills development;
- fostering the growth of Canadian companies supplying digital technologies to global markets; and
- creating made-in-Canada content across all platforms, to bring Canada to the world.

To achieve these goals, among other specific actions we will:

- support collaborative projects between colleges and small- and medium-sized businesses to **accelerate the adoption of information and communications technologies**;
- **promote enrolment in post-secondary science, technology, engineering and mathematics** programs; and
- **build Canada's digital content** through additional support for the Canada Media Fund. <sup>17</sup>

A Stephen Harper-led majority Government will also reintroduce and **pass the Copyright Modernization Act**, a key pillar in our commitment to make Canada a leader in the global digital economy.

This balanced, commonsense legislation recognizes the practical priorities of teachers, students, artists, families, and technology companies, among others, while aligning Canada with international standards. It respects both the rights of creators and the interests of consumers.

It will ensure that Canada's copyright law will be responsive in a fast-changing digital world, while protecting and creating jobs, promoting innovation, and attracting investment to Canada.

Also, as part of the next wireless spectrum auction, **we will set aside**

### **17 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION**

with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to create good jobs in the digital economy**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

spectrum for emergency responders.

### **PROMOTE CANADA'S WORLD-CLASS AEROSPACE INDUSTRY**

Canada's export-oriented aerospace industry – the fifth largest in the world – employs more than 80,000 Canadians in well-paid, highly-skilled jobs in almost every region of the country. It is also one of the top investors in industrial research and development – high-tech innovation that attracts talent to Canada and creates more good new jobs for Canadians.

To support this world-class Canadian industry, Stephen Harper's Government has:

- established the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative, to leverage private-sector investment in research and development in this important and growing sector of our economy; and
- helped maintain and create jobs in the industry in every region of the country through our investments in re-equipping the Canadian Armed Forces.

But the vast majority of the Canadian aerospace industry's clients are civilian, and more than 80 percent of its revenues come from exports. In fact, the industry is Canada's leading exporter of advanced technology.

Through a consultative process involving the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada and their member firms, we will conduct a comprehensive review of policies and programs to **develop a federal policy framework to maximize the competitiveness of Canada's aerospace and space industry.**

We will also **ensure stable funding is provided for the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative.**

### **SUPPORT CANADIAN AEROSPACE JOBS**

Stephen Harper's Government has provided strong support for jobs in Canada's world-class aerospace industry.

Among other things, we have committed to purchasing the next-generation fighter jet, the F-35 – a necessary and responsible investment to re-equip Canada's air force and to strengthen Canadian sovereignty.

The previous Liberal government invested in the development of the F-35, and we supported the decision, because it was and is the best option for Canada.

But now Michael Ignatieff and his Coalition partners, the NDP and Bloc Québécois, have promised to scrap it – a reckless and irresponsible promise which would sacrifice \$12 billion in possible economic benefits across the country, and kill thousands of Canadian jobs.

A re-elected Stephen Harper Government will **follow through on the purchase of the F-35**, to strengthen the Canadian Armed Forces and to support thousands of jobs for Canadian aerospace workers across the country.



## **NATIONAL SHIPBUILDING PROCUREMENT STRATEGY**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to provide the Canadian Armed Forces the equipment they need to protect and defend our country – and in so doing we are supporting and creating well-paid, highly skilled jobs across the country.

In 2010 we announced the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy, to re-equip the navy and the Canadian Coast Guard.

The Strategy will:

- bring predictability to federal ship procurement and eliminate cycles of boom and bust;
- help revitalize Canadian shipyards; and
- support the broader Canadian marine industry and its suppliers.

The Strategy was developed after consultations with industry stakeholders. It is designed to promote opportunities for shipyards and other businesses across the country, including small businesses, while reducing production costs and ensuring the best value for taxpayers.

Stephen Harper's Government has already taken action to begin re-equipping the navy and the Coast Guard. For example, we have:

- committed to invest in new Arctic patrol ships; and
- started planning for the launch of a new polar-class icebreaker, the John G. Diefenbaker.

We will **complete the implementation of the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy**, to ensure our men and women in uniform have the tools they need to do their job, and to create good jobs in high-tech industries across Canada.

## **ESTABLISHING A NEW AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING AT CFB BAGOTVILLE**

As part of our Government's commitment to strengthen the military and create jobs in all regions of the country, we remain committed to establishing a new air expeditionary wing at CFB Bagotville.

The new expeditionary wing will enhance the Canadian Armed Forces' ability to respond quickly and decisively to domestic or international needs. And the growth in the number of military families will create jobs and growth in the Saguenay region.

We will:

- take action to **establish a new air expeditionary wing before the end of 2011**; and
- follow through on our commitment to **station 550 personnel at Bagotville for this purpose by 2015**.

To begin to implement these commitments, we will **station 250 personnel at Bagotville by the end of 2011**. Depending on any demands placed on the air force – such as the allied operations in Libya, the Middle East, or Central Asia – if necessary this deadline may be

extended into early 2012.

### **FEDERAL TOURISM STRATEGY**

Canada's tourism industry is an important pillar of our economy, and provides approximately 650,000 jobs for Canadians. Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to support this sector, through:

- major investments to upgrade infrastructure in our National Parks and National Historic Sites of Canada;
- our successful efforts to gain Approved Destination Status to attract tourists from China – a change which Canadian governments had sought for more than a decade, providing a huge boost to the Canadian tourism industry; and
- strong support for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games – a spectacular success which proved once again that Canada is one of the world's great tourist destinations.

But Canada is facing increasingly stiff competition in the global tourism market. We will build on our efforts to attract more visitors to Canada, and to encourage Canadians to explore our own magnificent country.

We will **announce and implement a Federal Tourism Strategy**, to ensure consultation and collaboration among all industry stakeholders, including small-business operators, who form the backbone of the Canadian tourism industry.

In addition, we will invest in **promoting events connected to the 100th anniversaries of the Calgary Stampede and the Grey Cup**, in 2012.

We will also **support the commemoration of upcoming milestones in Canadian history**, drawing visitors from abroad – and encouraging Canadians to enjoy and appreciate our own magnificent country.

We will invest in celebrating:

- the bicentennial of the **War of 1812**;
- Her Majesty's **Diamond Jubilee**, in 2012;
- the 150<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of the **Charlottetown Conference**, in 2014;
- the bicentennial of the birth of **Sir John A. Macdonald**, in 2015; and
- the **150th anniversary of Confederation**, in 2017.

### **SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to support new opportunities and a higher quality of life for Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Through Canada's Economic Action Plan, we have made substantial investments in:

- better infrastructure in First Nations communities – including new and better housing, schools, drinking-water and waste-water systems, and health and police infrastructure; and

- expanded Aboriginal skills and training opportunities.

We also established a new stand-alone regional development agency, CanNor, to promote economic development in Canada's North.

We will build on these actions, by:

- providing **new investments in First Nations Land Management**, allowing First Nations to promote the development of their reserve lands and resources – a policy which has already led to new greater investment on reserve lands and more job opportunities for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals;
- expanding **adult basic education programming in the territories**, which will help increase education and employment levels among Aboriginals in the North;
- supporting **environmental safety upgrades to the fuel tanks that power essential community infrastructure** in many remote and rural First Nations communities; and
- promoting the deployment of **clean energy technologies** in Aboriginal and Northern communities. <sup>18</sup>

#### **LONG-TERM PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken historic action in collaboration with the provinces and municipalities to modernize Canada's infrastructure, to create jobs, and to support long-term economic growth:

- in 2007 we established the Building Canada Fund, a historic, long-term investment in our National Highway System, drinking-water and wastewater systems, public transit, and green energy projects;
- in 2008 we made the Gas Tax Fund permanent, to help municipalities plan and fund improvements to essential infrastructure; and
- in 2009 and 2010, through our Economic Action Plan we implemented the largest federal investment in infrastructure in more than 60 years, to provide better roads, bridges, border crossings, public transit, and college and university facilities across the country.

The Building Canada Plan is set to expire in 2014; and after the accomplishments of recent years, we need to take stock of our efforts and future needs.

Going forward, we will **work with provinces, territories, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and other stakeholders to develop a long-term plan for public infrastructure** that extends beyond the expiry of the Building Canada Plan.

#### **PROFESSIONAL SPORTS FACILITIES**

Stephen Harper's Government will continue directing infrastructure investments to priorities. **We will maintain the consistent policy of the federal government not to fund professional sports facilities, and we will apply it uniformly across the country.**

<sup>18</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to support Aboriginal Canadians**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

### **CANADIAN SECURITIES REGULATOR**

The global financial crisis has shown that Canada needs a national securities regulator.

In 2010 our Government tabled for information a proposed Canadian Securities Act. At the same time we referred it to the Supreme Court of Canada for a ruling on whether Parliament has the constitutional authority to enact the proposed legislation.

**We will continue working with willing provinces and territories to establish a Canadian securities regulator.** We encourage all jurisdictions to partner and help shape this new institution. **We will not proceed unless the Supreme Court rules that this matter is within our jurisdiction.**

### **REACHING A TAX HARMONIZATION AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC**

Stephen Harper's Government respects provincial jurisdiction, and we respect the provinces' freedom to choose whether to harmonize with the GST.

The Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec have engaged in good faith negotiations to complete a harmonization agreement that respects Quebec's role in administration, legislation and in other aspects of the system and is consistent with the spirit of existing harmonization agreements with other provinces.

We had made substantial progress – in fact we were well advanced in the final stages of negotiations – before the Bloc Québécois forced an unnecessary and opportunistic election. This has delayed the final stages of our government-to-government negotiations.

In spite of this unnecessary delay caused by the Bloc Québécois, **a re-elected Conservative Government will work expeditiously with the Government of Quebec to complete a harmonization agreement as soon as practical after the election and in no event later than September 15, 2011.** Such an agreement will be positive for the economy and will be fair for the people in every region of Quebec.

**HERE FOR  
CANADA**  
Conservative



**HERE TO  
ELIMINATE THE DEFICIT**

# HERE TO ELIMINATE THE DEFICIT

## OUR GOAL

Stephen Harper's Government will **eliminate the deficit** and return to balanced budgets.

We will achieve this without raising taxes. We will **keep taxes low**.

Eliminating the deficit and keeping taxes low are necessary to ensure that:

- our economy can continue to grow and create jobs; and
- the government can continue investing in the priorities of Canadians.

## OUR RECORD

Canada's response to the global recession has been held up as a model and inspiration around the world.

**In November 2009 the world was confronted with a global economic crisis, unforeseen and unlike anything since the 1930s** – the threat of a synchronized collapse in financial systems and in consumer and business confidence.

To meet this extraordinary challenge, **it was essential for advanced countries around the world to run temporary deficits** in order to sustain global business confidence, protect jobs, and stimulate our economies. In 2009, the leaders of the G-20, the world's major advanced and emerging economies, agreed on the need for such action and set a common target for stimulus investments.

