

OTTAWA REPORT

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Service Dogs Pilot Project

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) is funding a two-and-a-half-year pilot project to look at the impact of the use of psychiatric service dogs in assisting Veterans with PTSD. Up to 50 Veterans will participate in the project and VAC will provide up to \$500,000 in research and treatment benefits for the pilot project's duration. By exploring whether the use of psychiatric service dogs would help Veterans manage their PTSD symptoms, Veterans Affairs Canada is listening to Veterans and ensuring they get the care and support they need.

Quanto's Law

The Justice for Animals in Service Act (Quanto's Law) was recently introduced in Parliament. The legislation proposes Criminal Code amendments that would create a new offence specifically prohibiting the injuring or killing of animals trained and being used to help law enforcement officers, persons with disabilities or the Canadian Armed Forces.

Persons convicted of such an offence could face up to five years' imprisonment, with a mandatory minimum sentence of six months in prison in cases where a law enforcement animal is killed while assisting a law enforcement officer in enforcing the law and where the offence is prosecuted by indictment. The new legislation would extend to dogs, horses and other kinds of animals.

The development of Quanto's Law is part of the government's plan for safe streets and communities which focuses on tackling crime, enhancing victims' rights, and ensuring a fair and efficient justice system.

Action on Climate Change

The Government of Canada is committed to protecting the environment while keeping the Canadian economy strong and is doing this through a wide range of actions and investments.

Since 2006, we have invested more than \$10 billion to begin Canada's transition to a clean energy economy and advance this country's climate change objectives. These have included investments in green infrastructure, energy efficiency, adaptation, the development of clean energy technologies and the production of cleaner energy and cleaner fuels. It also includes over \$4 billion invested in science and technology at Environment Canada since 2006, and another quarter of a billion dollars to be invested over the next five years into Canada's weather services.

We have also taken action on climate change by introducing regulations on the two largest emitting sectors?transportation and coal-fired electricity. Since 2005, Canadian greenhouse gas emissions have decreased 4.8 percent while the economy has grown by 8.4 percent and our emissions per capita have decreased significantly and are at an historic low.

Canada represents less than 2% of global carbon emissions. By comparison, the U.S. coal sector produces more greenhouse gas emissions than all of Canada. As a result of our actions, carbon emissions will decrease by close to 130 megatons from what they would have been under the former government's plan; the equivalent of shutting down 37 coal-fired electricity generation plants.

Paid Internships in High-Demand Fields

The government has announced significant new funding for paid internships for post-secondary graduates. The support for the internship initiative, which was provided in Economic Action Plan 2014, will help up to 3,000 post-secondary graduates take part in full-time paid internships across the country in high-demand fields such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics and the skilled trades.

The internships, which will last between six and 12 months, will take place over the next two years and give participants the opportunity to gain the real-life work experience and skills necessary to succeed in the workplace now and in the future. The internships will be offered through the Youth Employment Program (YEP) of the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP), as well as by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)'s Career Focus Program.

EcoAction Community Funding

The government recently announced \$4,351,753 in funding for 85 EcoAction Community Funding Program projects across Canada and is now accepting new applications. Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program provides financial support to community groups for projects that have measurable, positive impacts on the environment.

It supports the key priorities of the National Conservation Plan (NCP), which was recently launched by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to provide a shared and coherent vision to advance conservation efforts across the country.

Since 2006, EcoAction has approved \$38,649,632 in funding for 1,006 projects that engage Canadians in direct environmental activities. Projects must address one of the following four themes: clean air; clean water, climate change and nature. For every dollar received through EcoAction, approximately \$2.45 is leveraged from other funding partners.

Applications are now being accepted until November 1, 2014 from non-profit groups and organizations. Groups that are non-incorporated may apply to the EcoAction Community Funding Program. For more information, visit ec.gc.ca/ecoaction.

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.