

## **Summary:**

### **A. Border Related News Media**

#### **Security/Transportation:**

- **Three accused of smuggling aliens**
- **2 suspects, \$1m in drug netted in Ecstasy bust**
- **Charles Schumer seeks funds for port, bay outlet dredging**
- **Criminal racket - Cigarette smuggling on the rise nationally**
- **S.C. man indicted in cigarette-smuggling scheme**

#### **Politics:**

- **Conservatives appear set to win Canadian election**
- **Politicians don't want to go up against Canadiens**

#### **Business/Trade:**

- **Owens backs firm's efforts for trade zone**
- **Trade information session explores local export gap**
- **Proposed rule requiring 20 percent down on a house draws opposition**

#### **Culture/Tourism:**

- **Unwind in this wilderness haven**
- **Bound For Ogdensburg**
- **1812-style quilts sought for Trail event**

#### **Environment:**

- **Lakes advocates express relief**

#### **Energy:**

- **Plans for offshore wind farms sputter**

#### **Education:**

- **Fulbright Canada and Plattsburgh State reach new agreement**

### **B. Border Communications**

- **CBP in Buffalo Advises Travelers: Prepare For Busy Holiday Weekend**
- **Higgins Asks CBP to Consider Smaller Peace Bridge Plaza**
- **Short Sea Shipping Bill Would Encourage Needed Job Creation**

- **Schumer To Border Patrol: Delays In Canadian Trains Hurting Upstate Business – Streamline Inspection Process To Keep Trains And Businesses Moving**
- **To Help NY Dairy Farmers and Protect Consumers, Schumer, Gillibrand Push Legislation to Require Country of Origin Labeling on All Dairy Products**
- **Schumer: Port Of Rochester Getting Shallower By The Day, Threatening Fishing, Shipping, And Tourism – Will Push To Free-Up Bottled-Up Funds To Dredge Rochester Port**
- **Recent Survey Shows Importance of Canadian Visitors to Northern New York Economy North Country Chamber of Commerce Study Reveals Canadian Visitation is Strong**
- **Peace Bridge Authority Launches Revamped Website**
- **Canada Institute News**
- **Embassy: Canada's Foreign Policy Newsweekly**

### **C. Editorials/Columns**

- **Analysis: Canada's Harper continues quest for majority government**

### **D. Citizens Views (write-in letters)**

## **REPORT:**

### **A. Border Related News Media**

#### **Three accused of smuggling aliens Watertown Daily Times – April 21, 2011**

Three Canadians face allegations that they tried to smuggle three United Kingdom residents into the United States by boat Friday night at Lisbon Beach. Kenneth S. Reid, Wilma W. Winter and Michael A. Richard, ages and addresses not available, were each charged by U.S. Border Patrol agents with bringing in and harboring aliens after agents halted a boat traveling on the St. Lawrence River without navigational lights. According to a criminal complaint filed Monday in U.S. District Court, agents saw a boat traveling between Galop Island and Red Mills about 8:20 p.m. and began to follow it because of the lack of lights. It is alleged the boat landed at the closed Lisbon Beach boat launch for about 30 seconds, then backed away and returned to the river. At the same time, agents on the water and on land observed a car in the beach parking lot drive away as the boat left. Agents stopped the boat and observed four passengers and three large duffel bags.

Agents questioned the boat's operator, Mr. Reid, who told them he was from Johnstown, Ontario, and the people in the boat were his friends, although he knew the name of only one of the other occupants, according to the complaint. He allegedly told agents the passengers had been staying with him for a week and were from "Ireland or the U.K. somewhere, I think." He said he met them online. When asked why he was operating without lights, he allegedly said the lights "just blink on and off so I shut them off." When asked why he made landfall, Mr. Reid allegedly said his boat "isn't running properly" and he was meeting his girlfriend, Ms. Winter, who was shopping in Ogdensburg and "has some tools in her car and I thought maybe I could fix it." The agents doubted the explanation, according to the complaint, because at the point they began observing the boat operating without lights it was about the same distance from Johnstown as it was from Lisbon Beach and "the logical action" would have been to return to Johnstown. Mr. Reid also allegedly tried to reach into a small compartment on the boat, but was told to keep his hands where agents could see them. A subsequent search of the boat allegedly found the compartment contained \$4,960 in Canadian cash. Despite Mr. Reid's claim his passengers had been staying with him for a week, a baggage claim ticket on one of the duffel bags allegedly showed it had arrived at a Montreal airport the day before. Mr. Reid then told agents, "They flew in yesterday," according to the complaint. A passenger, Roddy M.A. Teelan, then allegedly told agents that he and fellow passengers Shaun L. Stevens and John A. Teelan had flown into Montreal the day before from London and had taken a taxi from Montreal to Brockville, Ontario, where Mr. Reid picked them up after a night in a hotel. According to the complaint, Mr. Teelan told agents each man had paid Mr. Reid \$1,600 Canadian to take them by boat from Prescott, Ontario, to Lisbon Beach. He allegedly said he was heading to Yonkers, where his father lives, but then refused to sign a statement or talk further about the case. Agents on land arrived at Lisbon Beach and observed a vehicle with Ontario plates leaving the area. The driver, Mr. Richard, allegedly told agents he had crossed the international bridge at Ogdensburg about 7 p.m. and was planning to meet a friend to go to the casino. He said he "was just going to hang out" until the friend arrived. He allowed agents to search his vehicle, where \$1,500 was found under a floor mat. Agents also observed a second vehicle parked in the beach lot, facing the water, and asked the operator, Ms. Winter, why she was there. She allegedly told agents she "has been going through a rough patch" and came to Lisbon Beach to "relax" before visiting Walmart. Agents determined that her vehicle had crossed the Ogdensburg bridge just 13 minutes before, indicating she had driven directly to the beach. Upon seeing Ms. Winter, agents said, Mr. Reid "acted surprised" to see her and asked what she was doing there, despite his earlier claim that he was to meet her there to perform boat repairs. A search of Ms. Winter's vehicle allegedly revealed no tools to fix a boat, according to the complaint. Agents said they tested the lights on Mr. Reid's boat and they "worked fine." Mr. Reid is being held by federal marshals without bond, while Ms. Winter posted \$10,000 bond Wednesday and was released. A bond hearing for Mr. Richard had not been held as of Wednesday. Each has been assigned a federal public defender. Roddy Teelan and Mr. Stevens are in U.S. Border Patrol custody, charged with concealing facts about their entry into the United States as they had not passed through a port of entry. Court documents show that John Teelan was initially detained at Ogdensburg, although there is no record of any charge against him.

**2 suspects, \$1m in drug netted in Ecstasy bust**  
**Watertown Daily Times – April 19, 2011**

A suspect in an Ontario attempted-murder case faces unrelated federal drug charges in Massena for possessing about \$1 million in Ecstasy, federal authorities said. U.S. Border Patrol agents on Sunday seized about 20 pounds of illegal MDMA pills, better known as Ecstasy, hidden in several bags in a pickup truck, federal court records show. The bags contained about 36,000 Ecstasy pills. Each pill has a street value of about \$30. Roohid Hakimi, 26, Brampton, Ontario,

and Cheyenne R. Anderson, 20, Hogansburg, face charges of possessing Ecstasy, court records show. Border Patrol agents tailed Mr. Hakimi's rental car on Route 37 coming from the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation, court papers show.

**Charles Schumer seeks funds for port, bay outlet dredging**  
**Rochester Democrat & Chronicle – April 12, 2011**

Saying that a federal "accounting trick" is threatening safe navigation of harbors and ports like the ones in the Rochester area, U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer said Monday that he was co-sponsoring legislation to fix the problem. At a news conference Monday on a wind-swept veranda at the ferry terminal in Charlotte, New York's senior Democratic senator said shippers pay fees that are set aside to pay for dredging navigable harbors and rivers. Among them are Rochester's port and the Irondequoit Bay outlet to Lake Ontario. But while there is plenty of money in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to pay for dredging, federal officials refuse to release all of it. Instead, Schumer charged they hold back billions of dredging dollars to create a surplus that is used, on paper, to offset the soaring federal deficit. "Just like the muck and mud are piling up here in Rochester's port, the dollars for dredging are piling up in Washington," he said. As a consequence, Schumer said, dredging projects are not undertaken often enough. Rochester's port at the mouth of the Genesee River, for example, used to be dredged every two years. Now, it's done every three years. With deficit reduction now the rage in Washington, he said he fears an even greater delay. "The port of Rochester is on the list to be dredged this summer, but if they don't put the money in, it won't happen," he said. He and others who attended the news conference said buildup of silt carried in by the river's currents can create real problems. The freighter Stephen B. Roman, which carries dry cement from Canada to an Essroc terminal near Rochester's Turning Point Park, ran aground in the mouth of the Genesee in March 2007. Until dredging was finished months later, Essroc had to make 7,000 cement shipments by truck, a more costly and environmentally undesirable means of transport. And last June, the captain of the large Great Lakes cruise ship Clelia II opted not to enter the river after having scraped bottom the summer before. The vessel anchored off Rochester instead and, to the dismay of some passengers, they had to be ferried ashore in small boats, city officials said. The legislation co-sponsored by Schumer and 17 other senators, including Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., would require that shipper's fees be spent in the year they're collected. Similar anti-hoarding laws have been enacted to address similar problems in highway and airport trust funds, Schumer said.