Stephen Harper's Government has met that target for Canada – and **as shown by Canada's record on job creation since the global recession hit, our investments have been effective**.

But we have said all along – and Canadians agree – that **we will not allow the deficit to become permanent**.

In 2010, under the co-chairmanship of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the leaders of the G-20 agreed on the need to reduce deficits and debts, and established clear targets to achieve these goals. Canada will meet and exceed those targets, because we made the right choices – not just during the global recession, but before it hit.

**Before the global recession hit**, Stephen Harper's Government:

- maintained a balanced budget;
- paid down \$37 billion of the federal debt;
- established an ongoing review of government spending, to cut low-priority or ineffective programs;
- reduced taxes on families and businesses;
- invested in the priorities of Canadians; and
- increased provincial transfer payments to record levels, to support health care and education.

Because of these balanced, responsible choices, in contrast to many

other countries, **Canada has been able to fight the global recession from a position of strength:**

- Canada has now finished the vast majority of our stimulus program, and by the end of 2011 it will have been fully completed;
- we ensured our stimulus investments would protect and create jobs immediately, without establishing permanent new government programs;
- we are on track to eliminating our deficit well ahead of the rest of G-7; and
- we are preserving and enhancing Canada's strong fiscal position – we are emerging from the global recession with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio of any major advanced economy, by far.

## OUR PLAN

Unlike the Ignatieff-led Coalition with the NDP and Bloc Québécois, **Stephen Harper's Government will not raise taxes** on Canadian families or on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians.

Unlike the previous Liberal government, **we will not cut transfer payments** to individuals or to the provinces for essential things like health care, education, and pensions.

As laid out in the Budget we presented last month, the deficit is already 25 percent lower this year than last year, and it is projected to shrink by more than 25 percent again in 2011-12.

Through accelerated reductions in government spending, **a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will eliminate the deficit by 2014-15**, by:

- completing our stimulus package, as promised;
- continuing specific measures to restrain the growth of program spending;
- completing, within one year, a comprehensive review of government spending. <sup>19</sup>

This **comprehensive Strategic and Operating Review** is designed to realize substantial additional savings through greater efficiency and effectiveness. It will place the government in a strong position over the long term to:

- resume paying down the federal debt;
- keep reducing the tax burden on Canadian families; and
- continue investing in priorities.

We will eliminate the deficit, and we will do so in a careful, responsible manner. **Our plan is based on the fiscal projections in the Budget our Government presented last month. These projections were based on independent, expert advice** from Canada's leading private-sector economists, and a cautious estimate of economic growth over the next few years.

## 19 ELIMINATING THE DEFICIT

	BUDGET 2011 DEFICIT/SURPLUS PROJECTION (\$ BILLIONS)	STRATEGIC AND OPERATING REVIEW SAVINGS	REVISED DEFICIT/SURPLUS PROJECTION (\$ BILLIONS)
<b>2011-12</b>	-29.6		<b>-29.6</b>
<b>2012-13</b>	-19.4	1.0	<b>-18.4</b>
<b>2013-14</b>	-9.5	2.0	<b>-7.5</b>
<b>2014-15</b>	-0.3	4.0	<b>3.7</b>
<b>2015-16</b>	4.2	4.0	<b>8.2</b>



**HERE FOR  
CANADA**



**HERE FOR  
HARD-WORKING FAMILIES**



# HERE FOR HARD-WORKING FAMILIES

## OUR GOAL

Canadians work hard to provide for their families and make ends meet. Stephen Harper's Government believes in **increasing the freedom of Canadians to spend their own money on their own priorities.**

Since we were first elected in 2006, we have taken action to **reduce the tax burden on hard-working Canadian families and improve their financial security.**

By **putting money back in the pockets of taxpayers**, we are:

- helping Canadians care for their families, and improving their financial security;
- supporting a higher quality of life for families in every region of our country; and
- helping stimulate our economy, which in turn creates good, new jobs in our communities.

## OUR RECORD

Stephen Harper's Government has provided substantial tax relief to Canadians, bringing the overall **federal tax burden to its lowest level in 50 years**, and providing a significant advantage to Canada in the global economy.

The Ignatieff-led Coalition has opposed us in pursuit of their high-tax agenda, but we have stood firm. To reduce the tax burden on Canadian families, among other things we have:

- reduced the GST twice, from 7 to 6 to 5 percent, saving an average family of four \$960 per year;
- removed more than a million low-income Canadians from the federal income tax rolls altogether;
- allowed seniors to split their pension income for tax purposes, saving senior couples an average of almost \$1,000 per year;
- established the Tax-Free Savings Account – the most important personal savings vehicle since the RRSP; and
- reduced the tax burden on seniors, students, transit users, tradespeople, new Canadians, and all Canadian families.

**In fact, since 2006 we have delivered 120 tax cuts, including measures saving the average Canadian family of four more than \$3,000 each year.**

## OUR PLAN

But there is more to do. We need to continue reducing the tax burden to **help Canadians care for their families**, and to **strengthen the financial security of Canadians**. Here is what a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will do to achieve these goals.

## FAMILY TAX CUT

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to support all Canadian families. In addition to the tax relief measures listed above, we:

- established the Universal Child Care Benefit, providing \$1,200 per year, per child under six years of age, to support all parents and to respect their right to choose the form of child care that's best for their families;
- established the Child Tax Credit, a \$2,000 tax credit for each child under 18 years of age;
- established the Children's Fitness Tax Credit, to help families cover the costs of registration fees for children's sports and other fitness activities;
- enhanced the Registered Education Savings Plan;
- established the Registered Disability Savings Plan, to help Canadians with disabilities and their families to plan for the future; and
- provided other substantial new tax relief measures, often of special benefit to lower-income families. <sup>20</sup>

The record shows we believe strongly in fairness for Canadian families, and in respecting the choices families make, according to their needs and priorities.

But there is more to be done, especially under the federal income tax system. As it stands, couples with the same number of children and the same total income are not treated equally.

A two-income couple, in which one spouse earns more than the other, pays more federal income tax than a two-income couple in which the two spouses earn equal amounts. And a single-income couple pays even more.

We will soon be in a position to take an historic step forward to achieve greater fairness for families. We will establish the **Family Tax Cut**: income-sharing for couples with dependent children under 18 years of age.

This will give spouses the choice to share up to \$50,000 of their household income, for federal income-tax purposes. This important new measure will be implemented when the federal budget is balanced within our next full term of office.

The result will be significant **tax relief for approximately 1.8 million Canadian families** – each of them saving, **on average, \$1,300 per year**.

Most of all, it will ensure that the federal income tax system respects and supports the choices that families make.

It will increase fairness for single-income couples. And it will ease the burden on double-income families, by allowing them to keep more of what they earn and to benefit more from having a second income.

## DOUBLING THE CHILDREN'S FITNESS TAX CREDIT

Parents know that regular exercise is a key part of their children's development. Whether it's hockey or dance or another program of physical activity, it gets them started on a lifetime of healthy, active living.

## <sup>20</sup> LOWER TAXES FOR LOWER-INCOME FAMILIES

Stephen Harper's government has provided substantial tax relief for all Canadian families, including lower-income families. For example, we:

- established, and then effectively doubled, the Working Income Tax Benefit;
- raised the income level at which the National Child Benefit and the Canada Child Tax Benefit are phased out;
- increased the Basic Personal Amount exemption;
- reduced the lowest personal income-tax rate from 16 to 15 percent; and
- allowed families to claim a greater portion of their income under the two lowest rates.

As a result of our tax reductions, we have:

- reduced the federal tax burden on families with incomes between \$15,000 and \$30,000 by more than 50 percent; and
- approximately 124,000 single-parent families have been removed from the federal tax rolls altogether.

But the financial costs can put a strain on the family budget. In 2007 Stephen Harper's Government established the Children's Fitness Tax Credit, in the amount of \$500, to help cover these costs. In 2008, almost 1.4 million Canadians benefitted from the measure in their tax returns.

Due to the success of the measure, we will double the value of the tax credit, and make it refundable – **up to \$1,000 to help cover the costs of registration fees for children's physical activities.** This measure will be implemented when the federal budget is balanced within our next full term of office.

#### **CHILDREN'S ARTS TAX CREDIT**

For so many Canadian children, involvement in the arts is a big part of growing up. One child thrives at art camp; another finds her calling on the stage; another learns about the language and heritage of his family background.

All of them find a great opportunity to make friends and to develop their creativity. But the fees and other costs involved can be beyond the reach of some families.

To help families in providing these important opportunities for their children, we will establish a **Children's Arts Tax Credit, to cover up to \$500 per child in qualifying expenses for eligible arts or cultural activities.** <sup>21</sup>

#### **ADULT FITNESS TAX CREDIT**

Canadians of all ages are interested in increasing their physical fitness.

It helps avoid major chronic health problems, and increases overall well-being. And there's a huge range of activities that can help achieve these goals – from hockey at the rec centre to time on the treadmill.

To support Canadians in choosing a healthy, active lifestyle, we will establish an Adult Fitness Tax Credit, to **cover up to \$500 in registration fees for fitness activities for adults.** This measure will be implemented when the federal budget is balanced within our next full term of office.

#### **ecoENERGY RETROFIT-HOMES PROGRAM**

In 2007 Stephen Harper's Government established the ecoENERGY Retrofit-Homes program to support energy-saving projects. This successful initiative is designed to help reduce energy costs for Canadians and achieve a cleaner environment.

The program provides home and property owners grants of up to \$5,000 per unit to offset the cost of energy-efficiency improvements – for example, replacing heating or cooling systems, and replacing doors or windows.

We will **extend, by one year, the ecoENERGY Retrofit-Homes program.** This new investment will help families lower their energy bills, and support jobs in home renovation. <sup>22</sup>

#### **SUPPORT FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS**

Canadians are busy – working hard, looking after their families and contributing to their communities.

**21 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support Canadian families**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**22 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help Canadians lower their energy bills**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

Many individuals and families have added responsibilities in caring for infirm parents or relatives. These family caregivers make special sacrifices, often leaving the workforce temporarily and forgoing employment income.

To recognize and support Canadians caring for infirm loved ones at home, we will establish a Family Caregiver Tax Credit – a tax credit on the amount of \$2,000.

This new measure will benefit more than 500,000 Canadian caregivers. It will include, for the first time, those caring for infirm spouses, common-law partners and minor children; and it will be designed to enhance existing dependency-related credits, to maximize support for family caregivers.<sup>23</sup>

### SUPPORT FOR LOW-INCOME SENIORS

Canadian seniors have earned our gratitude for a lifetime of hard work in service to our families, our communities, and our country. They deserve to be able to enjoy their later years in dignity.

