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REPORT:

A. Border Related News Media

High winds slam Western New York Buffalo News - April 28, 2011

Gale-force winds gusting to 83 mph wreaked havoc across the region Thursday, downing hundreds of trees and power lines, leaving tens of thousands without power and closing the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge for more than six hours. Niagara County bore the brunt of big blow, dispatchers said, but Erie, Orleans and Chautauqua counties also were hit hard. "The weather system we are seeing is a major system that has affected the entire Eastern U.S.," said Tom Niziol, head of the National Weather Service office in Buffalo. "It is related to the severe tornado activity that has been seen in the gulf region." The storm devastated the South, claiming more than 290 lives. "This equals the October Surprise storm ...," Lockport Police Chief Lawrence Eggert said. "It's almost as bad." At its height early Thursday afternoon, nearly 40,000 customers were without power. In Niagara County, more than 24,000 homes and businesses went dark, according to National Grid. The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission closed the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge after a tractor-trailer carrying a light load tipped over at about 10:35 a.m. along I-190 at exit 25A, just south of the international crossing. The driver was not hurt. The bridge did not reopen until about 5 p.m. Traffic was diverted to the Peace Bridge, where empty tractor-trailers were banned. The Rainbow Bridge was closed to buses or pedestrians, allowing only passenger vehicles to cross. Other parts of Western New York also were wind-battered. Nearly 7,000 National Grid customers were without power in Orleans County; more than 2,100 in Erie, mostly in Buffalo and the Town of Tonawanda; and more than 800 in Genesee County, the utility reported. National Grid spokesman Stephen Brady said crews would work around the clock to restore power but, he said, "It appears certain we will have outages that will carry into [today]." He said a small number of customers may not have power back until Saturday. National Grid plans to bring in crews from around the area, doubling its normal force to deal with the wind damage, Brady said. The National Weather Service issued a weather alert for Niagara, Orleans, Monroe, northern Erie and Genesee counties Thursday morning, warning of sustained winds of 40 mph and frequent gust in excess of 60 mph. Meteorologists hoped to cancel it at 4 p.m. but kept it in effect until 8 p.m. as the strong winds persisted. At Niagara Falls International Airport, where wind gusts as high as 83 mph were recorded, a flight from Florida was delayed from landing by an hour. The highest gusts

measured at Buffalo Niagara International Airport were 63 mph at 10 a.m. and 2:25 p.m. Sustained winds hit 46 mph. The cities of Lockport and Niagara Falls urged no unnecessary travel during the day. Lockport officials also asked residents to restrict water use because power was out at a pump station in the Town of Tonawanda that supplies water to the city. Royalton-Hartland and Wilson schools closed early. "Wilson Central Schools arranged for buses to take home any children who usually walk to and from school," said Superintendent Michael Wendt. "We've had some limbs down, some trees that blew down. Nobody has been hurt. We've kept kids inside." A Wilson High School employee whose car was in the teachers' parking lot managed to move it about 10:30 a.m., moments before winds uprooted a towering pine tree that would have crushed it, according to reports. Niagara Falls Police Superintendent John Chella said the department had everyone out on the streets, including him, addressing storm problems. He said the wind toppled a number of trees, some of which fell on houses and vehicles. "It's pretty bad out here," Chella said from his cell phone as he walked past the City Market on Pine Avenue and saw a tree on a house. "There are live power lines everywhere." Several roads were closed in Cambria, Newfane, Ransomville, Bergholz and Appleton because of downed power lines — and an outbuilding in a soon-to-be-opened Cambria winery called "Gust of Son" was hit by a gust of wind, which tore through the roof. "Perhaps the weather took exception to our name," owner Erik Gustafson said, trying to add some levity to the additional construction work ahead. Downed lines and other problems were reported across Chautauqua County, and National Grid reported about 800 people in the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation area were without power Thursday morning. The storm marked yet another wild day on the roller coaster of Western New York weather. On Wednesday, a temperature of 82 degrees — just two degrees shy of the record — was recorded at the airport. Highs today aren't expected to get out of the low 40s, with rain forecast. Sunshine and more moderate temperatures are expected Saturday.