**Criminal racket - Cigarette smuggling on the rise nationally**  
**Watertown Daily Times – April 19, 2011**

The arrest of a South Carolina man for his alleged role in a cigarette-smuggling scheme on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation is indicative of a growing criminal racket nationwide to avoid the high taxes on cigarettes. William D. Humphries allegedly transported thousands of pounds of raw tobacco in 2005 and 2006 from South Carolina to a Hogansburg cigarette manufacturer that later smuggled them into Canada. Last year, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reported 357 open cases involving tobacco smuggling, USA Today reports. Investigations led to the seizure of \$31.5 million in cash and property in the 2009 fiscal year, up from \$11 million two years earlier.

**S.C. man indicted in cigarette-smuggling scheme**  
**Watertown Daily Times – April 15, 2011**

A South Carolina man provided "tens of millions of dollars" in raw tobacco to an illegal St. Regis Mohawk Reservation cigarette manufacturer, which later smuggled the black-market cigarettes into Canada, federal prosecutors said. William D. Humphries, 64, of Lake City, S.C., was charged in an unsealed indictment Wednesday with interstate travel in aid of racketeering and wire-fraud conspiracy to defraud Canada of tax revenue, federal prosecutors said. If convicted, he could face up to 35 years in federal prison and fines of up to \$1 million. Mr. Humphries reportedly moved thousands of pounds of raw tobacco in 2005 and 2006 from South Carolina to Hogansburg using rental trucks and tractor-trailers, prosecutors said. He owned Carolina Tobacco Warehouse in Lake City. Two unidentified people started manufacturing illegal cigarettes in July 2005 at 418 St. Regis Road, Hogansburg, using proceeds from marijuana smuggling, court papers say. The business operated under the name "MHP Tobacco," but it later was changed to "MHP Manufacturing." Assistant U.S. Attorney Carl G. Eurenus said Mr. Humphries became "a silent partner" in the business in fall 2005, gaining a 25 percent share of the company for \$1 million. The illegal cigarettes were smuggled by boat into Canada. The cigarette smuggling investigation started when Mr. Humphries was stopped on Feb. 18, 2006, by St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Police for a traffic infraction, Mr. Eurenus said. Officers reportedly found \$88,000 in his possession. The case was turned over to federal authorities, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The investigation took a few years because of a lack of cooperation from witnesses. The investigation is continuing and more arrests are pending.

**Conservatives appear set to win Canadian election**  
**Plattsburgh Press Republican - April 19, 2011**

There is a possibility for a Conservative majority government in the upcoming general election in Canada. Dr. Christopher Kirkey, director of the Center for the Study of Canada at Plattsburgh State, believes if the Conservative Party can keep Canadian voters focused on economic issues until the election is held May 2 and Liberal Party Leader Michael Ignatieff doesn't suddenly resonate with voters, there is a "serious chance" of a Conservative majority government. "I just have a sense this is not the Liberals' election," he said. Kirkey said it is unclear at this time what effect a Conservative majority government would have on the North Country.

NO CONFIDENCE - The election was triggered by a motion of no confidence passed in the House of Commons on March 25. The motion stemmed from a committee report that found the Conservative minority government was in contempt for failing to provide sufficient information to members of Parliament on matters such as costs of certain budget provisions. The Liberal Party, New Democratic Party and Bloc Quebecois Party members voted in favor of the no-confidence measure, while the Conservatives voted in opposition to it. Kirkey said polling up until the no-confidence vote showed the question was not if the Conservatives would win the election, but whether they could win enough seats to form a majority government. He said if the election had been held April 14, the Conservatives would have won a comfortable minority or slim majority of seats.

NEED 11 SEATS - There are 308 seats in the House of Commons. The last election was held in October 2008. It left the Conservatives with 144 seats, the Liberals with 77, 48 Bloc Quebecois seats and 36 for the New Democrats. There are two independently held seats and one that is vacant. The Conservatives would need to gain 11 seats to form a majority government. They would then no longer have to rely on votes from the other parties to pass legislation. Kirkey said the Conservative strategy is to keep the seats they won in the last election and make gains in other parts of the country. They are focused on about 50 ridings (districts) where they were close in the last election. "They have sunk a lot of time, energy and money in those ridings," he said. They expect to gain in the Maritime provinces, where they have a big lead in popularity on the Liberals. They also look to gain some seats in rural areas of Quebec.

MORE LIBERAL - Another hotly contested area is the greater Toronto area and ridings west of there, Kirkey said. While Conservative Party Leader Stephen Harper is not seen as overly friendly, Kirkey said, he is viewed as a competent manager of the government. "To the Canadian voter, he resonates leadership qualities," he said. Ignatieff was supposed to represent a more active leadership than Stephane Dion, the previous head of the Liberal Party. He has yet to resonate with the Canadian people, Kirkey said. He said the Liberal's policies have returned to those in place when Lester Pearson, Pierre Trudeau and Jean Chretien headed the party. That agenda is much more liberal than it has been during the last 10 years, Kirkey said. Health care is their number-one priority. The Liberals are also in favor of increased multi-lateralism, peacekeeping, foreign aid and a renewed commitment to the United Nations.

'HERE FOR CANADA' - The Conservatives have unveiled a "Here for Canada" plan with five key priorities. They are: job creation; a family tax cut; more support for seniors and caregivers; elimination of the federal deficit by 2015-2015; increased crime prevention; and a stronger Canadian military to help protect and develop the north. There's not much in there about foreign policy, Kirkey said, but the Conservative Party has a much more North American focus on national security than the Liberals do. Kirkey said there has always been a sense that the Harper government, elected to minority governments in 2006 and 2008, has never had the chance to enact all it wants to enact. With a majority government, he thinks Canadians would see less emphasis on government regulation, a significant increase of the military and cuts in corporate and personal taxes.

**Politicians don't want to go up against Canadiens**  
**Buffalo News - April 10, 2011**

File this under "Only in Canada." A move is afoot to reschedule a federal election debate slated for Thursday so it doesn't conflict with the opening game of the Montreal Canadiens' first-round playoff series against the Boston Bruins. Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe says he's sure Montreal fans will choose the game over the French-language debate, and NDP Leader Jack Layton echoed those sentiments. Duceppe is asking other party leaders to join in urging the broadcasters who organize the debate to move it back a day. An English debate is scheduled for Tuesday, before the playoffs begin. A spokesman for Prime Minister Stephen Harper said the Tory leader will be there on whatever date they choose.

**Owens backs firm's efforts for trade zone**  
**Watertown Daily Times - April 20, 2011**

Rep. William L. Owens, D-Plattsburgh, on Tuesday toured the world's second-largest hockey tape manufacturer in support of the company's efforts to establish a foreign trade zone. The foreign trade zone — a geographical unit near a foreign border that is recognized as if it were a foreign land — would help ease the high price that North American Tapes has to pay in duties to import cloth from Asia. "For us, it's a matter of being able to stay competitive," said Martin J. LeMoine, the Canadian sales manager for the Fisher Road company. Mr. Owens has sent a letter to the FTZ board in support of creating the foreign trade zone. He saw first-hand Tuesday some of the activities that go on at the plant, where gobs of black and white adhesive were smushed onto barrel-size rolls of white cloth via spinning tubes. Mr. Owens said it was a "neat operation," and was told that if the company could secure status as a foreign trade zone, it could double in size. It now employs 25 people. Several people not affiliated with the company who toured the facility were surprised to learn of the pedigree of the local hockey tape company. Hockey tape is used mostly to wrap around hockey sticks to help players get a better grip, and to protect the stick from damage. The Watertown company sells hockey tape to 17 National Hockey League teams, though officials there are reluctant to say which ones, or which players in particular use it,

because they don't want to create the impression that an endorsement deal exists. But, Mr. LeMoine said, the company did have to send out a special shipment for one player in particular, one of the NHL's most famous names, because the team ran out of his preferred tape — made by North American Tapes under the Comp-o-stik brand. Officials there hope that a foreign trade zone can help net the company even more shipments like that. But when paying expensive duties on imported cloth, "We're at a huge disadvantage," Mr. LeMoine said.

**Trade information session explores local export gap**  
**Rochester Democrat & Chronicle – April 14, 2011**

For many Rochester-region businesses, exports are less a source of revenue than a missed opportunity. Laurie DeRoller, executive director of the International Business Council of Greater Rochester, an affiliate of Greater Rochester Enterprise, says that barely 1 percent of Rochester companies capable of exporting are doing so. To help fill that void, the IBC hosted a one-day session Wednesday, "Successful Business under NAFTA" (North American Free Trade Agreement). The session focused on the specifics of the trade agreement with regard to dealing with Canada, including regulations and customs details and opportunities for sales, jobs and products. Thirty companies sent representatives to the conference, held at the Hyatt Regency Rochester hotel. Attending and leading the discussion were Charles Giunta, director of the Rochester Port; Robert Carroll, president of the international division of Henrietta's Pictometry International Corp.; Mike Flaherty, senior trade commissioner with the Canadian Consulate; Cathy Ackerson, vice president of M&T Commercial Banking in Toronto; and DeRoller. DeRoller said there would be subsequent conferences centered on other countries with which the United States has free-trade agreements, including Mexico, Peru and Chile. "There's a knowledge gap," DeRoller said about the inability of companies to take advantage of export opportunities. "The session helped companies realize what they might gain and spelled out the kind of documentation needed to deal with Canadian companies." The local trade information sessions are extensions of President Obama's National Export Initiative, set in motion last year with the goal of doubling U.S. exports in five years.