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to support our seniors, including low-income seniors. Among other things, we:

- increased the Age Credit – twice – to increase the amount of income that can be earned without tax consequences;
- allowed senior couples to split their pension income for tax purposes;
- invested \$400 million in better housing for low-income seniors, through our Economic Action Plan; and
- increased the amount GIS recipients can earn without losing benefits.

But more is needed. While the rate of poverty among seniors in Canada is low relative to other countries, we must not be complacent.

In communities across our country there are seniors struggling to pay their bills each month. Often they are women; often they are widowed. They worked hard their whole lives for their families and communities, but lack any pension income.

To provide greater support to the most vulnerable seniors, we will provide a **top-up benefit to the Guaranteed Income Supplement**, providing up to \$600 extra per year for single seniors, and up to \$840 per year for senior couples.

We estimate this measure will improve the financial security of some 680,000 Canadian seniors, helping them to make ends meet.<sup>24</sup>

### DOUBLING THE TAX-FREE SAVINGS ACCOUNT LIMIT

Hard-working Canadians are increasingly concerned about their savings – having enough set aside for their children's education, and a nest-egg for their retirement.

To help Canadians save more for the future, in 2008 our Government established the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA). The TFSA is the most important personal savings vehicle since the RRSP.

**23 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help family caregivers**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**24 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help low-income seniors**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

The measure has been a huge success – approximately 4.7 million Canadians have opened a TFSA. And it's of special benefit to seniors – they can withdraw savings from it without any clawback of their OAS or GIS payments.

We will build on this success, by **doubling the amount Canadians can save each year, to \$10,000**. This measure will be implemented when the federal budget is balanced within our next full term of office.

#### **HELPING CANADIANS SAVE FOR RETIREMENT**

Stephen Harper's Government has provided significant tax relief for seniors and pensioners, to help ensure a good quality of life for our seniors.

But more is needed. Many Canadians are concerned about whether they are saving enough for retirement, and most Canadian workers lack workplace pensions.

Late last year, Stephen Harper's Government announced plans to provide additional help to Canadians saving for retirement, including self-employed Canadians, through a new, low-cost pension option.

A re-elected Stephen Harper Government will work with our provincial and territorial partners to **implement the Pooled Retirement Pension Plan** as soon as possible in our next term of office.

#### **SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN VETERANS**

The men and women who have served our country in uniform have earned our deepest gratitude and highest respect.

Stephen Harper's Government is committed to providing our military personnel, past and present, and their families the care, services, and financial support they need and deserve.

To support our Canadian Veterans, among other things we have:

- passed the *Enhanced New Veterans Charter Act*, providing:
  - improved access to monthly benefits for seriously injured Veterans;
  - a monthly \$1,000 supplement for life to help our most seriously injured or ill Veterans; and
  - flexible options for receiving a Disability Award.
- established a Legacy of Care to provide additional support to seriously injured military personnel and their families;
- improved support for Veterans with ALS; provided Agent Orange ex gratia payments; and established the Atomic Veterans Recognition Program;
- established the Community War Memorial Program; and provided GST relief for Royal Canadian Legion Remembrance Day poppies and wreaths.

We will continue supporting and honouring our brave Canadian Veterans. We will invest in the **'Helmets to Hardhats'** program, to help former military personnel find work in the construction industry.

This will build on our continuing, substantial support for Career Transition Services through Veterans Affairs Canada. <sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help Canadian Veterans**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

## WAGE EARNER PROTECTION PROGRAM

The Wage Earner Protection Program provides guaranteed, timely payment of wages and vacation pay to workers whose employers go bankrupt.

To help Canadians hit hardest by the global recession, Stephen Harper's Government extended the program, to cover severance and termination pay.

To keep helping Canadians who lose their jobs through no fault of their own, we will **enhance the Wage Earner Protection Program** – we will extend protection to workers whose employers' restructuring attempts take longer than six months and are subsequently unsuccessful. <sup>26</sup>

## RENEWING THE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL HEALTH ACCORD

Stephen Harper's Government is committed to a universal public health care system and the Canada Health Act, and the right of provinces to deliver health care within their jurisdictions.

As promised, we have implemented the 10-year federal-provincial Health Accord, providing predictable transfer payments to assist the provinces and territories in strengthening health care services for Canadians.

To help ensure the new funding would be used effectively, we worked collaboratively with the provinces and territories to develop a Patient Wait Times Guarantee for essential medical treatments.

The Wait Times Alliance has reported progress in reducing wait times for radiation/oncology treatments and cataract and bypass surgeries.

But they have also reported that more work is needed to reduce wait times for other treatments and diagnostic procedures. And there remains a need for more timely and uniform reporting from the provinces and territories in order to measure progress.

Canadians expect and deserve timely access to high-quality health care services. To help achieve that goal, we will **work collaboratively with the provinces and territories to renew the Health Accord and to continue reducing wait times.**

In our discussions we will **emphasize the importance of accountability and results for Canadians** – better reporting from the provinces and territories to measure progress, and guarantees covering additional medically necessary procedures.

In the spirit of open federalism, when renewing the Health Accord we will **respect the fact that health care is an area of provincial jurisdiction and respect limits on the federal spending power.**

Recognizing asymmetrical federalism, we will follow the precedent of a **separate agreement with the Government of Quebec** regarding the implementation of the renewed Health Accord. <sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help Canadian workers**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

## 27 PROTECTING CONSUMERS AND ENSURING PRODUCT SAFETY

Stephen Harper's government has taken strong action to protect consumers and ensure product safety. Among other things, we have:

- encouraged greater competition in wireless telecommunications, to reduce costs and increase choice for consumers;
- established new credit card regulations to protect Canadians from unexpected costs and to ensure clear information on terms and conditions;
- established a Code of Conduct for the Credit and Debit Card Industry, to promote competition, choice, and lower costs for small businesses and consumers;
- passed a law cracking down on Internet spam;
- passed a law to ensure the accuracy of gas pumps and retail food scales, and to increase penalties for unfair business practices;
- modernized Canada's consumer product safety law, providing for the mandatory recall of dangerous products;
- passed a law cracking down on tobacco marketing aimed at children and youth;
- introduced larger and stronger health warnings on tobacco packaging; and
- established strong new regulations to:
  - ensure the safety of cribs and child car seats;
  - protect babies and toddlers from harmful exposure to lead, bisphenol A, and phthalates; and
  - protect our environment and the health of Canadians, including measures to reduce phosphates in household cleaning products and Volatile Organic Compounds.



**HERE FOR  
CANADA**  
Conservative



**HERE TO  
STAND ON GUARD  
FOR CANADA**

# HERE TO STAND ON GUARD FOR CANADA

## OUR GOAL

Canadians have seen that **no one can predict when our brave men and women in uniform may be called upon** – whether to support our allies and defend our country’s interests, to help keep the peace in troubled lands, or to rescue the victims of natural disasters at home and abroad.

In the age of global security threats, **Canadians see the need for extra vigilance** – and they see that Canada is not immune from the threat of “home-grown” terrorists.

Stephen Harper’s Government believes that the federal government’s most solemn responsibility is to defend and **strengthen our national sovereignty**.

Above all, the federal government has a duty to protect the lives of Canadians – to **defend our country and secure our borders**.

Generations of Canadians have worked hard to build our country; and in times of peril up to the present day, our best and bravest have given their lives in service to it.

Stephen Harper’s Government is also committed to **promoting Canada’s history and defending the principles which make our country united, strong and free**.

## OUR RECORD

Here are some of the actions Stephen Harper’s Government has taken so far to **stand on guard for Canada**. To strengthen our national sovereignty and secure our borders, we:

- are rebuilding the Canadian Armed Forces, giving our men and women in uniform the equipment they need and the respect they deserve;
- are supporting our military in their outstanding contribution to the allied effort in Afghanistan, and in the transition of their mission from combat to training this year, to help ensure that Afghanistan is no longer a safe haven for terrorists;
- introduced legislation to allow victims to sue listed supporters and perpetrators of terrorism, in Canadian courts;
- established new measures to combat terrorist financing and money laundering, and to prevent organizations linked to terrorism from operating as registered charities;
- developed the Federal Emergency Response Plan, and the National Strategy and Action Plan for Critical Infrastructure to manage risks and strengthen the resiliency of vital systems such as our food supply, electricity grids, and transportation, communications, and public safety systems;
- passed the *Balanced Refugee Reform Act*, to provide faster protection for those in need of Canada’s protection and faster removal of failed asylum claimants; and



- passed a law allowing Canada to freeze the Canadian assets of corrupt former leaders of foreign states, their family members, senior officials, and associates.

Stephen Harper's Government has also taken action to **promote Canadian patriotism and celebrate our shared history and institutions.**

We have:

- published a new Citizenship Guide to welcome new Canadians, to encourage them to embrace Canada's history and our shared values and to contribute actively to our country's continuing development;
- established, in cooperation with public- and private-sector partners, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, in Winnipeg – the first national museum to be established since 1967, and the first ever outside the National Capital Region;
- established the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, in Halifax;
- celebrated milestones of Canadian history, including:
  - the 400<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of the founding of Quebec City;
  - the 400<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of Cupids, in Newfoundland and Labrador, the oldest English settlement in all of Canada;
  - the 250<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of parliamentary democracy in Canada, first established in Nova Scotia; and
  - the 150<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Crown Colony of British Columbia;
- celebrated Her Majesty's 22<sup>ND</sup> Royal Tour as Queen of Canada; and
- taken action, where the previous Liberal government refused to act, to strengthen the bonds of unity among Canadians:
  - we have officially addressed dark chapters in our history – for example, the Indian Residential Schools policy, and the “head tax” designed to prevent immigration from China;
  - we have recognized the deliberate rejection of Jewish refugees before and during the Second World War; the internment of “enemy aliens” during the First and Second World Wars; and the *Komagata Maru* incident of 1914; and
  - we took historic action to recognize that the Québécois form a nation within a united Canada.

## OUR PLAN

Here is what a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will do to:

- ensure our country is ready to meet security challenges in the years and decades to come;
- assert our national sovereignty; and
- promote our nation's history and foster Canadian patriotism.

## STRENGTHEN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

The previous Liberal government refused to provide our men and women in uniform the tools they need to do their job, sending them into harm's way without the necessary equipment.

Since then, the Ignatieff-led Coalition has opposed every attempt to reverse the effects of what our military calls the "Decade of Darkness".

In spite of this obstruction, Stephen Harper's Government has taken major steps forward to ensure the Canadian Armed Forces have the equipment they need to defend our country. We have invested in modern tanks, helicopters, and transport planes for the army; and we have established a National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy, to re-equip the navy.<sup>28</sup>

We have also committed to buying the next-generation fighter jet, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter for our air force.

