

OTTAWA REPORT

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Record Session of Parliament

Parliament has concluded the most productive year on record, with 40 bills being passed.

We negotiated our largest free trade deal ever with the European Union, promoted Canadian values globally and introduced many measures to protect Canadian families.

Progress was made on our Throne Speech commitments including combatting harmful online harassment and exploitation, protecting Canadians from unsafe drugs, supporting injured veterans with priority consideration for public service jobs and standing up for victims of crime.

This Parliament has also been marked by unprecedented success on the part of individual Members of Parliament. Since 2011, a record 19 Private Members' Bills have received Royal Assent and become law. This makes a record number of 39 substantive Private Members' Bills receiving Royal Assent under our Conservative Government.

Pre Budget Consultations underway

The 2014 federal pre-budget consultations are underway and I want to hear from you! Please take a moment to share your thoughts and suggestions on how we can take the necessary steps to continue to build a stronger, more prosperous community and country. Specifically, I would like your perspective on how we can strengthen and build on the successes we have achieved through our Economic Action Plan, your priorities for the future and how you would like to see your federal tax dollars spent.

You can participate in a number of ways; by completing my online Pre-Budget Survey on my website at www.loisbrown.ca, mailing, emailing or dropping off your comments to my office and/or attending my public Pre-Budget Consultation meeting on Tuesday, January 14, from 7 - 9 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

This is your chance to have your say and I sincerely hope to hear from you.

Introducing Vanessa's Law

Our government has introduced new patient safety legislation, known as the Protecting Canadians from Unsafe Drugs Act (Vanessa's Law). The law would protect Canadian families and children from unsafe medicine by enabling the government to; require strong surveillance including mandatory adverse drug reaction reporting, recall unsafe products, impose tough new penalties for unsafe products, including jail time and new fines of up to \$5 million per day, provide the courts with discretion to impose even stronger fines if violations were caused intentionally, compel drug companies to revise labels to clearly reflect health risk information, including updates for health warnings for children, and compel drug companies to do further testing on a product, including when issues are identified with certain at-risk populations such as children.

These changes will build on our existing efforts to ensure that drug labels and safety information are easier to read and understand. The bill represents a large step forward in protecting vulnerable patients and reducing serious adverse drug reactions and reducing deaths and injuries caused by adverse drug reactions, seventy percent of which are preventable.

Celebrate Canada Funding Available

Canadian Heritage provides financial support for activities organized during the Celebrate Canada period. These activities celebrate National Aboriginal Day on June 21, Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day on June 24, Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27 and Canada Day on July 1.

Eligible recipients for funding include Canadian not-for-profit organizations, unincorporated associations, Canadian businesses organizing projects of a non-commercial nature, Canadian educational institutions and municipal governments, and other municipal, provincial or territorial institutions. Deadline to apply is January 15, 2014. The funding application form and detailed information about application requirements are available at www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1292265603193

Merry Christmas!

In Canada and around the world, as Christians gather to celebrate the birth of Christ, we are reminded of the holiday's message of generosity, peace and hope. It is a time when we pause from our busy lives and gather with family and friends.

It is also a time to give thanks for our blessings and to think about those less fortunate than ourselves. This year, as we embrace this season of giving, let us also remember to honour and give thanks to the generous sacrifices made by our armed forces, our veterans and their families. I wish everyone the very best this Christmas season and that your hearts are filled with love and goodwill.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank The Auroran for the ongoing opportunity, through this column, to share with you important news from our nation's capital. From my family to yours - Merry Christmas!

If you would like to contact me on any issue, please call 905-953-7515 or visit my website at www.loisbrown.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.