**Proposed rule requiring 20 percent down on a house draws opposition**  
**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette - April 21, 2011**

A proposed rule intended to prevent the kind of reckless lending and borrowing that heaped so many toxic mortgages into the marketplace in recent years has alarmed some groups, who argue the unintended consequences could worsen the nation's housing troubles. The plan would require home-owners to make down payments of at least 20 percent of the cost of a home. "It's a good thing to have more equity in your house, but it's not a good thing for the federal government to set a 20 percent down payment as the gold standard of mortgage underwriting," said Barry Zigas, director of Housing Policy for the Consumer Federation of America in Washington, D.C. "Our ample experience over the past 20 years shows that borrowers with less down payments, with fully underwritten and sound mortgages, can be successful homeowners." The multiagency proposal is backed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., the Federal Reserve, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Public comments on the proposal will be accepted until June 10. The six agencies will evaluate the comments, make necessary changes and finalize them before carving a new rule in stone. "We don't know what the final rule will look like or what the time frame will be," said David Barr, spokesman for the FDIC in Washington, D.C. As proposed, the 20 percent down payment requirement, which grew out of the Dodd-Frank regulatory overhaul enacted in July, would not apply to all residential mortgages. It is intended to apply to mortgages that banks plan to package

as mortgage-backed securities to sell to investors. If lenders do not require a borrower to make the 20 percent minimum down payment, the financial institutions would be required to hold at least 5 percent of the value of the loan on their books, a move to make sure they, too, would lose if a loan goes bad. Banks typically reserve about 1 percent of their total loan portfolio against losses. The central question in the national debate is whether it is necessary to have so much equity to be a successful borrower and what impact it would have on middle-class and working class families who could not easily save that kind of money. In the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, where the median price of a single-family home stands at \$123,900, a 20 percent down payment amounts to \$24,780, not including closing costs. Groups that oppose the proposal say banks will either decide not to lend money to people who don't have 20 percent or will charge higher interest and fees to offset the bank's cost of holding the 5 percent reserve. It is unclear how soon the rule would impact the housing market, if it is approved. Most home loans in this country are insured by federal agencies, such as Federal Housing Administration with its 3.5 percent down payment. Those mortgages would continue to be exempt from the 20 percent requirements. But not all borrowers or properties qualify for federal programs. "I am very much opposed to the proposal," said Howard "Hoddy" Hanna, president and CEO of Howard Hanna Real Estate Services, based in O'Hara. "There is definitely a public policy movement in Washington, D.C., that will prohibit less affluent working class people from buying a home. "Certain segments of the population will probably not be able to own a home in this generation if this proposal become reality." The new rule establishing guidelines for the Qualified Residential Mortgage rule would be a complete pendulum swing from the days of easy credit, which gave birth to mortgage innovations that fueled the housing boom. Gone are the years when subprime loans with little or no down payment were readily available to people with troubled credit histories. While they are still available, adjustable rate mortgages with floating interest rates that can go up over time have fallen out of popularity. Interest-only mortgages are rare these days, and stated income loans that require no proof are nonexistent. Back when such exotic mortgages were in their heyday, lenders would securitize them and resell them to investors around the world. The lenders collected a hefty fee and had no liability if the loan failed. The 5 percent risk retention rule would make sure that if lenders did not require borrowers to put 20 percent down, the lender would still have a stake in the loan being repaid. According to the National Association of Realtors in Washington, D.C., first-time homebuyers in 2010 made a median down payment of 4 percent on their homes. Repeat homebuyers made a median down payment of 16 percent. Data released by Ginnie Mae showed FHA and Veterans Administration loans turned a modest profit to the U.S. Treasury and have never needed a bailout. "We believe low down payment mortgages should continue to be available to buyers who have demonstrated financial responsibility and are willing to stay well within their budget," said Walter Molony, spokesman for the National Association of Realtors. The mortgage crisis had its roots in the U.S. government's efforts to increase homeownership, especially among minorities and other low-income groups. Many fear this new proposal will instead create more hurdles for them. "In principle, it's a good idea to have more equity, but in practice it is far from the reality of the marketplace," said Michael Sichenzia, a mortgage expert based in South Florida. "For the average 24- to 35-year old -- who statistics tell us 39 percent of them still live at home with their parents -- it will take them 14 years to save a 20 percent down payment for the median house for sale in America today." Harlan Platt, a professor of finance at Northeastern University, said the proposed regulation followed the model used in Canada where it is very difficult, if not impossible, to get a mortgage without a 20 percent down payment. "I suspect regulators have noticed the financial crisis did not affect Canada," he said. "But what they have not noticed is homeownership percentagewise in Canada is far below what it is in the U.S." Mr. Platt is convinced that if the rule is approved, home prices could decline and more people with homes underwater -- the houses are worth less than the owners owe -- will walk away, creating a bigger overhang of unsold properties. "[Regulators] are behaving like a farmer whose cow ran away through the open barn door, and their response is to close the barn door," Mr. Platt

said. "What they should do is examine whether banks are doing their due diligence when someone applies for a mortgage, and not create barriers for people who don't have 20 percent." The new rule would apply to the conventional loan market. The Obama administration and members of Congress are taking steps to reduce the role of government-backed mortgage giants such as the Federal National Mortgage Corp. (Fannie Mae) and Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corp. (Freddie Mac), which use government money to buy mortgages on the secondary market. Their future role in home mortgage lending could be changing. Keith Gumbinger, vice president at HSH.com, a financial publisher in Pompton Plains, N.J., specializing in mortgage information, said only 26 percent of the borrowers in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac portfolios would qualify for a mortgage under this rule. This suggests that a large swath of the homebuying market would either face higher costs or have to wait to accumulate sufficient funds, which would place downward pressure on home prices. "In this way, the rule would be considered bad," he said, "at least to those hoping to buy or sell their homes or recover from underwater situations in any sort of a timely fashion."

**Unwind in this wilderness haven**  
**Buffalo News - April 10, 2011**

It's nice to know places like Bronte Creek Provincial Park exist, places where people can recharge themselves, not their electronic gadgets, and escape from a busy schedule to connect with nature. This 648-acre wilderness haven, situated 70 miles north of Buffalo on the border of Burlington and Oakville, opened in 1975 to serve the surrounding urban population as a day-use recreational facility and campground. The park is open year-round, with six miles of trails, 11 picnic shelters with fire pits and a children's farm and play barn. Several accessible walks, many of them barrier-free, give everyone a chance to view wildlife. White-tailed deer, red fox, red-tailed hawks and snowy owls are just a few of the species that make the park their home. Chickadees will feed from an open hand if you bring some seed, a thrill no matter what your age. The Half Moon Valley Trail is a popular hourlong walk that takes visitors into Bronte Creek Valley. An audio tour, which can be downloaded from the park website, gives information on the geology and history of the land, which at one time was used for agriculture. A lookout platform provides a view of the creek 80 feet below. The Trillium Trail, named after Ontario's provincial flower, is known for its abundance of wildflowers. It is especially popular in spring when the trilliums bloom—usually in late April and May—and with heated washrooms and rest stations with fire pits, the stark beauty of a chilly landscape can be enjoyed in relative comfort. And the bugs aren't here yet. The Olympic-size skating rink and toboggan hill are other fun activities, especially for families, during the colder months. For children under 10, there is a Children's Playbarn, which is a highlight of every child's visit. A 150-year red barn has been transformed into a two-story play structure, where kids can climb ropes, swing on tires, run through tunnels and slide and jump from the hayloft onto cushioned pads. When they have run out of steam, they can visit the sheep, pigs and other farm animals housed in original homestead buildings. Feeding the baby goats is a big hit for the kids (animal and human variety). The Spruce Lane Farmhouse, once the home of a well-off farm family, is now a turn-of-the-century living history museum that re-creates life on the farm during Victorian times through costumed guides and demonstrations. The aroma of cookies and a wood fire often greet visitors when they enter the old-fashioned kitchen, and you can taste the treats, which are as good as they smell. Looking at the family photos and their prized possessions gives a realistic feel for what life was like at the time. Some people have felt something else in these rooms. Ghost hunters investigated the farm for paranormal activity after reports of whispers, children's laughter and a smoking room door that opens and closes on its own. You can decide for yourself on a ghost tour, held every Sunday in August. Spruce Lane Farm House, unlike the Playbarn and animal farm, is open only in the summer, as is a small nature center that delights children with its collection of creatures that

includes turtles, fish, snakes, salamanders, toads and even honey bees. A tunnel connects the hive to the outside and they buzz in and out, while visitors watch their hard work through a window. The biggest summer attraction, though, is the swimming pool, which is massive, covering a 1.8-acre area and holding 1.3 million gallons of water. It may seem early to start planning for the summer, but if you're thinking about camping here, it pays to plan ahead. Reservations can be made up to five months in advance, and this popular park fills up fast. Camping season is from April to October and there are 144 electric service campsites and three yurts—canvas-covered very basic accommodation that can hold up to six people. Special events also are held throughout the year. In March, maple syrup time marks the beginning of spring, and costumed guides demonstrate how to tap trees, and boil the liquid until it is transformed to the delicious treat we love. Wagon rides, pancakes with sausages and pure maple syrup are part of the festivities. Even with all its activities, the park's main draw is the landscape. Nature has been shown to have a calming effect, lowering the levels of stress hormones in our bodies. It is comforting to know that in the midst of a densely populated urban environment, there are places like Bronte Creek. If you go: To get to Bronte Creek Provincial Park, take the Q. E. W. to Burloak Drive (exit 109). The entrance is on the right. Note that the campground has a separate entrance point off Bronte Road. Day-use park fee is \$16 vehicle, 8a.m. to 10 p. m.; play-barn is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; for more information: (905) 827-6911, or go to [www.brontecreek.org](http://www.brontecreek.org). More in Ontario - Ontario has a staggering 30,000 square miles of parkland, including more than 50 parks in Southern Ontario alone. Popular parks like Bronte Creek fill up fast so if you want a campsite in the summer, reservations usually need to be made ahead of time. Campers can book campsites, cabins, yurts and cottages by phone at (888) ONT-PARK (668-7275) or online via [www.Ontario-Parks.com](http://www.Ontario-Parks.com). For general information about the parks, (800) ONTARIO (1-800-668-2746) or contact the park you plan to visit.