The development of the F-35 is a cooperative program including Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and Turkey.

The F-35 purchase is necessary to replace the current fleet of CF-18s before they are no longer useable, and to ensure Canada's fighter jets are compatible with those of our NATO allies. The investment will be made gradually over the next 15 years, most of it beginning only in 2015, once the budget is balanced.

The previous Liberal government invested in the development of the F-35, and we supported the decision, because it was and is the best option for Canada.

But now Michael Ignatieff and his Coalition partners, the NDP and Bloc Québécois, have promised to scrap it – a reckless and irresponsible promise which would kill thousands of well-paid, highly-skilled Canadian jobs and deny the men and women of our air force the modern equipment they need to do their job.

A re-elected Stephen Harper Government will **follow through on the purchase of the F-35, to ensure our air force personnel have the tools they need to defend our country** in the years to come.

## CRACK DOWN ON HUMAN SMUGGLING

Recent events have shown that Canada's immigration system is a target of criminal abuse that costs Canadians dearly.

It's not fair that criminal human smugglers and bogus claimants abuse Canada's generosity and jump the immigration queue ahead of those who follow the rules.

Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to protect Canada's immigration system by introducing the *Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act*.

But Michael Ignatieff and his Coalition partners, the NDP and Bloc Québécois, strongly opposed these urgently needed reforms. They oppose detaining illegal immigrants. They even oppose tougher sentences for human smugglers.

## 28 HELPING HAITI IN HER HOUR OF NEED

Canadians are rightly proud of the magnificent contribution of our Canadian Armed Forces personnel to international rescue and relief efforts in Haiti after the catastrophic earthquake there in 2010.

With modern equipment, our men and women in uniform were able to rush to the scene and provide immediate help to a devastated country. Their experience, expertise, and compassion were put to work, earning them the admiration of their international partners and their fellow Canadians.

A Stephen Harper-led majority Government will make it a priority to reintroduce and pass our legislation to crack down on human smuggling.

### **STRENGTHEN THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action on a number of fronts to strengthen our national sovereignty, including our sovereignty in the Arctic.

We are re-equipping the Canadian Armed Forces, and steadily implementing our Northern Strategy. But improvements are needed to strengthen Canada's ability to patrol our coasts and to enforce our laws on Canadian waters.

The Canadian Coast Guard serves many functions, including support for environmental protection and emergency response. At present, however, it lacks the mandate and the means to play a significant role in enforcing Canadian law and in protecting our national security.

Stephen Harper's Government has already taken action to re-equip the Coast Guard. We have invested in the procurement of 98 new vessels and barges and in major repairs to 40 existing vessels, as a key part of our National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy.

To build on these actions and further strengthen our national security, we will:

- **give the Coast Guard a law-enforcement mandate**, to enable them to enforce federal laws on our oceans and on the Great Lakes;
- **establish armed boarding teams** including Coast Guard and RCMP personnel; and
- **outfit selected Coast Guard vessels with armed capability.**

### **DEPORT FOREIGN CRIMINALS**

It often takes years to deport even dangerous foreign criminals from Canada. In some cases, foreign criminals and terrorists here have evaded removal from Canada for over a decade as they exploit endless appeals and loopholes.

Canadians expect that foreign criminals will get due process before being removed, but not an endless abuse of our generosity.

We will streamline the process for deporting foreign criminals.

We will:

- **expedite the deportation of foreign criminals**, putting the top priority on executing existing and new deportation orders against individuals with criminal records, or connections to terrorist organizations or organized crime;
- **streamline the multiple levels of appeal** available to individuals ordered deported for serious criminality or connections to terrorist organizations or organized crime;
- amend the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, the Criminal Code and the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* to permit sentencing courts to **order deportation immedi-**

ately on reaching parole eligibility or on completion of sentence, and make acceptance of deportation a condition of parole eligibility; and

- amend the *International Transfer of Offenders Act* to **remove the requirement for a foreign offender's consent for prisoner transfer**, so that in some cases they can complete their sentence abroad.

#### **EXTEND THE SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM**

Canada is a diverse and tolerant country.

But sadly, some communities are vulnerable to hate-motivated crime, targeted simply because of their race, religion, or culture. Such violent and hateful acts damage property and pose a risk to public safety, and they place entire communities in a state of fear and anxiety.<sup>29</sup>

In 2007 Stephen Harper's Government established a pilot project, the Security Infrastructure Program, to assist such communities in acquiring surveillance cameras, alarm systems, fencing and other equipment to protect their places of worship, schools and community centres.

We will **extend this program to prevent hate-motivated crime** and help restore a sense of security among affected communities.<sup>30</sup>

#### **REINTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO COMBAT TERRORISM**

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Parliament passed legislation to give law enforcement the tools they need to combat terrorism.

The law expired after five years. Stephen Harper's Government has tried to reinstate its key provisions:

- "investigative hearings" – allowing a judge to order a person to answer questions or produce documents, when there are grounds to believe a terrorism offence has been or will be committed; and
- "recognizance with conditions" – whereby a person agrees to abide by conditions imposed by a judge, to prevent terrorist activity.

Unfortunately, the Ignatieff-led Coalition with the NDP and Bloc Québécois has blocked these necessary measures.

But Canadians know that the threat of global terrorism remains, and in the years since 9/11 we have seen that Canada is also vulnerable to the threat of "home-grown" terrorist plots.

We will reintroduce our legislation to **give law enforcement the tools they need to investigate and prevent acts of terrorism**, to protect Canadians and defend our country against such atrocities.

#### **NATIONAL COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY**

The federal government's most solemn responsibility is to protect the security of Canadians and defend our country against attack.

Canadians know we are not immune to the threat of terrorism, and they want and deserve to be confident that their government has a

#### **29 FIGHTING HATE-MOTIVATED CRIME**

Stephen Harper's government established the Security Infrastructure Program to protect communities vulnerable to hate-motivated crime. Most recipients have reported no further incidents after their security upgrades, and individual reports indicate the program has been effective in preventing and mitigating such crimes. The program has benefitted Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and First Nations communities, among many others.

#### **30 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the

NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to protect vulnerable communities**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

comprehensive plan to counter that threat.

Among other things, Stephen Harper's Government has:

- helped ensure that vital intelligence is shared and analyzed comprehensively by Canada's law enforcement and intelligence agencies;
- provided increased funding to strengthen air cargo security and to improve operations of the Canadian Air Transportation Security Authority; and
- developed the Federal Emergency Response Plan, and the National Strategy and Action Plan for Critical Infrastructure.

To build on these actions we will develop a new **National Counter-Terrorism Strategy** outlining relevant laws and procedures and highlighting the means to protect our country from terrorism through **effective coordination among Canada's security agencies, all levels of government, law enforcement, community stakeholders and our international partners.**

#### **ARCTIC SOVEREIGNTY: COMPLETING THE DEMPSTER HIGHWAY**

Canada's North is at the heart of our Canadian identity – from ancient Aboriginal cultures to famous explorers to iconic Canadian artwork and literature.

Our presence in Canada's North is also an increasingly important factor in defending our national sovereignty.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has made Canada's North a cornerstone of our Government's agenda. Through our Government's four-point Northern Strategy, we are:

- strengthening Canada's Arctic sovereignty;
- protecting the Northern environment;
- promoting economic and social development; and
- giving Northerners more control over their own affairs.

To implement our Northern Strategy, among many other things, Stephen Harper's Government has:

- expanded Nahanni National Park Reserve to six times its original size;
- taken action to establish Tasiuyutait Marine Protected Area and Lancaster Sound National Marine Conservation Area;
- passed legislation protecting our Arctic waters;
- established a new economic development agency, CanNor, dedicated to the region;
- invested in affordable housing;
- invested in skills training, and supported business development by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal businesses;
- started work on a new High Arctic Research Station;
- expanded the size and capabilities of the Canadian Rangers;
- supported the next phase of the RADARSAT Constellation Mission, a system of three advanced remote sensing satellites; and

- committed to invest in new Arctic patrol ships and started planning for the launch of a new polar-class icebreaker, the John G. Diefenbaker.

A re-elected Stephen Harper Government will build on these achievements. We will:

- help increase education and employment levels in Canada's North, by expanding **adult basic education programming in the territories**; and
- increase economic opportunities in First Nations communities, by **extending support for First Nations Land Management**, which allows First Nations to promote the development of their reserve lands and resources.<sup>31</sup>

We will also build a crucial piece of infrastructure, long needed in the Northwest Territories – in partnership with the territorial government and private-sector stakeholders, we will build **an all-weather road linking Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk**.

This initiative will strengthen the local and regional economies. It will also be a significant assertion of Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic.

Beyond these important goals, by **extending the Dempster Highway to the Arctic Ocean**, we will complete one of the legacies of Prime Minister Diefenbaker's Northern vision – and we will complete the National Highway System, **connecting Canada from sea to sea to sea**.<sup>32</sup>

### **CELEBRATE OUR VICTORY IN THE WAR OF 1812, AND OTHER NATIONAL MILESTONES**

In 2012 we will reach the bicentennial of a crucial event in our history.

In the War of 1812, professional regiments, Aboriginal peoples, and local volunteer militias, English- and French-speaking alike, saved Canada from American invasion and confirmed our destiny as a country distinct from the United States.

We will lead the country in commemorating **The War of 1812: The Fight for Canada**. We will:

- designate October 2012 as **a month of commemoration of the heroes and key battles** of the war;
- sponsor hundreds of **events and re-enactments** across the country;
- honour the **contributions of First Nations** to the Canadian victory;
- recognize and honour current Canadian regiments which **perpetuate the identities of War of 1812 militia units**;
- invest in the **restoration of monuments and historic sites** connected to the war;
- ensure a **proper interment** of the remains of those who fell

**31 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to help Northern and Aboriginal Canadians**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**32 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to strengthen the Northern economy and build our sovereignty in the Arctic**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

in the Battle of Stoney Creek; and

- establish a new **national War of 1812 monument**, to be located in the National Capital Region.

We will also celebrate other **upcoming milestones in the life and history of our country**:

- next year we will observe Her Majesty's **Diamond Jubilee**, celebrating her six decades of service as Queen of Canada;
- in 2014 we will celebrate the 150<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of the **Charlottetown Conference**, a crucial step toward Confederation;
- in 2015 we will mark the bicentennial of the birth of **Sir John A. Macdonald**; and
- in 2017, we will lead Canadians in the greatest birthday celebration in our nation's history – the **150th anniversary of Confederation**.

### **NATIONAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL**

The Holocaust was one of the darkest chapters in human history. We must ensure that it is never forgotten, in the hope that it will never be repeated. Remembering the Holocaust also provides an opportunity to appreciate the historic advances in human rights that came about in response to its horrors.