Good grade for bridge panel
Buffalo News - April 29, 2011

The operator of three Niagara River bridges has received a credit rating upgrade from A to A+ from Standard & Poor's. The new rating represents the third-highest possible. The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission operates the Lewiston-Queenston, Rainbow and Whirlpool bridges. "The commission has worked hard over the years to operate the . . . bridges as efficiently and as effectively as possible," said Chairman Patrick D. Brown in a release. "The S&P report is good news because it indicates that we are on solid footing and well positioned to continue planning for success well into the future." S&P credit ratings reflect the organization's opinion of the ability of a corporation or other entity to satisfy its financial obligations. "Going forward, if we needed to borrow, we would do it at a lower interest rate and a lower cost," Brown said. "It's also good for our existing bonds. It shows our investors holding them are holding good debt. It gives investors confidence." Brown said the largest advantage is that future products would be able to be completed at a lower cost and that the savings would translate into cheaper use of the bridges.

Northern states to get Homeland Security grants
Buffalo News - April 25, 2011

Law enforcement agencies in northern border states for now will still be able to receive border protection grants after Congress nixed an attempt to limit the money to the Southwest. But it may be a temporary reprieve, with the Department of Homeland Security's 2012 budget request also seeking to restrict the Operation Stonegarden grant money to Southwestern border states. Both the 2011 and 2012 budget requests by the department earmarked \$50 million for Operation Stonegarden, which local law enforcement agencies in border states use to pay for overtime and equipment meant to help the federal government secure U.S. borders. But unlike past years,

Homeland Security specified in its requests the grant money was to be spent only "to address the nation's Southwest border security issues." That limitation was met with dismay from northern lawmakers from Maine to Montana who argued against cutting support to protect the 5,525-mile U.S.-Canada border. Last year, border states in the Southwest received \$47.6 million in Operation Stonegarden grants, compared with \$11.1 million for northern border states. The restriction was removed in the budget bill passed by Congress earlier this month, the agency said Friday and the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee confirmed on Monday.

"Northern border states are eligible for Operation Stonegarden grants in (Fiscal Year) 2011," DHS spokesman Chris Ortman said. It wasn't immediately clear who pulled the restriction from the 2011 budget bill, said Senate committee spokeswoman Leslie Phillips. It's also not clear whether northern border states will be eligible for the grants beyond this year. Homeland Security's budget request for next year includes the same proposed restriction, and congressional budget negotiations for that year have not yet begun. Restricting the funding would leave one of the world's longest land borders open to drugs, weapons and human trafficking, Reps. Bill Owens, D-N.Y., and Denny Rehberg, R-Mont., said in a statement. "That simple fact makes limiting federal resources to the Southwest border region short-sighted at best and downright negligent at worst," Rehberg said. Valley County Sheriff Glen Meier in northeastern Montana said the grant money is vital to assist federal border agents keep the porous northern border more secure. Valley County received \$215,000 in 2009 and \$190,000 last year, using that money to pay for overtime, fuel, surveillance equipment, an all-terrain vehicle and a four-wheel-drive sport-utility vehicle. "If we caught somebody who was going to do another 9/11, the money spent on Stonegarden would be pretty minor," Meier said. "I hope if they drop Stonegarden, something serious doesn't happen that we wish didn't happen." Meier acknowledged the border protection money has become essential to paying his deputies overtime and predicted he would lose personnel if the funding were lost. "It's the only way they can make a living anymore with (the price of) things so high," he said. "We depend very much on Stonegarden to make a living and support families." But other counties are finding it hard to spend all the money they receive through the program. Blaine County Sheriff Glenn Huestis said he hasn't yet spent half the \$215,000 his department received from the program in 2009, and he still has the entire \$190,000 the department received in 2010. He said that along with overtime, he will only purchase equipment he can justify, since somebody's tax dollars are paying for it. "I could have an ATV sent here that I would use maybe once a year. Why spend it on that when I could use a camera and surveillance equipment multiple times a year?" Huestis asked.

Canadians Backed Up
Watertown Daily Times – April 26, 2011

Canadian visitors taking advantage of the long Easter weekend caused miles of traffic backups along the northern border Friday and Saturday, according to Thousand Islands Bridge Authority officials. Robert G. Horr III, executive director of the authority, said vehicles were backed up to Highway 401 and travelers entering the U.S. via the Wellesley Island port of entry had to wait up to two hours Friday and Saturday because of heavy southbound traffic from Canada. As many Canadians get Easter Monday off as a national holiday, vacationers, seasonal residents and cross-border shoppers seem to have hit the road all at once, Mr. Horr said. He said the strong Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar paired with relatively cheaper fuel prices also may have attracted more Canadian shoppers to the states than usual. The same phenomenon was observed at almost every other U.S.-Canadian port of entry, and wait times were as long as three hours at some other crossings, he said.