### **Bound For Ogdensburg** **The Ogdensburg Journal – April 21, 2011**

The city of Ogdensburg will play host twice this year to a tall ship with a historical and educational twist. The Greater Ogdensburg Chamber of Commerce announced Wednesday that the 122-foot-long schooner Lynx will be here June 9-12. The 114-ton ship will stop at the city docks as part of its summer Great Lakes tour. The Lynx has a historical and educational theme as it enacts and explains the maritime adventures of the War of 1812. The Lynx will return to Ogdensburg on Sept. 8-12. "This is a great way to start off the summer season," said Chamber President Jack F. McGrath. California-based Lynx Educational Foundation owns the Lynx. Its mission is to use the ship as an interpretive and educational tool to teach people about the War of 1812. Director of Operations Jeffrey L. Woods said Wednesday that passengers will be able to don period costumes and join the crew in all on-board activities such as firing cannons. Mr. Woods said the Lynx experience is educational because, to many, the War of 1812 "is a forgotten war." But education isn't all there is to it. "It's fun as well," Mr. Woods said. The Lynx will arrive in Ogdensburg at noon June 9. Public ship tours will be offered June 10-12 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with "sailaway" events on the St. Lawrence River offered from 4 to 6 p.m. Also, a "port to port passage" from Ogdensburg to Clayton will take place June 13-14. Passengers will have to find their way back to Ogdensburg. The cost is \$195 and includes meals. In Clayton, the ship will be showcased during the community's Sailing Seaway Clayton events through June 20. Reservations are required for the sailaway, which cost \$55 for adults, \$45 for senior citizens and active military and \$30 for children age 5 to 12 years. Tours are \$5 for adults and no charge for children age 12 years and under. Tickets can be ordered online at [www.privateerlynx.org](http://www.privateerlynx.org). They are also available by calling 866-446-5969. The Lynx was inspired to come to Ogdensburg by positive word-of-mouth about the visit here in May 2010 another tall ship, the HMS Bounty. A total of 5,000 people toured the Bounty that has a wide array of film credits including the 1960

film "Mutiny on the Bounty," starring Marlon Brando, "Treasure Island," starring Charlton Heston in 1989, "Sponge Bob Square Pants - The Movie," and Disney's "Pirates of the Caribbean - Dead Man's Chest." The Florida-based Bounty is expected to make another visit to Ogdensburg during its next Great Lakes tour. That is set for summer 2013. The Lynx's stop in Ogdensburg is part of a five-year mission along the East Coast, Great Lakes and Canada. The tour is pegged to the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

**1812-style quilts sought for Trail event**  
**Watertown Daily Times - April 16, 2011**

It's a once-in-two-centuries opportunity. The Seaway Trail Foundation is asking for homemade quilts with War of 1812-era colors and patterns for the Great Lakes Seaway Trail 2012 War of 1812 Bicentennial Quilt Show and Challenge. Organizers are reaching out to American-history enthusiasts and re-enactors and children from the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, Native Americans and other nations around the world to enter and attend the commemorative event scheduled March 17 and 18, 2012, at the Great Lakes Seaway Trail Discovery Center. Guidelines for making cot- to coffin-size (30 by 70 inches) quilts using a variety of fabrics, including cotton, linen, silk, wool and linsey-woolsey, and patterns common to the 1812 period are online at [www.seawaytrail.com/quilting.html](http://www.seawaytrail.com/quilting.html). Entries must be committed by Jan. 15 and completed by March 3. The guidelines suggest studying the research works and books of noted quilt historians Barbara Brackman, Anne Orr and Pepper Cory. Brackman, of Lawrence, Kan., suggests that a quilt in medallion or strip format would be a good patchwork design for the historical era.

"Patterns that were popular during the 1812 time were simple stars and basic nine-patch and four-patch variations," she said. "The war cut into fabric imports into America but well-to-do women already had stashes of imported French, English and Indian chintzes and calicoes in a variety of colors, and loved to mix large-scale and small-scale prints.." Brackman has designed a reproduction collection of prints from the era for Moda Fabrics; the "Lately Arrived from London" collection should be available in quilt shops by the end of this summer. The March show next year will be the kickoff for a 2011-14 traveling educational exhibit of the quilts. For more information call the Seaway Trail Discovery center at 646-1000.

**Lakes advocates express relief**  
**Watertown Daily Times - April 15, 2011**

Funding for Great Lakes restoration will tumble from \$475 million last year to \$300 million for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30 — but that's good news in a way, an advocacy group said Thursday. The nonprofit group Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition expressed relief that a spending bill passed in the House, and nearing enactment, preserved more funding for Great Lakes restoration than House Republicans initially proposed. The group urged no more reductions, although that appears unlikely if lawmakers' tendency toward spending cuts accelerates for the next fiscal year. "Our goal now is to work with Congress to protect funding to Great Lakes programs in the 2012 budget that protect drinking water, create jobs, safeguard public health and uphold the quality of life for millions of people," Jeff Skelding, the group's campaign director, said in a news release. "If we can't maintain the funding now, it will only cost more later because restoring the Great Lakes will only get harder and more expensive the longer we wait." Rep. William L. Owens, D-N.Y., voted for the spending bill. In commenting on it Wednesday, he said it was "reasonable" in light of the need to spread funding reductions throughout the government. In a news release Thursday, he said, "I am pleased to see compromise on this budget, which will keep critical government services running for Upstate New Yorkers." He also noted that it prevents any interruption in funding for the military. Mr.

Owens was one of 81 Democrats to vote for the measure, against 108 who opposed it. Republicans supported it with 179 in favor and 59 opposed, meaning House Speaker Rep. John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, did not have enough votes from his own party to pass the bill, which averts a government shutdown until at least October. That is when the next fiscal year begins. Mr. Skelding said the 2011 budget nearing completion provides important funding, though the scaled-back funding "means that it will take longer and cost more to get the job done." Total funding will be slightly less than \$300 million because of a 0.2 percent across-the-board cut being applied to non-defense programs, the group reported. An earlier proposal from House Republicans cut the Great Lakes program to \$225 million. In addition, the measure cuts the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, also used for Great Lakes protection, by 27 percent, to \$1.53 billion. The earlier GOP budget proposal included a 67 percent reduction.

**Plans for offshore wind farms sputter**  
**Rochester Democrat & Chronicle – April 18, 2011**

As New York Power Authority officials near a decision point for their Great Lakes offshore wind-farm plans, they find themselves almost alone in their pursuit: Nearly all the other freshwater offshore wind projects in North America have stalled or died. Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and the other three Great Lakes are among the windiest spots in the eastern half of the continent, and in recent years wind-energy developers publicized proposals for a dozen or more large wind farms for the lakes' waters. Today, none of those large-scale proposals are active, a circumstance that in some cases is attributed to fierce public opposition. Two months ago the Canadian province of Ontario, which had been promoting wind energy and considering development of roughly 1,000 turbines in lakes Erie and Ontario, terminated or suspended all offshore projects. Only one small pilot project, in the waters of Lake Erie near Cleveland, is moving forward. The sudden declaration of an offshore wind moratorium in Ontario was "a huge blow to offshore development in not only Canada but in the U.S. as well," said Alan Isselhard, an outspoken opponent of the power authority's plan. "But I don't feel NYPA will be intimidated ... by what's happened anywhere else," said Isselhard, who lives on the Lake Ontario shoreline in Wayne County. "They have unlimited public money at their disposal to go forward." Indeed, the authority — an independent arm of state government based in Westchester County — is pressing ahead eagerly, hoping to be the first offshore wind project in the Great Lakes. At an offshore wind conference in Henrietta on Wednesday, authority spokesman Louis Paonessa said NYPA was "very close" to announcing a way forward. Since last June, authority officials have been reviewing five private-sector proposals for offshore wind farms in the New York waters of Lake Erie or Lake Ontario. Though officials have refused to release any details about the proposals, each of them likely calls for construction of dozens of huge electricity-generating turbines a few miles off shore. The authority, which provides electricity to hundreds of New York government entities, businesses and institutions, will select one or more proposals, probably in the next two months, Paonessa said. The authority plans to support the project financially by signing a long-term power-purchase deal with the developer. Paonessa said the authority will pay a premium price for offshore power, but that "it may not look so high in 20 years." The offshore wind conference, held at Rochester Institute of Technology and sponsored by the Pace Energy and Climate Center and two other groups, brought together a dozen experts in the field. Some spoke to about 30 conferees about regulatory and legal issues, others about technical challenges. And numerous speakers cited the potential of wind turbines in the breezy Great Lakes to generate a considerable portion of the electricity used in eastern North America. Yet, as one speaker noted, there are 1,100 offshore wind turbines in Europe but not a single one in North America. What's happened, said Terry Yonker, the keynote speaker at the conference, is that planned Great Lakes projects have stalled for several reasons. "Some of the projects were ahead of the science," said Yonker, a Niagara County marine avian consultant who is co-chair of the Great Lakes Wind