At present, Canada is alone among our allies in lacking a national Holocaust memorial. We will establish a National Holocaust Memorial, to be located in the National Capital Region, to **ensure the victims and the lessons of the Holocaust are never forgotten**.

### **MEMORIAL TO VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM**

For much of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century, many countries suffered under the murderous dictatorships inspired by communism. Canada was a haven of freedom for tens of thousands of newcomers fleeing communist regimes.

Stephen Harper's Government has spoken out and taken action to recognize these facts of history:

- in 2009, our Government celebrated the 20<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, which represented the culmination of 40 years of foreign policy objectives pursued in partnership with our NATO allies.
- in 2007, under Prime Minister Stephen Harper's leadership, Canada proudly co-sponsored Ukraine's motion at UNESCO, honouring the millions who perished in the Holodomor and acknowledging that their deaths were caused by Josef Stalin's Soviet regime; and
- in 2008, we strongly supported Conservative MP James Bezan's bill establishing Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day and recognizing the Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 as an act of genocide.

As announced in the Speech from the Throne in 2010, we will continue to **support the establishment of the Memorial to Victims of Communism**.

The Memorial will stand in the National Capital Region as a reminder

that all political systems are not the same, and that our democracy and our freedoms are to be cherished, exercised, and protected.

### **DEFENDING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

Around the world vulnerable religious minorities are subject to persecution, violence, and repression.

Canada has a proud tradition of defending fundamental human rights, such as freedom of religion and freedom of conscience; and our Government recognizes that respect for religious pluralism is inextricably linked to democratic development.

But we can and should do more to respond to the plight of those who suffer merely because of their faith. We will:

- **create a special Office of Religious Freedom in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade** to monitor religious freedom around the world, to promote religious freedom as a key objective of Canadian foreign policy, and to advance policies and programs that support religious freedom;
- continue to **ensure that Canada offers its protection to vulnerable religious minorities** through our generous refugee resettlement programs; and
- **ensure that the Canadian International Development Agency works with groups supporting such vulnerable minorities.**

### **CONSERVING AND PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT**

Stephen Harper's Government is strongly committed to the conservation of Canada's magnificent natural heritage.

In collaboration with the provinces and territories, Aboriginal peoples, civil society, and private landowners, we have increased the size of our marine protected areas, and created eight new federal protected areas.

We also expanded Nahanni National Park Reserve to six times its previous size – the greatest conservation achievement in a generation.

In the past four years alone, we have taken steps that will add more than 133,000 square kilometres to the existing lands and waters administered by Parks Canada – a 48-percent increase, or an additional protected area equivalent in size to a country such as Greece. <sup>33</sup>

We have also taken action on a number of fronts to protect our environment, recognizing that a healthy environment and a strong economy go hand-in-hand. We have:

- passed legislation to strengthen control of our Northern waterways, to prevent pollution of fragile Arctic ecosystems;
- invested in the cleanup of Lake Winnipeg, Lake Simcoe, the Great Lakes, the Niagara River, and the St. Lawrence River;
- passed legislation cracking down on polluters, poachers, and wildlife smugglers, with new and increased fines and stronger enforcement powers;
- established regulations to raise the renewable fuel content in gasoline and to reduce tailpipe emissions, and introduced regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the production of electricity;

### **33 EXPANDING NAHANNI NATIONAL PARK RESERVE OF CANADA**

In close collaboration with the Dehcho First Nations, Stephen Harper's government expanded Nahanni National Park Reserve of Canada to six times its original size – the greatest conservation achievement in a generation, fulfilling the dream of protecting the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem in the Dehcho.

The expansion protects an additional 30,000 square kilometres (an area almost as large as Vancouver Island), including the highest mountains and largest glaciers in the Northwest Territories and the deepest canyons in Canada. It also protects geological features in the Nahanni North Karst which are unique in the world.



- made substantial investments in clean energy research and development, including carbon capture and storage;
- established the Clean Energy Dialogue between Canada and the United States, to enhance collaboration on reducing greenhouse gases and combating climate change;
- aligned our climate-change targets with those of the Obama Administration – our goal is a 17-percent reduction in domestic greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2020;
- successfully argued for the principles underlining the Copenhagen Accord, which for the first time ever brought all major emitting nations under one agreement, an essential step to addressing climate change; and
- delivered on our commitment under the Copenhagen Accord to support developing countries in adapting to and combating climate change.

We will build on these major accomplishments to conserve and protect our environment. We will work toward an agreement with provincial, regional, municipal, Aboriginal, and community stakeholders to establish a **National Conservation Plan**, to:

- facilitate the creation of new protected areas, National Parks, and National Marine Conservation Areas;
- make the land between protected areas more permeable to wildlife, and expand the use of digital and multimedia technologies to help connect Canadians to nature; and
- strengthen our efforts to restore degraded ecosystems and reintroduce native species.

We will **invest in the creation of Mealy Mountains National Park**, in Newfoundland and Labrador. <sup>34</sup>

We will also **take action toward the establishment of a new National Park in the Rouge Valley**, in the eastern part of the Greater Toronto Area.

In establishing this new National Park, we will work toward an agreement with provincial, regional, municipal, Aboriginal, and community stakeholders. We will ensure that the rights and interests of farmers in the region are fully protected. We will also ensure that communities in the region remain free to address their infrastructure needs.

Stephen Harper's Government will also continue taking action on climate change. Unlike the previous Liberal government – which signed grand international accords but took no action – our Government has a climate change plan, and it is working.

As part of our ongoing efforts we will make **new investments to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions** – including an extension of the ecoENERGY Retrofit-Homes program.

We will also provide **additional support for research and development in clean energy and energy efficiency**. <sup>35</sup>

**34 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed creating this new National Park**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**35 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support clean energy**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

## **SUPPORT FOR CLEAN ENERGY**

Stephen Harper's Government will continue supporting clean energy initiatives, to protect our environment and improve the quality of the air we breathe.

**We will support economically viable clean energy projects that will assist regions and provinces in the replacement of fossil fuel with renewable fuel sources.** The criteria for our support of a project will be whether it:

- has national or regional significance;
- has economic and financial merit; and
- will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

For example, **we will support the Lower Churchill hydro-electric project, through a loan guarantee or equivalent financial support.** The project would strengthen the island of Newfoundland's connection to the continental grid – and it would be a major regional environmental initiative.

It is estimated the project would reduce carbon emissions by 4.5 million tonnes annually – the equivalent of removing 3.2 million cars from the road every year.

In addition to the criteria noted above, **our support for any clean energy project will be based on the principles of respect and equitable treatment for all regions of the country.**

## **SUPPORT FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Culture and the arts contribute \$46 billion to the Canadian economy, and support more than 630,000 Canadian jobs.

But beyond this, they also enrich our lives immeasurably, as individuals, as communities, and as a country. They express Canadian diversity and strengthen Canadian identity.

Stephen Harper's Government has provided strong support for culture and the arts. Among other things, we have:

- established two new national museums, the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, in Halifax, and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, in Winnipeg;
- increased support for the Canada Council for the Arts by 20 percent, to its highest level in history;
- created the Canada Media Fund to support Canadian television, film, and digital media content;
- provided stable funding, at record levels, for the Canada Book Fund, the Canada Music Fund, and the Canada Periodical Fund;
- invested in cultural infrastructure across the country, including the Royal BC Museum, in Victoria; the Quartier de Spectacles, home of the Montreal Jazz Festival, and the Confederation Centre for the Arts, in Charlottetown; and
- provided substantial support for official language communities, through our Roadmap for Linguistic Duality – in recognition for

his support for official languages, Prime Minister Stephen Harper was awarded the Francophonie's highest international award.

We will build on these actions, by **supporting the Royal Conservatory of Music** in launching a national examination system in partnership with Carnegie Hall.

We will also **provide ongoing support for the Canada Periodical Fund** to support the distribution of publications to Canadians, while providing long-term, stable program funding.<sup>36</sup>

### **SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND FOR MATERNAL, NEWBORN, AND CHILD HEALTH**

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada won the support of our fellow G-8 countries in following through on two of the most important commitments of the Millennium Development Goals – to improve maternal and child health in the world's poorest countries.

Through the Muskoka Initiative on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, Canada, its G-8 partners, and leading charitable foundations are providing unprecedented resources to save the lives of countless women and children.

In recognition of Canada's leadership, Prime Minister Harper has been named co-chair of the UN Commission established to ensure accountability and results in meeting this most urgent challenge.

In addition to leading this historic breakthrough, we have:

- followed through on Canada's commitment to double overall international assistance from 2001-2002 levels;
- doubled our aid to Africa from 2003-2004 levels, making Canada the first G-8 country to deliver on this promise;
- ensured greater focus, efficiency, and accountability in the use of Canada's foreign aid dollars, and "untied" funding to make it more effective;
- forgiven more than \$1 billion in debt owed by the world's poorest countries;
- provided immediate and substantial assistance to Haiti in the aftermath of its devastating earthquake; and
- provided substantial development and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, and laid out a post-combat role for Canada in Afghanistan beginning this year.

We will continue to **rally world leaders to follow through on our commitments to improve the health of women and children in developing countries.**

We will also **focus our post-combat efforts in Afghanistan** on investing in the education and health of children and youth; advancing security, the rule of law, and human rights; promoting regional diplomacy; and delivering humanitarian assistance.

**36 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed these measures to support culture and the arts**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.



**HERE FOR  
LAW-ABIDING CANADIANS**

## HERE FOR LAW-ABIDING CANADIANS OUR GOAL

Law-abiding Canadians expect to live in a country where they don't have to worry when they go to bed at night; where they don't have to look over their shoulders as they walk down the street; where they can expect to find their car where they parked it.

They want to know that their **streets are safe**, and that their **children are protected** against predators.

Canadians agree that the justice system should not put the rights of criminals ahead of the **rights of victims and law-abiding citizens**. They believe that one victim is one victim too many.

They believe in **supporting the rehabilitation of offenders, but also that the punishment should fit the crime**.

Since we were first elected in 2006, Stephen Harper's Government has made **tackling crime** one of our highest priorities. The Ignatieff-led Coalition – true to its soft-on-crime ideology – has resisted and blocked our efforts.

But Stephen Harper's Government shares the common-sense beliefs of law-abiding Canadians, and we will continue pursuing our law-and-order agenda.