Police: woman had 130 pounds pot
Watertown Daily Times – April 29, 2011

A woman faces an allegation that she had 130 pounds of marijuana in her vehicle following a traffic stop here Tuesday. Alinda Amaral, age and address not available, was charged by U.S. Border Patrol agents about 7:15 a.m. on Route 37 in the town of Massena with possession of a controlled substance with the intent to distribute. According to a criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court, Plattsburgh, after Ms. Amaral's rented Dodge Charger was halted for an unspecified reason, she appeared nervous and was "visibly trembling" when she handed documents to an agent. She allegedly told the agent she flew from Canada to Buffalo and then traveled to the casino on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation and was on her way to Boston. A Border Patrol canine unit was called to the scene, where a dog allegedly alerted to the vehicle. A subsequent search of the vehicle's trunk allegedly revealed two hockey bags containing a substance that tested positive for marijuana. She was sent to U.S. marshals' custody pending a May 10 detention hearing.

A look at incumbent Prime Minister Stephen Harper
Buffalo News - April 29, 2011

NAME: Stephen Harper.

AGE: Turns 52 on Saturday.

OCCUPATION: Career politician. Trained economist.

FAMILY: Wife is graphic designer Lauren; two children, Ben and Rachel.

POLITICAL: He forged an alliance of old and new Tory parties to form the Conservative Party of Canada. He has won two elections but never with a majority. Yet although his hold on the 308-member Parliament was tenuous, he managed to nudge an instinctively center-left country to the right. He has gradually lowered sales and corporate taxes, avoided climate change legislation, promoted Arctic sovereignty, upped military spending and extended Canada's military mission in Afghanistan. He has staunchly backed Israel's right-wing government.

BACKGROUND: Harper grew up in the suburbs of Toronto. After high school, he dropped out of the University of Toronto and made oil-rich, highly conservative Alberta his adopted home. He worked in the mailroom of petroleum giant Imperial Oil, then got his masters in economics at the University of Calgary.

QUOTE: "I think if you look on balance I think this is a center-right government. ... We tend to favor free enterprise and markets over government intervention. Low taxes over high taxes. We favor family tradition. We're strong supporters of our traditional allies."

A look at Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff
Buffalo News - April 29, 2011

NAME: Michael Ignatieff

AGE: 63.

OCCUPATION: One of Canada's leading public intellectuals: an author, historian and journalist in Britain and a human rights professor at Harvard before going into politics.

FAMILY: Married to Zsuzsanna Zsohar; two children by a previous marriage, Theo and Sophie. Son of prominent Canadian diplomat George Ignatieff. He is the grandson of Russian Count Paul Ignatieff, who was the czar's last minister of education and one of the few to escape execution by the Bolsheviks. He is also the nephew of Conservative political philosopher George Grant.

POLITICAL: Left Harvard in 2005 with the hope he would take over leadership of the Liberal party, which governed Canada for much of the last century. First elected to Parliament in 2006, re-elected 2008 in Toronto riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore. Front-runner in 2006 Liberal leadership contest, lost to Stéphane Dion. Took helm of party in December 2008, officially acclaimed in May 2009. Criticized for spending half his life abroad.

BACKGROUND: Descended from Russia's Czarist aristocracy, Toronto-born Ignatieff earned a Ph.D. in history from Harvard, and has lectured at Oxford, Cambridge, the University of California at Berkeley and the London School of Economics. He hosted award-winning TV shows on the BBC, and worked as a journalist in Rwanda and Kosovo. He has written 17 books and a critically acclaimed family history, "The Russian Album."

QUOTE: "Did I expect it to be this tough? Probably not. But this isn't showbiz. This is political life. You've got to be tough. They've thrown a lot of nonsense at me and I'm still standing. They may have tried it with other leaders but they will not succeed with me."

A look at New Democrat leader Jack Layton Buffalo News - April 29, 2011

NAME: Jack Layton

AGE: 60.

OCCUPATION: Career politician. Former Toronto city councilor and tenured professor at Ryerson University.

FAMILY: Wife Olivia Chow is former Toronto city councilor and now New Democrat member of Parliament for a district in Toronto; two children, Sarah and Mike, from a previous marriage. Mike is a Toronto city councilor.

POLITICAL: Entered politics 1982 as leftist Toronto city councilor; president of Federation of Canadian Municipalities; elected leader of federal New Democrat party, January 2003; won seat in Toronto-Danforth in June 2004 federal election and has held it since. The New Democrats are a union-backed party with socialist roots.

BACKGROUND: Layton was born in Montreal and later moved to Toronto. He is the son of a former Progressive Conservative cabinet minister and the grandson of a cabinet minister in Quebec provincial politics. Layton ran to become Toronto's mayor in 1991 and lost. He opposed Toronto's bid for the 1996 Summer Olympics which ultimately failed.

