

OTTAWA REPORT

By Lois Brown, MP
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Winter Paralympic Games

Following Canada's success at the Olympic Games in Sochi last month, Canada is looking forward to the Paralympic Games, taking place from March 7 to 16. Canada's team is estimated at 125, including 55 athletes competing in five Paralympic sports; alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, ice sledge hockey and wheelchair curling.

Our Paralympians have a goal of finishing in the top-3 in the gold medal count. Canada's athletes are high performance heroes and an enormous source of pride for all of us, as well as outstanding role models for our youth. I know all Newmarket-Aurora will join me in cheering on our para athletes in Sochi as they take on the world while proudly wearing the Maple Leaf.

The Play Exchange, Canada's Active Living Challenge

Preventing chronic illnesses, like type 2 diabetes and heart disease, is one of the public health challenges of our times. Statistics show that three in five Canadians over the age of 20 have at least one chronic disease, such as cancer, diabetes or heart disease. How do we get more Canadians active? What can we do to encourage children and youth to spend less time on the couch? Many chronic diseases are entirely preventable through regular physical activity and healthy eating, as part of a healthy lifestyle. When it comes to encouraging physical activity, we're all in this together.

On Saturday, February 22, 2014, Minister Ambrose and partners launched, The Play Exchange, a first of its kind partnership that asks Canadians to submit their ideas on how we can lead active, healthier lifestyles. Finalists will share their plans to a panel of judges and the winner will be announced during a CBC special program in January 2015. Canadians will have the chance to vote for what they think is the best idea. Up to \$1 million will support the implementation of the winning project.

The Play Exchange is the Public Health Agency of Canada's flagship healthy living and chronic disease prevention initiative. This is one of many partnerships made under the Government of Canada's multi-sectoral partnership approach to healthy living and chronic disease prevention, which invests \$20 million per year in projects that focus on addressing common risk factors, such as unhealthy eating, physical inactivity and smoking, to prevent chronic disease.

The Play Exchange will accept applications until June 18, 2014. Please visit www.playexchange.ca for more information and updates.

More Choice for Wireless Consumers

Consumers are the big winners following the conclusion of the recent 700 MHz spectrum auction. Industry Minister James Moore announced that 97 licences have been awarded to 8 Canadian companies. A fourth wireless provider obtained spectrum in every region of the country, delivering on our government's commitment to encourage more competition in Canada's wireless industry. The total revenue generated from the 700 MHz auction is \$5.27 billion, the highest return ever for a wireless auction in Canada. Through this auction, our government sought to make spectrum available in a way that would result in more competition for Canadian consumers. The auction results achieved this goal. Companies that obtained licences for these high-quality wireless airwaves will be able to start deploying in mid-April to provide better service to their customers on the latest technologies.

Beware of Fraudulent CRA Communications

The CRA is warning Canadians that fraudulent emails purporting to be from the Agency are currently circulating. If you receive either by telephone, mail, or email, a communication that claims to be from the Canada Revenue Agency that asks for personal information, such as a social insurance, credit card, bank account or passport number - it is NOT from CRA. These are fraudulent communications. Invariably, the communication argues that this personal information is needed so that the taxpayer can receive a refund or benefit payment. Another common scam refers the person to a website resembling the CRA's website where the person is asked to verify their identity by entering personal information. To better equip yourself to identify a fraudulent communication, remember that the CRA does not do the following: request personal information by email; divulge taxpayer information to another person unless formally authorized; leave any personal information on an answering machine.

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.