## OUR RECORD

In spite of obstruction from the Ignatieff-led Coalition, Stephen Harper's Government has managed to pass a number of important measures to **protect the vulnerable**, and to **hold criminals accountable**. We have:

- toughened sentencing and bail for serious gun crimes;
- strengthened the sentencing and monitoring of dangerous, high-risk offenders;
- ensured that murders connected to organized crime will be treated automatically as first-degree murders, and imposed mandatory jail time for drive-by or reckless shootings;
- ended sentence discounts for multiple murder;
- abolished the faint-hope clause that allowed early parole for murderers;
- cracked down on street racing and drug-impaired driving;
- raised the age of consent to 16 years, to better protect 14- and 15-year olds from sexual predators;
- strengthened the National Sex Offender Registry and the National DNA Data Bank, to better protect our children and our communities from sexual predators;
- strengthened measures to protect children from online sexual exploitation;
- limited the granting of pardons, to better reflect the severity of the crimes committed, especially sexual offences against children;
- eliminated Old Age Security payments to prisoners;

- ended the practice of giving 2-for-1 credit for time served in pre-trial custody;
- ended the practice of granting early parole to white-collar criminals and other non-violent offenders;
- ensured tougher sentences for fraud, to help fight white-collar crime;
- passed a law to crack down on crooked immigration consultants who exploit prospective immigrants and undermine the integrity of our immigration system
- cracked down on auto theft and trafficking in stolen property; and
- given police and courts new tools to fight identity theft, to help prevent fraud.

In addition to these new laws, we have:

- established the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, to provide information on victims' rights and services for victims, to receive complaints, and to raise awareness of victims' concerns among policy makers and in the justice system;
- established the National Anti-Drug Strategy, to help prevent illicit drug use and to support access to treatment for those with drug dependencies;
- established the Youth Gang Prevention Fund, providing support for successful community programs to help at-risk youth to avoid involvement in gangs and criminal activity; and
- invested in hiring 1,000 new RCMP personnel, and established a Police Officers Recruitment Fund to support the recruitment of 2,500 police officers across Canada.

## OUR PLAN

But there is more to do, and we will press on with our law-and-order agenda.

Here is what a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will do to **strengthen our justice and corrections systems**, and to **help Canadians feel safe in their homes and in their communities**:

### SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME

Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to support victims of crime. We believe the justice system must not put the rights of criminals ahead of the rights of victims.

We established the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, to provide information on victims' rights and services for victims, to receive complaints, and to raise awareness of victims' concerns among policy makers and in the justice system.

We have also made the rights of victims a priority in our reforms to the justice system. Among many other things, we:

- ended sentence discounts for multiple murder, because every victim matters, and their families should not be left to feel as if the life of their loved one doesn't count;

- established tougher sentences for fraud, and ended early parole for fraudsters and other non-violent offenders, to better reflect the devastating impact of white-collar crime on individuals and communities;
- limited the granting of pardons, to better reflect the severity of the crimes committed, especially sexual offences against children; and
- abolished the faint-hope clause for murderers, to spare families of victims the pain of reliving their losses over and over again through repeated parole eligibility hearings.

But more is needed to hold criminals to account and to stand up for victims of crime.

Under the Criminal Code as it stands, courts are supposed to impose a victim surcharge on convicted criminals – a fine to help fund victim support services in every province.

In a majority of cases, however, the fine is not imposed. Criminals are let off the hook, and victim support services are left without adequate funding.

**We will amend the Criminal Code to double the victim surcharge, and make it mandatory in every case without exception.**

We will also take action to support parents of murdered or missing children, and parents of gravely ill children.

No one but a parent who has experienced these things can imagine or understand their suffering. But we know we have a duty to help support them.

To this end, we will **provide enhanced EI benefits to parents of murdered or missing children, and parents of gravely ill children.** Funding for this measure will come from general revenue, not EI premiums.

In recognition of the fact that the loss or serious illness of a child is one of the worst experiences a parent can undergo, these enhanced benefits will assist affected parents through the most difficult periods of their lives.

#### **DRUG-FREE PRISONS**

Drug use among prisoners dramatically reduces their chances of rehabilitation. Tackling drug use and the drug trade in federal prisons would greatly increase the success of rehabilitation efforts, and it would go a long way to making the system safer for guards and prisoners.

We will ensure that:

- every federal inmate will undergo **drug testing at least once a year;**
- prisoners in possession of illicit substances will face **appropriate additional charges;** and that
- **parole applicants who fail drug tests will be denied parole.**

## COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is one of the most heinous crimes imaginable.

This modern-day form of slavery is a fast-growing, multi-billion dollar global industry in which it is estimated some two million persons are bought and sold around the world each year. Its victims, most often vulnerable women and children, are used primarily in the sex trade.

It is estimated that 12,000 to 15,000 persons in Canada are victims of human trafficking.

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to help address the problem. Among other things, we:

- strongly supported Conservative MP Joy Smith's bill, which established mandatory jail time for trafficking in children; and
- we raised the age of consent to 16 years, to better protect 14- and 15-year olds from sexual predators.

Now we will take the next steps. We will:

- develop and implement a **National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking**;
- support organizations providing **assistance to victims**; and
- **help ensure female immigrants aged 15 to 21 who arrive in Canada alone are not subjected to illegitimate or unsafe work** – in cases of individuals at high-risk, during their first six months in our country we will provide for regular contact with the Canadian Border Services Agency.

We will also re-introduce **legislation to protect vulnerable foreign workers** – for example, women entering Canada to work as exotic dancers.

The legislation will give immigration officers greater authority to deny work permits for those being sent to Canada to work in humiliating or degrading situations, including those who may be victims of human trafficking.

## ENDING SENTENCE DISCOUNTS FOR MULTIPLE CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND SEX OFFENCES

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to make the protection of society a fundamental principle of the justice and corrections systems. We have also worked hard to defend the rights of victims of crime.

For example, we passed legislation to end the practice of granting concurrent periods of parole ineligibility – sentence discounts – for multiple murder. Every victim matters, and we must not allow the system to treat victims and their families as if they don't count. We must also take action to keep dangerous criminals behind bars where they belong.

We will extend this principle, through **legislation to end sentence discounts for multiple child sex offences and child pornography offences**, including making, distributing, possessing, or accessing child pornography.



We will ensure that society is better protected from such criminals, and that punishment in such cases better reflects the devastation caused in the lives of children and their families by these most heinous crimes.

### **CRACKING DOWN ON ELDER ABUSE**

Canadians agree that the justice system's highest priority should be to protect society – and especially the most vulnerable members of society.

And Canadians agree that we must do whatever we can to protect and honour those who have built our great country. Elderly Canadians have earned our gratitude for a lifetime of hard work in service to our families, our communities, and our country.

Sadly, all too often they are victims of crime, including fraud, neglect, and violence, which robs them of their dignity and peace at a time of life when they deserve to enjoy special care and respect.

Stephen Harper's Government has already taken action to stand up for older Canadians who are victims of fraud, as part of our efforts to crack down on white-collar crime. But more is needed.

To help protect elderly Canadians and to ensure crimes against them are punished appropriately, we will **amend the Criminal Code to add vulnerability due to age as an aggravating factor when sentencing those who commit crimes against elderly Canadians.**

### **STRENGTHENING THE LAWS ON SELF-DEFENCE, DEFENCE OF PROPERTY, AND CITIZEN'S ARREST**

Canadians have the right to self-defence and the right to defend their property. They may also make a citizen's arrest when necessary.

Canadians agree that the police are our first line of defence against crime, and that vigilantism has no place in our society.

But the police cannot be everywhere at once. And in recent years the scales of justice have tipped too far in favour of the rights of criminals at the expense of law-abiding citizens.

The case of Toronto shopkeeper David Chen made it perfectly clear: when a hard-working Canadian can be charged and prosecuted for arresting a career criminal who repeatedly robbed his store, the time has come to take action.

A re-elected Stephen Harper Government will re-introduce the **Citizen's Arrest and Self-Defence Act** – legislation to clarify the self-defence and defence of property provisions in the Criminal Code, and expand the circumstances under which Canadians may make a citizen's arrest.

### **TACKLING CONTRABAND TOBACCO**

Contraband tobacco has become a massive black-market industry. It results in huge losses in revenue.

More important, it makes it much cheaper – and therefore much easier – for children and teenagers to start smoking. And, by encouraging smoking, it leads to higher health care costs and higher rates of smoking-related illness and death.

To help reduce the problem of trafficking in contraband tobacco, we will establish **mandatory jail time for repeat offenders**.

We will also establish a new **RCMP Anti-Contraband Force** of 50 officers.

#### **REINTRODUCTION OF LAW-AND-ORDER LEGISLATION**

Prior to this unnecessary election, our Government was attempting to pass other pieces of legislation to protect society and hold criminals accountable, including bills to:

- crack down on organized drug crime;
- end house arrest for serious and violent criminals;
- end house arrest for serious personal injury offences, such as sexual assault;
- eliminate pardons for serious criminals;
- establish tougher sentences and mandatory jail time for sexual offences against children;
- strengthen the handling of violent and repeat young offenders (Sébastien's Law);
- give law enforcement and national security agencies up-to-date tools to fight crime in today's high-tech telecommunications environment;
- put public safety first, when considering requests to transfer prisoners back to Canada;
- give police and courts the tools they need to investigate and prevent acts of terrorism;
- allow victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism, in Canadian courts; and
- streamline long and complex trials, to ensure justice is delivered swiftly.

We believe that the justice and corrections systems must put victims and public safety first – and Canadians agree. But the Ignatieff-led Coalition has obstructed our reforms, for the sake of an out-of-touch ideology that makes apologies for criminals.

Enough is enough. **A Stephen Harper-led majority Government will bundle these bills into comprehensive legislation, and pass them within the new Parliament's first 100 days.**



**HERE FOR  
CANADA**

 Conservative

**HERE FOR COMMUNITIES  
AND INDUSTRIES**

# HERE FOR COMMUNITIES AND INDUSTRIES

## OUR GOAL

Stephen Harper's Government shares the pride of all Canadians, of living in the greatest country in the world. We are committed to building a future of hope and opportunity for our children and grandchildren, from coast to coast to coast. Our goals are to:

- promote a strong quality of life in all communities – cities, towns, and rural communities;
- support individual regions in their unique challenges and aspirations;
- respect and preserve the culture and values of rural Canada; and
- help ensure the success of traditional industries.

## OUR RECORD

Stephen Harper's Government has **taken action on the priorities of urban communities**. We have:

- worked effectively with the provinces and municipalities to deliver historic investments in local infrastructure, including better highways, roads, bridges, water- and wastewater systems, housing, college and university facilities, public transit, and green energy;
- doubled the Gas Tax Fund and made it permanent, to provide a predictable stream of revenue to allow municipalities to plan and fund improvements to essential infrastructure;
- provided special funding, through the Communities Component of our Building Canada Fund, to address the unique needs of smaller municipalities;
- established the Public Transit Tax Credit, to encourage the use of public transit and help protect our environment;
- cracked down on guns, gangs, and drugs;
- established the Youth Gang Prevention Fund, providing support for successful community programs to help at-risk youth to avoid involvement in gangs and criminal activity; and
- supported the recruitment of 2,500 police officers across Canada.