Consortium. More study is needed, for example, of the impact on birds, bats and fish. Then there is public opposition, which he believes is often driven by concern about turbines' impact on the view from shore. "I don't want to give a lot of credit to the opposition, but when you're dealing with public agencies and political entities, they've obviously got their nose out there in the wind," Yonker said. "Clearly, the opposition in Ontario was raising a number of environmental and watershed questions that were beginning to mount up." Many observers say Ontario's Liberal Party leadership pulled the plug on a number of large offshore proposals in anticipation of provincial elections scheduled for October. "I think it was politically driven. It was a very wise decision on their part," said Sherri Lange, founding director of Toronto Wind Action, which fought a proposed wind farm in Lake Ontario off eastern metro Toronto. An offshore wind project in Lake Michigan, originally cast as a multibillion dollar deal that would have been at least double the size of anything the New York Power Authority envisions, was first scaled back and then abandoned. Richard Stuebi, president of the newly formed Coalition for Great Lakes Offshore Wind in suburban Cleveland, said that project was just too big. "I think that scared a lot of constituencies, and set in place a certain amount of opposition. I'm not sure that was the best path forward," he said. Two Michigan state legislators there recently introduced a bill to ban outright any wind development in that state's waters. Stuebi's coalition grew out of the one project that seems to be advancing — a five-turbine pilot project off of Cleveland's Lake Erie shoreline. Advanced by the nonprofit Lake Erie Development Corp., the project has signed up strategic partners and executed options to lease state-owned lake bottomland to site the turbines. Testing of that bottomland is to take place this summer. Because Lake Erie is relatively shallow, the turbines can be placed at least seven miles offshore, minimizing visual impact. The next step is negotiating a power-purchase agreement, needed to arrange financing. Lorry Wagner, the corporation's president, said the project is progressing because it was community-driven, has tried to be open and is starting small. "This first project is, for a lot of reasons, more readily doable than the larger projects," Wagner said.

**Fulbright Canada and Plattsburgh State reach new agreement**  
**Plattsburgh Press Republican - April 13, 2011**

An agreement has been reached to establish the Fulbright Distinguished Scholar in Residence position at Plattsburgh State. Plattsburgh State President Dr. John Ettling and Canada-U.S. Fulbright Program Executive Director Michael Hawes signed a memorandum of understanding earlier this week. "We're happy to continue this relationship with Fulbright by signing this agreement today," Ettling said. The distinguished visiting scholar will take up residence at the Center for the Study of Canada at Plattsburgh State for between two and six weeks every year. While there, the scholar will teach a one-credit course, deliver lectures on topics related to his or her field of expertise and work with colleagues at the university.

STRATEGIC VISION - Ettling said the new position fits nicely with the strategic vision of Plattsburgh State and SUNY Chancellor Dr. Nancy Zimpher. Applications are to be submitted to Fulbright Canada, which will manage the peer review and selection process. Plattsburgh State is encouraged to invite scholars to apply. A list of applicants recommended for awards by Fulbright Canada will be sent to the director of the Center for the Study of Canada at Plattsburgh State at least five months prior to the start of the semester the scholar is scheduled to arrive. The director or a delegate, in consultation with the CEO of Fulbright Canada, will select the nominees for the Scholar in Residence position from that list. The memorandum of understanding will remain in force for three years from the arrival of the first distinguished scholar, scheduled for 2012.

MORE INSTRUCTIONAL - According to its website, Fulbright Canada is a binational program of educational exchange supported by the government of Canada through its Department of Foreign Affairs, the U.S. government through its Department of State, and a large number of public-sector and private-sector partners. Center for the Study of Canada Director Christopher

Kirkey said he and Hawes have worked together since Kirkey was named director in 2002. That same year, they were able to get Plattsburgh State included in a pilot program for student exchanges sponsored by the Killam Trusts. They also established the Fulbright-SUNY Plattsburgh Visiting Research Chair in Canadian Studies in 2004. While that position is focused on research, Kirkey said the new program is intended to be more instructional. The scholar in residence will offer an intensive course based on his or her particular field of expertise, he said. "It will once again provide an important link between these two programs," Kirkey said.

AHEAD OF CURVE - He said anyone with ideas on how whomever comes to the new post can help in the community is asked to contact the center. Hawes said he has found Plattsburgh State students to be very excited about opportunities to study in Canada from the start of the Killam program. "It has been a terrific relationship with the college here," Hawes said. He said Ettling and Kirkey have been ahead of the curve when it comes to integration of teaching, learning, research and student service opportunities. Ettling and Hawes also signed a five-year agreement to continue the Killam Undergraduate Fellowships for Americans program. "That's been wonderfully successful," Kirkey said. It provides a cash award of \$5,000 for up to two semesters of studies at select Canadian universities. Kirkey said the center is working to establish a first-of-its-kind Chair in Quebec Studies position. An announcement on that is expected in the near future.

## B. Border Communications

### **CBP in Buffalo Advises Travelers: Prepare For Busy Holiday Weekend**

(Monday, April 18, 2011)

**Buffalo, N.Y.** - U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Field Operations reminds travelers planning cross border trips this Holiday weekend to make sure they have the proper documents and to plan for a possible increase in traffic. CBP officials want to inform the traveling public that there are a number of steps that can be taken to facilitate their arrival into the U.S.

Travelers should check traffic conditions at the four border crossings within the Buffalo/Niagara region and select the crossing that is least congested. Travelers can easily obtain current border traffic conditions by calling the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission's toll free number at **1-800-715-6722** or by visiting any of the following websites: , ( [cbsa-asfc.gc.ca](http://cbsa-asfc.gc.ca) ) , ( [nittec.org](http://nittec.org) ) , ( [peacebridge.com](http://peacebridge.com) ) , or ( [niagarafallsbridges.com](http://niagarafallsbridges.com) ) .

Travelers should familiarize themselves with the "Know Before You Go" section of the CBP Web site and consult the border wait times page. ( [Know Before You Go](#) ) ( [Wait Times - Airport and Border](#) )

Wait time information is updated hourly and is useful in identifying periods of light traffic/short waits. Travelers should have their approved travel documents available for inspection and be prepared to declare all items acquired outside, or being imported into, the U.S.

In compliance with the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, implemented June 1, 2009, all travelers, including U.S. and Canadian citizens, need to present an approved travel document to enter the U.S. by land and sea. These documents include a valid Passport, U.S. Passport Card, Trusted Traveler card (NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST) or an Enhanced Driver's License. Children under the age of 16 can present an original or copy of their birth certificate. Please visit the WHTI Web site for additional information. ( [getyouhome.gov](http://getyouhome.gov) )

CBP strongly encourages travelers to obtain a radio frequency identification enabled travel document such as a U.S. Passport Card, Enhanced Driver's License/Enhanced Identification Card or Trusted Traveler Program card (NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST/EXPRES) to expedite their entry and make crossing the border more efficient.

WHTI compliant, RFID enabled documents help reduce the time it takes to process travelers at the border. No personal identification information is stored on the RFID chip embedded in the cards – only a series of ones and zeros that points to information in a secure CBP database.

WHTI document requirements for air travel have been in effect since January 2007.

CBP also reminds U.S. lawful permanent residents that the I-551 form (green card) is acceptable for land and sea travel into the U.S.

Frequent cross-border travelers are encouraged to participate in the NEXUS program, which allows pre-screened, low-risk travelers to proceed with little or no delay into the United States and Canada. Application forms are available on the Canada Border Services Agency website at ([cbasf.asfc.gc.ca](http://cbasf.asfc.gc.ca)) and travelers can apply online at [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov). Additionally, NEXUS information is available toll-free at **1-866-NEXUS 26 (1-866-639-8726)**.

WHTI is the joint Department of State-Department of Homeland Security plan that implemented a key 9/11 Commission recommendation to establish document requirements for travelers entering the United States who were previously exempt, including citizens of the U.S., Canada and Bermuda.

*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*

For Immediate Release: April 14, 2011

Contact: Theresa Kennedy

716-852-3501 / 716-803-4281 (cell)

[theresa.kennedy@mail.house.gov](mailto:theresa.kennedy@mail.house.gov)

## Higgins Asks CBP to Consider Smaller Peace Bridge Plaza

*Congressman Says Reduced Footprint could Benefit Project  
Momentum*

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27), a member of the House of Representatives Committees on Homeland Security and Foreign Affairs, sent a letter to the U.S. Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) asking for expedited effort on the Peace Bridge construction project including consideration of a reduced footprint for the American plaza.

“We have clarity on shared border management, commitment on funding and now we must look closely at how we can work together to put the final pieces in place to give this region the best opportunity for a better quality of life,” said Higgins. “We should be ensuring this gateway is no larger than it absolutely needs to be to open up the door of economic opportunity for the entire cross-border region.”

Congressman Higgins’ district includes the Peace Bridge crossing between Western New York and Ontario and he is a staunch advocate for new Bridge construction. More on the Congressman’s efforts is available at: <http://higgins.house.gov/peacebridge>.

