

PROTECTING CANADA'S **FUTURE**

**MAY CONSTITUENCY  
WEEK CAUCUS PACKAGE**

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CONSERVATIVE RESOURCE GROUP  
MAY 2009

## **May Constituency Week Stump Speech**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for that warm greeting.

I always enjoy being back in [Community].

You know, being in Ottawa is a chance to make a real contribution towards making Canada work better for all of you.

But being back here always serves as an important reminder of what actually needs to get done — and who we need to get it done for.

Being back also gives me the chance to fill you in on what's going on in Ottawa —and what it means for your family and our community.

### **Global Economic Downturn**

In particular, I want to talk about Canada's Economic Action Plan.

This is the playbook we are using to get our economy back on track. Our Conservative government's plan delivers for Canadians in several key areas.

We are reducing taxes for everyone — businesses and individuals. It means that everyone has a little more money in their pocket now, when it's needed most.

You may also have heard about our landmark investment in community infrastructure projects like the roads **[and bridges]** we drive on, sewers, water treatment facilities and even community Rec centres.

This is investment that really hits home because it is investment in things that families in our community use — and depend on — every day.

All this construction means more jobs, more money in people's pockets, and more support for local businesses.

Our government is working hard to get the money out the door and the shovels in the ground.

### **EI Enhancement**

At the same time, we are continuing to take action for vulnerable workers —and a big part of that is cleaning up the old Liberal Employment Insurance system.

First and foremost, this includes extending Employment Insurance benefits by an extra five weeks for the next two years.

We are helping Canadians who have lost their jobs to train for better ones by extending EI income benefits while they are training.

We are also expanding the federal work-sharing program. For those that don't know, work-sharing agreements are between the government and individual companies to reduce the need for laying off workers in slow periods.

By combining EI income benefits with a reduced number of working hours, work-sharing agreements keep Canadian workers on the job.

### **Rural Support**

However, there are some communities that need special attention. Those communities that are dependent on a single industry for most people's jobs are particularly vulnerable. It could be a place where the a local mine employs the majority of the folks in town, — a community where generations of the same family work alongside one another building cars on the assembly line — or a mill town that's feeling the effects of the reduced demand for Canadian lumber.

The point is that in difficult economic times, these are communities that are particularly hard hit.

To help single-industry communities, the Conservative government has created the Community Adjustment Fund. This fund helps struggling communities to attract new businesses and provides additional support for hard hit families.

### **Long-Gun Registry**

Speaking of supporting rural Canada, I want to talk a bit about crime.

Our government recently introduced new legislation to deal with the failed long-gun registry.

Since taking office in 2006, we have been working to eliminate this wasteful Liberal legacy — a \$2 billion waste of taxpayers' money that unfairly targets hunters and farmers.

The money that gets wasted on it should be going to support front line policing — and the pursuit of real criminals.

The Auditor General even pointed out that it was all for nothing, because the data in the registry isn't reliable.

Michael Ignatieff and his Liberals refuse to see reason on their costly mistake and continue to oppose ending the registry. And the Bloc and NDP are in lock-step behind them. In fact, the opposition parties are taking it one step further. They are trying to end the amnesty that our government introduced for farmers and hunters who hadn't registered in the first place.

If the Liberals and other opposition parties had their way, they'd be ramping up the persecution against law-abiding farmers and hunters.

That's unacceptable.

Now, we have a new bill to repeal the long-gun registry. Rural Canadians need to help us send a message to Michael Ignatieff and the Liberals — law-abiding farmers and hunters with shotguns and rifles aren't the problem.

### **Crime Reforms**

Criminals are part of the problem.

Weak laws are the other part.

You know that.

I know that. —

And the Conservative government knows that.

That's why, in addition to strengthening Canada's economy, we are continuing our action to crack down on crime — real crime.

Building on our Tackling Violent Crime Act that was passed before the election, we have already introduced tough measures this session to deal with crime more effectively.

For instance, we have brought forward a bill to require a mandatory jail sentence for criminals convicted of manufacturing drugs, or drug pushers who are caught selling drugs to children or dealing outside of schools.

Recently, Canadians have been even more concerned about a surge of gang violence in our cities. Together with the Provincial governments, we are bringing forward tough new measures to crack down on gang crime. These include measures to crack down on gun crimes, including drive-by shootings that endanger members of the public.

We are also targeting identity theft. The opportunities for fraud that the internet creates mean that we have to take a fresh look at how we go after fraudsters, particularly those that try to rip-off vulnerable seniors.

So we are targeting the roots of the problem by making it illegal to gather or sell personal information that will be used for fraud. We are also getting tough on offenders who steal government-issued ID and those that help create fakes.

Finally, we are taking action to bring some fairness to sentencing. I want to talk about this one for a second, because it just seems crazy to me.

Did you know when a criminal is convicted and then sentenced, any of the time they spent in jail before and during the trial gets counted for double, or even sometimes triple against their total sentence?

Think about it.

Someone who is too dangerous to be let out on bail before their trial can actually end up serving less time in the long-run. It's like 2-for-1 justice. And it's not right. So, we're taking action to bring some fairness back to sentencing.