We have also **stood up for rural communities**, and **taken action on the concerns of Canadians in rural regions**. We have:

- opposed the wasteful and ineffective long-gun registry, and extended measures to avoid the criminalization of law-abiding farmers, hunters, and sportsmen;
- provided strong support for each of Canada's regional development agencies, and established two new agencies to support economic development in Southern Ontario and in

Canada's North;

- made substantial investments to modernize rural infrastructure – including roads, bridges, harbours, water-treatment facilities, and post-secondary institutions;
- supported job creation and economic diversification in communities facing difficult transitions in local industries;
- increased investments in the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers, providing skills-training and job-search assistance in communities experiencing ongoing high unemployment and/or with a high reliance on a single industry affected by downsizing/closures;
- extended broadband coverage to 200,000 additional households in rural and remote regions; and
- invested in improvements to ferry services in Atlantic Canada, the Magdalen Islands, and British Columbia.

Stephen Harper's Government has also provided **strong support to protect, sustain, and promote Canada's traditional industries**. We have:

- fought hard and succeeded in reopening and expanding markets for Canadian beef around the world, including China, Hong Kong, Russia, and Colombia;
- fought hard and succeeded in reopening and expanding markets for Canadian pork around the world, including China and Russia;
- kept canola exports flowing to China;
- stood up for Canadian sealers and sealing communities, and opened a vast new market for Canadian seal products in China;
- made credit available to help young farmers get started and to help ensure the family farm can be passed on to the next generation;
- strengthened business risk management programs for farmers, and increased support for agricultural innovation, market development and competitiveness;
- successfully negotiated restored access to the U.S. market for the Canadian softwood lumber industry, including the return of more than \$5 billion in duty deposits to Canadian producers;
- invested in combating the mountain pine beetle infestation in British Columbia;
- provided \$170 million to support diversification and innovation in the forestry sector, and established a \$1-billion Pulp and Paper Green Transformation Program;
- provided \$44 billion in financial services to Canada-based forestry companies through Export Development Canada, to help increase their long-term competitiveness, and more than \$420 million in loans to Canadian forestry firms;
- re-established and extended the Mineral Exploration Tax Credit, and streamlined regulatory reviews for new mining and energy

projects, to help create jobs in the mining industry;

- helped Canadians in the fishing industry in transferring fishing property to their children, by giving them the same lifetime capital gains exemption enjoyed by farmers and small-business owners;
- promoted the sustainability of commercial fishing and small coastal communities, through investments in small craft harbours, and through regulatory initiatives in support of the aquaculture sector; and
- supported rural tourism, through historic expansions of our National Parks and wilderness and marine conservation areas, and substantial investments to improve facilities at our National Parks and National Historic Sites of Canada.

## OUR PLAN

Here is what a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will do to **support Canadian communities and industries, according to their unique needs and priorities.**

### CITIES, TOWNS, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

#### PERMANENT FUNDING FOR MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Stephen Harper's Government has provided strong support to municipalities, to help improve the quality of life of Canadians and ensure long-term economic growth. We have:

- worked effectively with other levels of government to deliver historic investments in local infrastructure – including better highways, roads, bridges, water- and wastewater systems, housing, college and university facilities, public transit, and green energy;
- provided special funding to address the unique needs of smaller municipalities; and
- established the Public Transit Tax Credit, to encourage the use of public transit and help protect our environment.

In 2008, Stephen Harper's Government doubled the Gas Tax Fund and made it permanent – a major step forward for municipalities, providing a stable and predictable source of revenue for the renewal of local infrastructure.

We will introduce **legislation to confirm this permanent funding for municipal infrastructure through the Gas Tax Fund.** <sup>37</sup>

#### SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERISM

The best solutions to the diverse challenges facing communities are often found locally. Every day, the power of innovation is seen at work in communities across Canada, as citizens, businesses, and charitable groups join forces to tackle local problems.

Stephen Harper's Government is committed to working in partnership with innovative charities and forward-thinking private-sector companies to support new approaches to social challenges.

For example, we provided support for Pathways to Education, to help it expand to cities across the country. Pathways is a practical,

**37 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support municipal infrastructure**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

volunteer-driven organization with a track record of reducing high-school drop-out rates and helping youth in low-income communities to go on to post-secondary education or job training.

We are also committed to promoting the great work of the countless volunteers who make a difference in our communities.

In January 2011, Prime Minister Stephen Harper established the Prime Minister's Awards for Volunteerism, to recognize outstanding volunteers from coast to coast to coast, and to encourage others to follow their example.

We will take action to provide more effective support for community partnerships and volunteerism. We will:

- establish **Social Impact Bonds**, to raise money for promising new community initiatives;
- **simplify funding agreements**, and **reduce red tape** for applicants;
- test new ways to **engage the private sector and maximize the effectiveness of government support**; and
- provide funding to Volunteer Canada to **develop a volunteer-matching service**. <sup>38</sup>

#### **HELPING AT-RISK YOUTH AVOID GANGS AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken strong action to prevent crime and to protect our communities from guns, gangs, and drugs.

Among many other actions, in 2007 we established the Youth Gang Prevention Fund, to support successful community programs that help youth who are in gangs or at risk of joining gangs.

The Fund supports practical initiatives, including recreational opportunities, peer and family support, mentoring, and life-skills development. It is helping at-risk youth across the country to set their sights on education, employment, and a hopeful future.

To build on our crime-prevention efforts, and to continue helping at-risk youth to make good choices for their future, we will **renew our support for the Youth Gang Prevention Fund, and make it permanent**. <sup>39</sup>

#### **MORE DOCTORS AND NURSES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES**

In recent years the number of doctors and nurses in Canada has increased. But Canadians in some regions of the country – especially rural and remote regions – continue to experience a shortage.

We will help attract new doctors, nurses and nurse practitioners to these communities, by **forgiving a portion of federal student loans for those who agree to practice in under-served rural or remote areas**.

The result will be better health care and a higher quality of life for Canadians in rural and remote communities. <sup>40</sup>

As Quebec does not participate in the Canada Student Loan Program, a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will work closely with the Government of Quebec to implement this measure in a manner that respects its jurisdiction.

**38 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to strengthen local communities**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**39 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to protect our communities and help at-risk youth**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**40 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to strengthen health care in rural communities**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

## DEFIBRILLATORS IN EVERY HOCKEY ARENA IN CANADA

There's nothing more Canadian than a hockey game at the local arena. It's a great way to build friendships and communities, and it's part of an active, healthy lifestyle.

To help protect players, both adults and children, many communities and local hockey associations have purchased defibrillators for their local arenas. Experience shows these investments can save lives. In partnership with interested stakeholders, we will **ensure that every recreational hockey arena in Canada has a defibrillator**, and we will **support training for attendants** in using them.

## VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS TAX CREDIT

Many fire departments in Canada depend on volunteers. Unfortunately, some have been forced to close because of a lack of recruits. As a result, some communities have lost their only emergency responder service, and lack protection from fire and other emergencies.

Volunteer firefighters sacrifice their time and some incur expenses, in addition to putting their lives at risk, to protect others. They deserve our gratitude and support.

We will **recognize the importance of this life-saving work**, and **help sustain volunteer fire departments**, by establishing a new Volunteer Firefighters Tax Credit. <sup>41</sup>

The measure will provide a non-refundable tax credit on an amount of \$3,000, for volunteer firefighters who perform at least 200 hours of service per year.

## END THE INEFFECTIVE LONG-GUN REGISTRY

Stephen Harper's Government has strongly and consistently opposed the previous Liberal government's \$2-billion long-gun registry.

The long-gun registry is wasteful and ineffective; and it needlessly and unfairly targets law-abiding Canadians. It does nothing to reduce crime, or to strengthen our efforts to keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

Unfortunately the Ignatieff-led Coalition with the NDP and Bloc Québécois has fiercely resisted efforts to abolish the long-gun registry. They oppose our efforts to crack down on criminals who use guns, while insisting on heaping penalties on farmers and duck hunters.

We will **end the long-gun registry once and for all**.

## HUNTING ADVISORY PANEL TO THE MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Hunting, fishing and trapping have played a key role in Canada's history.

They remain central to the livelihood and traditions of many Canadians, including Aboriginal and Northern communities. They are also an important part of many local and regional tourism industries.

Unfortunately these legitimate recreational and commercial activities are sometimes threatened by unfair restrictions based on misunderstandings of rural economies and conservation practices.

<sup>41</sup> **THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to help protect rural communities and support volunteer firefighters**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.



Canadians agree that we must take action to protect endangered species. But all too often decisions have been made without input from the Canadians most directly affected, who have unique expertise in the conservation of our natural heritage.

We will establish a Hunting Advisory Panel, reporting to the Minister of the Environment, comprised of representatives of provincial and territorial hunters and anglers associations, to **ensure government decisions are based on solid science and balanced advice.**

#### **STRENGTHEN PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The Canadian Bill of Rights, championed by John Diefenbaker and passed by his Conservative government in 1960, recognized property rights in Canada.

These rights were omitted in drafting the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, however, leaving landowners without appropriate protection against unfair restrictions on the use and enjoyment of their property.

Specifically, while the *Species at Risk Act* provides for compensation for land-use restrictions intended to protect the habitats of endangered species, in practice compensation is virtually never granted.

We will **strengthen the rights of landowners**, by reviewing the *Species at Risk Act* with a view to ensuring that when compensation is owed, compensation will be paid.

#### **IMPROVE AND EXPAND CANADA'S SNOWMOBILE AND RECREATIONAL TRAILS**

The snowmobile was invented in Canada and, ever since, snowmobiling has been a hugely popular Canadian recreational activity.

Our Government has provided support to the National Trails Coalition for a national initiative to create and improve snowmobile and all-terrain-vehicle trails. To date our support has helped improve 500 trails across the country.

We will build on this accomplishment, through **additional funding for upgrades and new trails.**

#### **RELOCATE THE HEAD OFFICE OF CANADA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR QUEBEC REGIONS**

Communities in the regions of Quebec benefit from the work of Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions. The agency targets assistance to businesses and non-profit organizations according to the specific needs and unique potential of each region of the province.

To better support the agency in creating jobs and opportunity for all Quebecers, we will **relocate its head office to a centre or centres appropriate to all the regions of the province.**

#### **ACCORD ON QUEBEC'S OFFSHORE RESOURCES**

Canada's natural resources are among our country's greatest assets. Throughout our history they have been a crucial source of jobs and growth in every region of the country.

The federal government has worked with provincial governments to develop these resources responsibly and to create new opportunities

for Canadians.

For more than 12 years the Government of Quebec has wanted to explore development of the Old Harry oil and gas field in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Recently our Government reached an historic accord with the Government of Quebec which sets the conditions to allow development in the area to proceed. The result will be long-term job creation and economic growth in the regions of Quebec.