Below is the text from Congressman Higgins’ letter to U.S. Customs and Border Protection:

Dear Commissioner Bersin,

I write you today regarding the Peace Bridge Expansion Project. In order to expedite the ultimate and successful completion of the Project, I urge you to use all possible avenues to maximize your program of requirements within the smallest footprint possible, reducing, to the maximum extent possible, the involuntary taking of homes on Buffalo's West Side. With your collaboration, we can have a project that meets our nation’s commitment to homeland security at a lower cost.

For the first time, we have achieved significant momentum on this project.

First, we have clarity. With Secretary Napolitano’s announcement that the shared border management pre-clearance program as was previously proposed is “dead”, we know with certainty that the Plaza will be located in the City of Buffalo. Now we can proceed with the environmental process knowing that there is a site certain for improvements to the Plaza.

Second, we have commitment. President Obama’s Fiscal Year 2012 Budget proposes an unprecedented \$2.2 billion for Land Ports of Entry within the request of the Department of Transportation. The Peace Bridge Expansion Project would rank high for funding in this request. With this commitment, combined with potential funding from the Canadian government and the bonding authority of the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority, we have a financing package that is coming together.

But I think we can go farther in making this project better. So third, I believe we can and should consolidate the current plaza plan into a reduced footprint that will meet the homeland security needs of your agency as well as decreasing the project’s cost and expediting its movement. I’ve studied the issues relating to the construction of similar projects, and I believe we can make this project better by making it smaller.

I your earliest convenience, I again urge you to come to Buffalo so we can begin to plan to make this project better and so I can show you first-hand how the Peace Bridge

Expansion Project would benefit Western New York, and solidify your commitment to the project's expeditious movement.

Sincerely,

BRIAN HIGGINS  
Member of Congress

## Short Sea Shipping Bill Would Encourage Needed Job Creation

### Higgins, Tiberi, LaTourette Introduce Bill To Continue Shipping Infrastructure Development

U.S. Congressmen Pat Tiberi (R-OH), Brian Higgins (D-NY), and Steve LaTourette (R-OH) today introduced the Short Sea Shipping Act to encourage job creation and to continue developing the United States shipping industry.

"Historically, proximity to water brought great economic opportunity for communities like Western New York," said Congressman Higgins. "We want to again make waterways business-friendly, promoting the robust flow of goods and the creation of quality jobs."

"This bill would encourage American job creation and economic growth by reducing certain shipping burdens," explained Congressman Tiberi, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures. "This is the type of measure that will reduce burdens associated with shipping goods between U.S. ports and make it easier for businesses to grow and deliver their products."

"This could be the last hurdle to making cargo Ferry service from Lake Erie to Canada a reality," LaTourette said. "This will hopefully open up an avalanche of new investment along the Great Lakes in our region."

Specifically, the bill would exempt from the Harbor Maintenance Tax commercial cargo that is loaded at a port in the United States mainland and unloaded at another port in the United States mainland after transport solely by coastal or river route or unloaded at a port in Canada located in the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway System. In addition the bill's exemption would apply to commercial cargo that is loaded at a port in Canada located in the Great Lakes Seaway System and unloaded at a port in the United States mainland.

Enacting this measure would enhance our short sea shipping industry, create jobs, and improve the flow of commerce in the United States.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 14, 2011

**SCHUMER TO BORDER PATROL: DELAYS IN CANADIAN TRAINS  
HURTING UPSTATE BUSINESS – STREAMLINE INSPECTION PROCESS TO  
KEEP TRAINS AND BUSINESSES MOVING**

***In Letter To Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano, Schumer Urges Feds To Use Prescreening System to Streamline Inspection Process So Passengers Can Reach Upstate NY Quicker – Fueling Local Businesses From Clinton County All The Way Down To NYC***

***Schumer Pushes To Consolidate Security Inspections At Montreal Train Station, Rather Than Having Trains Make Separate, Time Consuming Stops Midway***

***Schumer: Trains That Help Boost Upstate’s Economy Should Be Allowed To Move Full Steam Ahead***

Today, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer wrote a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano and Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Bersin, urging them to speed up the inspection process for trains coming into Upstate New York across the Canadian border. Currently, passenger travel on the Quebec to New York City corridor is delayed for significant periods of time as incoming trains are stopped at the border for an arduous, two hour inspection and screening process. The delays associated with crossing the border could be substantially reduced if Customs and Border Patrol established a passenger prescreening process at the Montreal train station, rather than in the middle of transit. Today, Schumer called on Customs and Border Patrol to establish a pre-trip inspection point to cut down on travel delays, and offered any necessary legislative assistance to help the agency create the inspection point.

“Trains loaded down with passengers help fuel Upstate New York businesses, and we need to be making it as convenient as possible for Canadians to visit our restaurants, shop in our stores, and continue to fuel the economy in Upstate New York,” said Schumer. “Establishing a prescreening center in Montreal will make train travel faster and easier, and encourage even more Canadians to visit New York. It’s absolutely critical that Border Patrol establishes a safe, efficient, and secure screening process at the Montreal station as quickly as possible to alleviate this burden that is putting a cramp on local businesses, and I’m going to do everything I can to get it up and running.”

Schumer, who serves as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and Border Security, notes that the strength of the Canadian economy and current exchange rate makes it essential that the federal government move quickly to speed up train travel between the two nations. Eliminating delays would help promote cross-border growth and boost businesses from the North Country through New York’s Tech Valley, all the way down to New York City. He also notes that Customs and Border Patrol has established an analogous screening center in Vancouver, that has helped speed up train travel in the Northwest, leading to increased economic activity throughout the region.

The text of Senator Schumer’s letter to Secretary Napolitano appears below:

April 14, 2011

Secretary Janet Napolitano  
Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Alan D. Bersin  
Commissioner  
United States Customs and Border Protection  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano and Commissioner Bersin,  
As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security, I am responsible for directing the Senate's oversight of the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to secure our borders and ports of entry while, at the same time, promoting trade, travel, and traffic that is essential to America's economy.

It is in this regard that I write to address delays in train travel between Canada and the United States. Specifically, between the Quebec-New York corridor, travel is delayed for great periods because incoming trains to the United States are stopped at our border for up to two hours to complete the clearance and screening process for passengers on board. Consequently, these delays result in impediments to cross border train travel that cost our businesses much needed revenue from Canadian travelers.

There is, however, a solution to this problem. Just as DHS and CBP have done in the Vancouver/Blaine international border, DHS and CBP should establish a pre-screening/pre-clearance process at the Montreal train station. Given that there is only 1 train per day that leaves Montreal for New York, and that the same customs agents who perform the screening at the border are only 20 minutes away from the Montreal train station, there should be no reason that pre-screening/pre-clearance could not be done at the train station. Similar pre-clearance is also already done for incoming air traffic to the United States, adding yet another justification for this necessary change.

With the strength of the Canadian economy and the current exchange rate—which facilitates Canadian consumer and tourism spending and investment in the United States—it is crucial that we do all that we can to ensure that lawful cross-border train traffic can move through our ports of entry as quickly as possible so as to not create a chilling effect over vital cross-border tourism and commerce.

I believe that your agency has all of the necessary authority to address this problem, but if there is any assistance you need from Congress in this regard, I stand ready to help with any legislation necessary to further this objective. I thank you for your attention to this important matter, and look forward to working with you to assist you in your mission of protecting America while promoting travel, trade, and commerce.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Refugees

###

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 11, 2011

**SCHUMER: PORT OF ROCHESTER GETTING SHALLOWER BY THE DAY,  
THREATENING FISHING, SHIPPING, AND TOURISM – WILL PUSH TO  
FREE-UP BOTTLED-UP FUNDS TO DREDGE ROCHESTER PORT**

*The Army Corps Of Engineers Is In Desperate Need Of Funds To Dredge In Rochester  
This Year – Without Dredging The Port May Be Closed To Local Businesses And  
Tourism, Resulting In Millions Of Dollars In Lost Revenues*

*Billions in Harbor Maintenance Funds Collected for Critical Dredging Projects But Sit  
Unused– Schumer Plan Would Put Existing Harbor Fund to Use Dredging Harbor  
and Unleashing Full Economic Potential Of Region’s Waterways*

*Schumer: This Plan Would Free-Up Existing Dredging Money For Rochester and  
Irondequoit Bay Now – Without Adding A Dime To The Deficit*

Today at the Port of Rochester, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer announced his support for legislation that would free up badly needed funds that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) must have in order to dredge the port this year. The port is scheduled for dredging this summer, but a lack of USACE funding threatens to delay dredging that will cost \$1.8 million and that is essential to keeping the port open for business. Each day, sediment settles at the bottom of Lake Ontario and the Genesee River, reducing water depth and creating a safety hazard for shipping barges, cruise ships, and recreational boats – all of which help pump millions of dollars into the economy every year. Today, Schumer announced his support for legislation that would release funding that is stuck in the Harbor Maintenance Trust for dredging in Rochester. The bill would ensure that incoming money from the Harbor Maintenance fee is spent on harbor maintenance projects, like dredging the Port of Rochester and Irondequoit Bay, rather than stuck in the account.

“Every day, sediment is piling up in the Port of Rochester and Irondequoit Bay, while money piles up in Washington that is supposed to be used to solve this problem,” said Schumer. “With the Port getting narrower and shallower every day, we can’t afford to miss the scheduled dredging that will keep our waterways open for business, open for fishing, and open to tourism. If we don’t act soon, shipping costs for local businesses will skyrocket, cruise ships will pass Rochester right on by, and our recreational fishing

industry will come to the end of its line. We badly need to dredge the Port of Rochester this summer, and the bill I support will make sure that we have the funds to make that happen.”