### **Protecting Seniors**

In addition to the action we are taking to crack down on fraudsters and criminals, our government is also working to help protect Canadian seniors from the global economic downturn. In difficult economic times, we must do what we can to ensure that our most vulnerable are able to live in security.

For seniors that live on fixed incomes, this can be a challenging time. That's why our government is once again increasing the Age Credit amount, by another \$1,000, helping stretch that fixed income a bit further.

At the same time we are helping to build more affordable housing for low-income seniors. Over this year and the next, we are investing \$400 million to expand our affordable housing program. Canadian seniors have given so much to our country. We have a duty to not only protect them, but to help preserve their dignity as well.

### **Swine Flu / Canadian Pork**

I want to speak for a minute about the H1N1 influenza. First, let me be very clear. From everything we have been told by our top scientists, there is absolutely no link between eating properly cooked pork and catching this virus. It seems the vast majority of people who have been sickened by the virus have recently returned from a visit to Mexico — where the problems started — or been in contact with someone who has.

Let me say that again. In fact, I'll repeat what the World Health Organization said, "There is no risk of infection from this virus from consumption of well-cooked pork and pork products."

Unfortunately, some parts of the world have resorted to panicking. Some governments have even taken the ridiculous step of banning pork products from different parts of Canada, even with the WHO and other international bodies saying that pork is not a source of the virus. We are working hard at the international level to resolve these trade issues. But, in the meantime, I would urge you to think about Canadian pig farmers the next time you are at the grocery store. In difficult times, Canadians stick together and help each other out.

### **Ignatieff / Liberals**

Well, after all I've told you about the good things our Conservative government is doing to deliver for hard-working Canadian families; you'd think the Liberals would be pretty supportive.

You'd think wrong.

Mr. Ignatieff actually told a group of Ontario business people that — in his words — “we will have to raise taxes.”

In a global economic downturn?

Our government thinks Canadians pay too much tax. That's why we find ways every year to reduce the taxes that hard-working families have to pay.

So, now we know where Mr. Ignatieff stands. But that's all we know. He won't tell us what taxes he wants to raise. He won't tell us how much he wants to raise them by. Most importantly he won't tell us who is going to have to pay them.

I encourage you to let him know that you aren't interested in his tax hikes — not his Carbon Tax, his GST hikes or any other of the taxes that he is hoping to impose on Canadians.

Thank you.

## Opinion / Editorial

### Taking the right action on taxes.

In tough economic times, it's real leadership that makes the difference between economic recovery and economic decline.

Part of that real leadership is the responsible spending of taxpayers' money.

And on that issue, the difference between the Conservatives and the Liberals is very apparent.

These are challenging economic times. That's why, in January 2009, the Conservative government delivered Canada's Economic Action Plan. The Plan is practical, modest, affordable and the right action for the right time. More jobs. More help for the economy. More protection for families, workers and vulnerable Canadians.

When the Ignatieff Liberals were asked for their input leading up to the January Budget, they didn't have anything to contribute. Not when it mattered.

Now though, they're floating new, grandiose ways to spend our tax dollars.

Vague. Uncosted. But sure to cost us more.

Clearly Michael Ignatieff and his Liberals believe that Canadians don't pay enough tax. And they're gearing up their plans to make us all pay more.

Take the GST. Conservatives have reduced the GST from 7% to 6% to 5%. Now Canadians pay less money for everything from a morning cup of coffee to a new car. Our government acted ahead of the curve to help Canadians save more money every day. Other countries, like the United Kingdom, followed this example to help stimulate their economy during the global recession.

Meanwhile, what does Michael Ignatieff want to do? Raise the GST right back up again. He let that cat out of the bag in December when he told CityTV news that he wouldn't take a GST hike off the table.

The Conservative government understands that ordinary Canadian families have to work hard for every dollar and that businesses need fewer barriers, not more, in order to succeed. Our government also understands that making families, seniors and Canadian businesses pay more for everything we buy is the wrong way to go.

That's also why our government is against Michael Ignatieff's plans to impose a new carbon tax. It's bad enough that Michael Ignatieff is the father of the Liberal Carbon Tax. It's bad enough that his Party recently voted to weave it back into their platform.

But what's worse is that Canadians already told the Liberals that we weren't interested in the "tax on everything". Michael Ignatieff and the Liberals just don't get it. It's clear that either they're not listening or they don't care.

Since taking office, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Conservative government have cut billions of dollars in taxes for businesses, families, seniors and individuals. With every budget, our government has lowered taxes, making life more affordable for families and workers, and helping businesses succeed and grow.

This trend of lowering taxes is one of the reasons that Canada was last to enter the global economic recession and is well positioned to come out of it.

And in a time like this, Michael Ignatieff chose to tell a group of Ontario business people, "we will have to raise taxes."

The real difference between the Conservative government and the Ignatieff Liberals: Conservatives are showing real leadership during this global economic crisis. Conservative action is delivering for Canadian families and helping to pump more money into our pockets and into the economy.

Michael Ignatieff has other ideas. And behind his grand plans and billions in uncosted spending promises, is the same problem: he thinks he can spend Canadians' money better than we can. That's why he wants more of it. And that's why he's planning on raising our taxes to get it.