**We will implement the accord on Quebec's offshore resources, by tabling the necessary legislation in Parliament.**



## **TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES**

### **EXPAND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS FOR FARMERS**

The agriculture and agri-food sector is the source of approximately one in eight jobs in Canada, and more than 8 percent of our GDP. Canadian farmers produce the best, healthiest, and safest food in the world.

Stephen Harper's Government recognizes the importance of agriculture to the Canadian economy, and has listened to and taken action on the priorities of Canadian farmers.

Among other things, we have provided strong support to the Agriculture and Food Trade Commissioner Service, to defend and advance the interests of Canadian farmers in trade negotiations and disputes.

We also established the Market Access Secretariat, to coordinate efforts to pursue new and existing international markets and to keep pace with global competitors. The Secretariat has already succeeded in keeping canola exports flowing to China.

To build on this, we will **increase support for the Agriculture and Food Trade Commissioner Service and the Market Access Secretariat.**

These two bodies have proved their value; we will extend their good work in support of Canadian farmers.

We will also invest in a new **Agriculture Innovation Initiative**, to support local farm-based research and development projects.<sup>42</sup>

In addition, to ensure our continuing efforts to support farmers are as effective as possible, we will develop a **National Farm and Food Strategy** to guide federal policy through the coming years.

The Strategy will build on our efforts to sustain the Canadian family farm, to strengthen food safety, and to open new markets for the world-class products of Canadian farmers.

#### **EQUIVALENCY FOR FOOD INPUTS**

Like other businesspeople, Canadian farmers want access to the latest innovations, to succeed in the global economy.

Unfortunately, long and burdensome approval processes imposed by the federal government are preventing Canadian farmers from obtaining the best fertilizers, pesticides, and veterinary drugs available on the market.

We will **revise current approval processes to allow for international equivalencies in such products**. We will eliminate needless duplication, while protecting our national sovereignty and maintaining the highest safety standards.

#### **SUPPORT SUPPLY MANAGEMENT**

Supply management helps ensure the success of Canadian farmers, through price stability, predictable levels of imports, and reasonable returns for their production. It also helps provide a consistent supply of high-quality, nutritious food for Canadian consumers.

Our Government has a strong record of defending supply management. For example, we have taken action on Article 28 under GATT to limit imports of milk protein concentrates, and we established cheese compositional standards to ensure that real milk is an ingredient in Canadian cheese.

We will **continue to stand up for Canadian farmers and industries, by defending supply management** in all international forums and bilateral negotiations.

#### **CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

We will **continue to work with Western Canadian grain farmers** to ensure that the results of the barley plebiscite are respected and that they are given the freedom to choose whether to sell grain on the open market or through the Canadian Wheat Board.

#### **SUPPORT FOREST INNOVATION AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT**

Canadian forestry workers and communities centered on the forestry industry have faced difficult challenges in recent years – the housing collapse in the U.S., a drop in demand for newsprint, and the mountain pine beetle infestation, among other things.

Stephen Harper's Government has provided substantial support to help meet these challenges, through innovation, diversification, market development, and increased competitiveness.

**42 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support Canadian farmers**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

We will build on these actions, by **extending the current Forest Innovation and Market Development programs.** <sup>43</sup>

#### **EXTEND THE MINERAL EXPLORATION TAX CREDIT**

To promote mineral exploration and to help protect mining communities affected by long-term challenges, Stephen Harper's Government has reintroduced and extended the Mineral Exploration Tax Credit.

We will extend this successful measure once again, to help **sustain and create jobs in the Canadian mining industry.** <sup>44</sup>

#### **SUPPORT FOR THE FISHING INDUSTRY**

Stephen Harper's Government has helped Canadians in the fishing industry in transferring fishing property to their children, by giving them the same lifetime capital gains exemption enjoyed by farmers and small-business owners.

We have also promoted the sustainability of commercial fishing and small coastal communities, through regulatory initiatives in support of the aquaculture sector, and through investments in small craft harbours.

In 2010 a series of storms damaged more than 250 small craft harbours in Manitoba, Quebec and across Atlantic Canada. As part of our ongoing support for the Canadian fishing industry, we will **extend support for repairs and improvements to small craft harbours.** <sup>45</sup>

**43 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support Canadian forestry**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**44 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support Canadian mining**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.

**45 THE IGNATIEFF-LED COALITION** with the NDP and Bloc Québécois **opposed this measure to support the Canadian fishing industry**, when they opposed Stephen Harper's Budget last month, and chose instead to force an unnecessary and opportunistic election.



**HERE FOR  
CANADA**



**HERE FOR INTEGRITY  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

# HERE FOR INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

## OUR GOAL

Before Stephen Harper became Prime Minister, Canadians had lost faith in the integrity of their government.

Waste, mismanagement, and corruption were rampant on the inside. And regular Canadians – people who work hard, pay their taxes, and play by the rules – were left on the outside.

In the election in 2006, Canadians voted for change – to end corruption and restore accountability in Ottawa.

Stephen Harper's Government has lived up to that mandate.

Conservatives are in public life to serve our fellow Canadians, and we are committed to **providing the principled, accountable government that our great country deserves.**

## OUR RECORD

Our first act on forming government in 2006 was to pass our **Federal Accountability Act**. Ottawa is now a different and better place as a result. Through this unprecedented, landmark legislation, we:

- strengthened the role of the Auditor General and the Ethics Commissioner;
- banned secret donations to political candidates;
- reformed the financing of political parties by eliminating large personal donations and banning donations from unions and corporations;
- provided real protection for whistleblowers;
- improved auditing and accountability within government departments; and
- strengthened public access to information.

We have also **worked tirelessly to increase the democratic legitimacy of the unelected Senate**. But the Ignatieff-led Coalition with the NDP and Bloc Québécois has resisted our efforts consistently – and unfortunately, so far they have been successful in preventing reform.

## OUR PLAN

Here is what a re-elected Stephen Harper Government will do to **continue strengthening integrity and accountability in government and political activity.**

### SENATE REFORM

An unelected Senate is simply not acceptable in a modern democracy. Stephen Harper's Government has fought long and hard for Senate reform.

Unfortunately, the Ignatieff-led Coalition has blocked us at every turn.

A Stephen Harper-led majority Government will:

- re-introduce and pass legislation setting **term limits for senators**;
- continue to encourage the provinces to work with us to **establish a democratic process for selecting senators**;
- **appoint those who are selected through democratic processes**; and
- in provinces that do not take us up on our offer, we will **fill Senate vacancies with individuals who support our Senate reform goals, including our goal of an elected Senate.**

#### **FAIR REPRESENTATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

The Fathers of Confederation agreed that the allocation of seats in the House of Commons should reflect each province's share of the population. "Representation by population" has remained a fundamental principle of our democracy ever since.

To ensure this principle is maintained and to take into account population changes across the country, from time to time the formula for allocating seats has been updated. Updates to the formula have been designed to ensure fairness for both faster- and slower-growing provinces.

Because of significant population changes since the last update, the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario are now significantly underrepresented.

We will reintroduce legislation to **restore fair representation in the House of Commons.**

At the same time, we will protect the seat count of slower-growing provinces. We will ensure that Quebec's seat count will not drop below its current 75 seats, and that the population of Quebec remains proportionately represented.

#### **FIRST NATIONS FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to strengthen the rights of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, including:

- formal endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in a manner fully consistent with Canada's constitution and laws;
- an independent tribunal with the power to make binding decisions on specific claims and compensation, part of our successful efforts to speed up the resolution of outstanding specific claims;
- extension of protection under the Canadian Human Rights Act to people living on reserve; and
- legislation to extend to women living on reserve the same matrimonial property rights held by other Canadian women.

We will continue to work cooperatively with Canada's Aboriginal peoples. Building on the steps we've taken to ensure they enjoy the same rights as other Canadians, we will introduce, as government legislation, Conservative MP Kelly Block's bill **requiring the**

**publication of the salaries and expenses of First Nations chiefs and councillors.**

This new law will increase transparency and accountability in the use of public funds for First Nations communities, and increase openness and trust among band councils and members, and all Canadians.

**END THE SUBSIDY OF POLITICAL PARTIES**

Stephen Harper's Government has taken action to reform the financing of political parties.

We eliminated large personal donations and banned donations from unions and corporations, to prevent unfair influence on political parties through money. But more is needed.

Political parties enjoy considerable advantages over other organizations in fundraising, including very strong tax incentives for donors, and rebates on money spent at the national and local levels.

In addition, the previous Liberal government established a direct subsidy for political parties – even for parties that make no effort to raise funds on their own. Last year alone, the cost to taxpayers of this direct subsidy was \$27 million.

Governments have a duty to use Canadians' tax dollars with great care, and only in the public interest – especially in a time of fiscal restraint, when families are struggling to make ends meet.

We have always opposed direct subsidies; and **a Stephen Harper-led majority Government will phase out the direct subsidy of political parties over the next three years.** <sup>46</sup>

**OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE**

Stephen Harper's Government has a strong record of action to increase accountability in Ottawa.

In response to the series of major scandals under the previous Liberal government, our first act on forming government in 2006 was to pass our *Federal Accountability Act*.

Recently we announced the new Open Government Initiative, as part of our ongoing efforts to foster greater openness and accountability. The Initiative is designed to achieve this in three broad streams:

- open data – centralized access to government data in a more useful format for citizens, the private sector and non-government organizations;
- open information – proactive release of government information, and administrative changes to improve the access to information system; and
- open dialogue – innovative online tools for two-way engagement between Canadians and their government.

We will take further action to implement the Open Government Initiative. We will establish an **Open Government Working Group**, to coordinate Open Government projects across government departments.

**46 PHASE-OUT OF THE SUBSIDY OF POLITICAL PARTIES**

	<b>COST PER VOTE</b>	<b>COST PER YEAR</b>
<b>NOW</b>	\$2.00	\$27.4 M
<b>YEAR 1</b>	\$1.50	\$20.5 M
<b>YEAR 2</b>	\$1.00	\$13.7 M
<b>YEAR 3</b>	\$0.50	\$6.8 M
<b>YEAR 4</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00





## FISCAL TRACK TO DEFICIT ELIMINATION

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Budget 2011 Fiscal Track	-29.6	-19.4	-9.5	-0.3	4.2
Strategic and Operating Review Savings		1.0	2.0	4.0	4.0
Revised Fiscal Track	-29.6	-18.4	-7.5	3.7	8.2
New Spending	-0.7	-1.7	-0.2	-0.9	-3.1
Four-Year Total					-6.6
Net Fiscal Track	<b>-30.3</b>	<b>-20.1</b>	<b>-7.7</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>5.1</b>



**HERE FOR**

**CANADA**



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