“Through the Harbor Maintenance Fees, industry has already paid for desperately needed dredging that has not been done, and we continue to deal with extraordinary, additional costs as we seek alternatives way to supply our customers with the materials that fuel economic activity,” said Steve Hewitt, Rochester Terminal Manager for Essroc Cement. “In the meantime the public pays the price again with congested and deteriorating roads while we are unable take advantage of the great resource that the Great Lakes waterway system offers.”

“We see about a foot and a half of sediment deposited every year along our boat slips on the Genesee River in Charlotte,” said Rochester Marina owner Steve Gibbs. “Without the Army Corp’s maintenance dredging of the navigation channel, our boaters would not be able to get into their slips in a just a few years.”

Schumer was joined by representatives from Sentry Safe, Essroc Cement Rochester Terminal Manager Steve Hewitt, Marina Owners Steve Gibbs and William Mayer, and UNICON Executive Director Ken Warner as he announced his support for the Harbor Maintenance Act of 2011.

The bipartisan bill would provide the USACE access to billions in funds collected in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund each year. The Trust Fund was established in 1986 in order to fund operations and maintenance of federal ports and harbors, and is funded by the Harbor Maintenance fee that is charged on imports and domestic cargo. Despite the fact that shippers are paying the fee that is supposed to go towards port dredging and maintenance, this money is not being sent out of the fund to serve its intended purpose. As a result, the Trust Fund has a current balance of \$5.7 billion – in the meantime, our ports are filling with sediment and in desperate need of infrastructure upgrades. Similar problems plagued the Highway Trust Fund, as well as the Airports and Airways Trust Fund, but were corrected with Congressional action that more closely tied revenues to expenditures. Continuing to charge this fee without using those revenues to improve harbor accessibility and safety is unfair. The bill that Schumer supports would link incoming revenues with expenditures on dredging and port maintenance projects, so that the money plus interest coming in each year would actually be allocated each year to improve our ports, rather than sitting in the Treasury.

Failing to dredge the Port of Rochester this year would be devastating to many businesses that play a key part of the Finger Lakes Region’s economy. Great Lakes Passenger Cruise ships, which have started docking in Rochester for multiple night stays, would have to bypass the Port if it becomes unsafe due to lack of dredging. Essroc Cement, a Rochester cement distributor, faced massive cost increases in 2007 when a cement barge importing cement from Canada ran aground, forcing deliveries for the following 12 months to be sent more expensively via truck. Sentry Safe of East Rochester currently receives shipments of Essroc cements for use in their manufacturing process. Sentry estimates its

cost for this cement would skyrocket by an additional \$150,000-\$200,000 per year if this cement had to be delivered by truck instead of barge. Local contractors are also concerned that the cost of construction projects would increase due to rising materials costs. Moreover, a lack of dredging threatens recreational boating and fishing industries, which help pump critical tourism dollars into waterfront communities every summer.

In Monroe County's other federal harbor, Irondequoit Bay, the bay's largest marina, Mayer Marina, estimates that curtailment of operations due to insufficient channel depth would likely cost the business upwards of \$180,000 a year in fuel sales alone, and that combined losses among all of the bay's marinas and related operations would likely be in the range of millions of dollars. It also threatens the recreation-oriented economies of three municipalities fronting the bay: the towns of Webster, Penfield and Irondequoit.

Continuing to spend funds on dredging and harbor maintenance projects is a sound investment. A 2003 study showed that the Great Lakes states are a recreational boating powerhouse, with nearly one third of all registered boats in the United States. Spending on boats and boating activities in the Great Lakes states totaled nearly \$16 billion in 2003 (the year of the study), directly supporting 107,000 jobs. With secondary effects figured in, that number grew to 244,000 jobs, with economic impacts of \$19 billion in sales, \$6.4 billion in personal income and, \$9.2 billion in value added. Compared to the economic benefits they provide, the cost of maintenance dredging for the harbors would be relatively minor. Not including commercial harbors, in the 2003 study the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that the dredging needs of all recreational harbors and channels in the Great Lakes could be adequately addressed for an investment of \$5 million per year.

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## **To Help NY Dairy Farmers and Protect Consumers, Schumer, Gillibrand Push Legislation to Require Country of Origin Labeling on All Dairy Products**

### **Bill Would Extend Country of Origin Labeling to Dairy Products**

April 14, 2011

*Washington, D.C.* In an effort to ensure that families know where the dairy products in their shopping carts come from and to help New York dairy farmers stand out in a crowded marketplace, U.S. Senators Charles E. Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, the first New York Senator to serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee in 40 years, reintroduced the Dairy COOL Act today. The bill would extend mandatory country of origin labeling (COOL) to dairy products.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's current COOL law, which went into effect in 2008, requires country of origin labeling of meats, produce, and nuts. The Dairy COOL Act would extend COOL requirements to include dairy products—including milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, and butter.

“From milk to yogurt to cheese, New York farmers produce some of the finest dairy products available,” said **Senator Schumer**. “Clear labeling will enable consumers to choose the highest quality, homegrown products and make them more aware of where their food is coming from. New Yorkers are proud of the high-quality dairy products they produce and this bill will boost New York agriculture while empowering consumers to choose our own locally produced foods.”

“We must do more to protect consumers and support New York's struggling dairy farmers,” said **Senator Gillibrand**. “By giving consumers country of origin labeling information on all dairy products they will have the tools to choose milk, yogurt and cheese from Upstate New York instead of China. With increasing dairy imports and alarming news about tainted products from overseas, country of origin labeling will allow families to buy the best products and make informed choices for their families.”

Food imports constitute a growing share of what is sold on grocery shelves across the country and what Americans eat. Fifteen percent of America's overall food supply is imported from overseas, including \$5.2 billion worth of food from China alone. Since 1996, the U.S. agricultural trade surplus shrank from \$27 billion to \$8 billion in 2006. Individual shipments of food from China increased from 82,000 shipments in 2002 to 199,000 in 2006.

In 2008, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's current COOL law went into effect requiring Country of Origin labeling for nuts, fruits, vegetables, meats, and seafood. The Dairy COOL Act would extend COOL requirements to include dairy products – milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, and butter.

Press Release

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For Immediate Release:

**Recent Survey Shows Importance of Canadian Visitors to Northern New York Economy**  
*North Country Chamber of Commerce Study Reveals Canadian Visitation is Strong*

Plattsburgh, NY – 4/12/11 – The North Country Chamber of Commerce and its Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau recently conducted a survey of more than 250 tourism-related businesses, verifying the importance of Canadian visitors to area businesses and the North Country economy.

"We certainly know that Canadian spending in our area is of great importance and has been growing," states Chamber President Garry Douglas, "but we decided it was time to take a snapshot of just how important it is and what the trends and opportunities may be, especially as we refine our Montreal marketing plans for this summer."

The Chamber surveyed more than 250 tourism-related businesses, including lodging, campgrounds, restaurants, attractions, marinas, retailers and agritourism operations, with the results revealing the following:

- A strong majority depends on Canadians for 20% or more of their business. Almost a fifth depends on Canadians for more than 50% of their business.
- 88% rate the importance of Canadians on their businesses as Important or Very Important. 48% say Very Important.
- 88% reported an increase in Canadian business in 2010 compared to 2009. A majority (64%) reported a 5-15% increase, while 12% reported an increase greater than 25%.

"These numbers confirm that we are enjoying the benefits of both a strong Canadian economy and the fact that the two currencies are remaining near par," states Douglas. "And they reinforce our belief that the opportunity is ripe to attract even more visitors and spending from north of the border this year, especially over the summer."

- more -

"We expect another strong summer in respect to Canadian visitors," stated Michele Powers, Vice President of Marketing for the North Country Chamber of Commerce. Powers, who also serves as the director of the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau, added, "We are in the process of creating an extensive marketing program targeting the Montreal market throughout the summer which will include a co-op advertising flight on Montreal television with member businesses. So when you combine the strength of the Canadian dollar, New York state's recent 4% tax exemption for all clothing purchases under \$55, and an aggressive marketing campaign, the outlook is good."

"Just as important as getting them here is making their visit as enjoyable and welcoming as possible," states Douglas. "All of our area hospitality and retail businesses need to step up their efforts to make our Quebec friends comfortable, including more bi-lingual menus and signs, more French skills among customer service staff, and zero tolerance for any impatience, prejudice or poor attitudes toward our neighbors. Walt Disney said that people spend money where and when they feel good. Let's make them feel very good about spending money, supporting jobs and generating sales tax revenue here in the North Country."

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#### **About the North Country Chamber of Commerce**

The North Country Chamber of Commerce is leading the way for business and economic development in the Quebec-New York region. The largest economic development entity in northern New York, the North Country Chamber of Commerce represents more than 4,000 companies and organizations across Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton and northern Warren Counties. Founded in 1912, the Plattsburgh-based organization has grown to become one of the five largest chambers in New York State. For more information on the North Country Chamber of Commerce call 518.563.1000 or visit [northcountrychamber.com](http://northcountrychamber.com).

#### **About the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau**

The Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau, a division of the North Country Chamber of Commerce, was established in 1994 as the official tourism promotion agency for the travel and tourism industry in Clinton County, NY. Based in Plattsburgh, NY, the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau contributes to the county's economic development and quality of life by promoting the region as a top destination for tourism, meetings and other special events. For more information on Clinton County tourism, please contact the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau at 518.563.1000 or visit [goadirondack.com](http://goadirondack.com).



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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**April 12, 2011**  
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### Peace Bridge Authority Launches Revamped Website

BUFFALO, NY/FORT ERIE, ON – Today the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority (PBA) officially launched a new and improved website at [www.peacebridge.com](http://www.peacebridge.com), which provides users with various updated features and increased access to convenient and timely information regarding Peace Bridge corridor travel and activity.

"Proper communication and good customer service is an essential component of our operation," said Authority Chairman Anthony Annunziata. "That's why the Authority constantly reevaluates the mechanisms we use to connect with bridge travelers and the surrounding Buffalo Niagara community. This new website will make it even easier for visitors to locate and retrieve the border crossing information they're looking for."

Enhancements to [www.peacebridge.com](http://www.peacebridge.com) include new content, greater navigability, an integrated search function, certain downloadable commercial carrier and employment forms, as well as the following improvements:

- Touch-screen friendly format for mobile and tablet device users.
- Social media integration, allowing travelers to share traffic condition information, crossing updates, webcam images, and other information through various web-based platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, RSS and others.
- Bridge lighting notifications, schedule, and criteria.

The Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority, a binational bridge authority, has owned and operated the Peace Bridge since 1933. The bridge, which was opened to traffic in 1927, spans the Niagara River between Fort Erie, Ontario, and Buffalo, New York, and is a key international border crossing. The Authority is governed by a 10 member board with an equal number of representatives from Canada and the United States. As an international compact and in accordance with its enabling legislation, the chairmanship alternates annually between Canada and the United States.

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## **Canada Institute News**

### **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars**

Welcome to the April 14 edition of "Canada Institute News." Our biweekly brief e-mail messages will keep you informed not only about what is happening at the Canada Institute but also in the Canada-U.S. relationship. Thank you for your continued interest and support--please feel free to pass this along to those who might be interested in the programs.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

##### **"Implications of the May 2nd Canadian Federal Election on Canada-U.S. Relations"**

Wednesday, May 4, 2011, 9:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.

The Canada Institute and the [Canadian American Business Council](#) will co-host a discussion of the May 2 election results and what they mean for Canadian politics, foreign policy and relations with the United States, as well as what issues are likely to top the federal political agenda. [View event details](#) and [RSVP](#).

##### **"Canada Crude to China? Prospects and Barriers of Increasing Chinese Imports of Canadian Oil"**

Thursday, May 5, 2011, 9:00a.m. - 11:30a.m.

The Canada Institute, in collaboration with the [China Environment Forum](#), will host a program exploring Canada's prospects for exporting oil to the Asian market. The forum will examine the anticipated completion of two major pipeline projects, and the regulatory challenges and environmental concerns associated with their construction. The event will also explore what these projects might mean for North American energy security. [Read more details](#) and [RSVP](#).

##### **"Cross-Border Extremist Crime Networks: Fact or Fiction?"**

Wednesday, May 11, 2011, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

The Canada Institute will hold a conference, co-sponsored with the [National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism \(START\)](#), exploring how vulnerable the Canada-U.S. border really is to crime and terrorism. The program will examine surprising data collected by a team of U.S. and Canadian researchers on the nature and extent of cross-border criminal activity, and propose a new model for defense. [Read details](#) and [RSVP](#).

## **EVENTS OF INTEREST**

### **Canada Arctic Governance Task Force Program and Reception**

Thursday, May 5, 2011, 5:30p.m.

*Canadian Embassy, 501 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC*

[The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies](#) at the University of Washington cordially invites friends to the Canada Arctic Governance Task Force program and reception. [The Canada Arctic Governance Task Force](#) provides education and research on a key Canada-U.S. foreign policy issue today--the Arctic. [Read more information](#) about the event and [RSVP to Kelly Voss](#) by April 18.

**Embassy: Canada's Foreign Policy Newsweekly - <http://www.embassymag.ca/>**

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## **C. Editorials/Columns**

### **Analysis: Canada's Harper continues quest for majority government Pittsburgh Post-Gazette - April 11, 2011**

When Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Conservatives lost the confidence of the House of Commons recently, it meant that Canada would have its fourth national election in seven years. But it did not mean that the country's longest period of minority government will end when the country votes on May 2. In fact, two weeks into the campaign, the polls suggest that the Conservatives are still short of winning most of the 308 seats in Parliament. In that case, the Conservatives will have to continue governing through fitful, difficult negotiation with the three left-of-center opposition parties. It is not a prospect that Mr. Harper relishes. Although he was careful not to say that he was seeking a majority when he ran in 2006 and sought re-election in 2008, he is now more direct. In fact, he pleads for "a strong, stable Conservative majority government" every day, making it a cornerstone of his campaign. If the Conservatives return with a third consecutive minority, he warns, Canada faces economic turbulence, higher taxes and political instability. His message: It's the Conservatives or chaos. Worried that he would frighten moderate Canadians who do not trust him with unchecked authority, Mr. Harper has avoided talk of a majority in the past. Now that he has governed for more than five years -- longer than the Nobel Laureate Lester Pearson in the 1960s -- he is assured that Canadians no longer believe that he has "a secret agenda" to slash the size of government, privatize state corporations (like the Canadian Broadcasting Company), restore capital punishment, outlaw abortion and curtail gay marriage, all of which make Canada more European than American. Mr. Harper warns Canadians repeatedly that if they don't give him a majority government, his party will be unseated by a coalition of the other three parties in Parliament. These include the Liberals, who are progressives; the New Democrats, who are farther to the left; and the Bloc Quebecois, who are committing to making the province of Quebec an independent country. When Parliament was dissolved in March after the government lost a critical vote, the Conservatives held 143 seats, the Liberals 77 seats, the New Democrats 36 seats, and the Bloc Quebecois 47 seats. There were two

independents and three vacancies. For casting a coalition as unseemly and unCanadian, Mr. Harper has been called a fear-monger. His critics say his allegations are unfounded; in Canada's parliamentary system, coalitions are unusual but not unconstitutional. Great Britain, the mother of parliament, has a coalition government, for example. Actually, Canada had a coalition government from 1917 to 1920. Mr. Harper never mentions that, insisting flatly that the party winning the most seats (even if it's a plurality) should form the government. He derides the informal coalition proposed by the opposition parties shortly after the election in the autumn of 2008. While his Conservatives had won more seats in Parliament, he again fell short of a majority. When, without warning, he moved to abolish public financing for political parties -- a measure that might have bankrupted those with less fund-raising capacity than the Conservatives -- the opposition formed a hasty coalition, led by the Liberals, and vowed to defeat the government in a vote of no-confidence. Rather than face such a vote, Mr. Harper asked the governor general, Canada's head-of-state, to dissolve Parliament. She did, the vote never happened, the crisis passed and the proposed coalition fell apart. Although Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff has strongly denied that his party will look to form a coalition after the election, Mr. Harper is unrelenting. In a country that is prosperous and in a campaign without a dominant issue, the matter refuses to go away. Mr. Harper is running a classic frontrunner's campaign. He appears at scripted events, screens the crowd and takes few questions from the media. His government has been a prudent manager of the economy, he boasts, which is why Canada weathered the recession better than any other and why growth of 5 percent is predicted this year. With relatively low unemployment, a dollar approaching a petrocurrency and soaring prices for precious metals, fossil fuels and foodstuffs, Canada is sitting pretty. Although household debt is a record 148 percent of household income, the federal deficit (3.6 percent of GDP) is lower than other industrialized countries and its national debt (34 percent of GDP) is more manageable than that of the United States. For this, the Conservatives take credit. The party hopes to win seats in the vote-rich suburbs around Toronto, where many immigrants live in one of the world's most heterogeneous societies. The Liberals have traditionally won there, but if the Conservatives can increase their hold -- along with their rock-ribbed base in western Canada -- they will reach the 155 seats they need for a majority in the House of Commons. The Liberals stand in their way. Once called "Canada's Natural Governing Party," they have been adrift since they were reduced to a minority in 2004 and lost power to the Conservatives in 2006. Mr. Ignatieff, a writer and scholar who was teaching at Harvard before returning to Canada in 2005, is trying to blunt the Conservative assault. Having been pilloried in television ads as a patrician, opportunist and parvenu who is "just visiting Canada" after 30 years abroad, Mr. Ignatieff is looking for a second chance to make a first impression. He is running a spirited, open campaign and trying to position his party slightly to the left of the Conservatives, whose positions on the economy and Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan are similar to the Liberals. So, he promises to raise corporate taxes, cancel an order for expensive fighter jets and stop building jails. He reminds Canadians that the Conservatives were found in contempt of Parliament for ignoring its rules, and have run "an undemocratic, autocratic government." The Liberals are offering improved home care, free education for veterans, enhanced student aid and tax breaks for families. Like the Conservatives, they are targeting the middle class. The New Democrats, for their part, are struggling to hold on to their seats in Ontario and the West. In Quebec, the Bloc Quebecois is expected to retain its support. While the polls show the Conservatives approaching a majority, it remains stubbornly elusive for them. They hope that they can seal the deal in the debates among the leaders, which take place on Tuesday and Thursday. The Liberals hope that a good showing by Mr. Ignatieff there will stop them. - *Andrew Cohen is an author, professor and syndicated columnist in Ottawa.*

**D. Citizens Views (write-in letters)**