QUOTE: "Canadians deserve a prime minister they can trust, a prime minister who will focus on the priorities of today's families, a prime minister who is really ready to roll up the sleeves, put the partisanship aside and work with others to get the job done."

Late leftist surge spices up Canadian election Buffalo News - April 29, 2011

Until a few days ago, Monday's election looked set to give Canada another mandate for the Conservative government. Instead, Prime Minister Stephen Harper could be out of a job if polls are right in predicting a late surge for the left. The unexpected gains for the New Democratic Party have upended previous soundings that predicted the Conservatives would get enough votes to form a minority government, perhaps even a majority one. Now a new scenario has emerged in which the New Democrats and the Liberals together win enough seats to eventually form a coalition. "We've had an earthquake here and it's all happening very quickly," said Nelson Wiseman, professor at the University of Toronto, after EKOS, a private polling company, gave the Conservatives 33.7 percent, the New Democrats 28 and the Liberals 23.7. The pollsters said they questioned 3,000 voters and gave a margin of error of 1.8 percentage points. A series of other polls have since reported similar results. It was a shock on two levels: for suggesting the Conservatives might be edged out of office by a late surge, and for predicting that the New Democrats would eclipse the Liberals, throughout Canadian history the party either in power or leading the opposition. The sudden shift reflected in the polls raised another, even more improbable scenario: that the New Democrats would win the most votes and leader Jack Layton, a little known figure outside Canada, would become prime minister. A poll published Thursday by The Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey put Layton's party just five percentage points

behind the Conservatives. "Nothing is off the table right now. We could have a New Democrat-led coalition, we could have a Conservative majority or we could even have the Liberals finish ahead of the New Democrats and a Liberal-led coalition," said Lawrence Martin, a political columnist for The Globe and Mail newspaper. Harper, in power since 2006, has won two elections but never with a majority. Yet although his hold on the 308-member Parliament is tenuous, he has managed to nudge an instinctively center-left country to the right. He has gradually lowered sales and corporate taxes, avoided climate change legislation, backed the oil industry against the environmental lobby, upped military spending and extended Canada's military mission in Afghanistan. Former colleagues of Harper say his long-term goals are to kill the image of the Liberals - the party of Jean Chretien, Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau - as the natural party of government in Canada, and to redefine what it means to be Canadian. Harper comes from the conservative western province of Alberta and "He's trying to say 'I represent Canadian values. Canadian values are really Conservative values,'" says Gerry Nicholls, who worked under Harper at a conservative think tank. "It's Tim Hortons versus Starbucks," he says, using a political shorthand that contrasts the nation's favorite chain of coffee and doughnut shops, named after the ice hockey star who founded it, to the more upmarket, urban American import. Nicholls and others say the New Democrats' surge may suit Harper by defining the contest in clearer terms of left vs. right, and winning over enough undecided voters to gain a majority. But the latest polls suggest that hope is fading. Harper said Friday he remains optimistic he will win a majority, but warned the Conservatives might not be in power for long if the result is another minority. "We will accept any mandate from the Canadian public, but my fear is that if we have a minority mandate, the other parties will not accept it," Harper said. The three opposition parties combined held 160 seats in the last Parliament, while the Conservatives held 143. The Liberals held 77, the New Democrats 36 and the Bloc Quebecois 47. The New Democrats' gains are being attributed to Layton's strong performance in the debates, a cheerful, upbeat message and a desire by the French-speakers in Quebec, the second most populous province, for a new face. "People are saying let's make some change happen," said Layton, who served as a longtime former city councilor in liberal Toronto. The campaign started out looking like a straight battle between Harper and the Liberals' Michael Ignatieff, with 60-year-old Layton recovering from prostate cancer and a broken hip. His party was scoring 14 to 18 percent in polls. In the Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey it hit 30 percent, and a photo of him wearing a Montreal Canadiens jersey and pouring a beer during the hockey playoffs has gone viral in Quebec. Layton favors higher taxes and more social spending. He has been a critic of Alberta's oil sands sector, the world's second largest oil reserves but a major polluter. Canada is the No. 1 source of oil for the U.S. Harper said the New Democrats stood for "higher taxes, higher spending, higher prices, protectionism. He called the election a choice between "a Conservative majority" and "a ramshackle coalition led by the NDP that will not last but will do a lot of destruction." Harper is counting on the economy to help him. Canada has outperformed other major industrialized democracies through the financial crisis, recovering almost all jobs lost during the recession while its banking sector remains intact. The only area that has not felt his conservative touch is the social one: he has said he will not tinker with Canada's liberal abortion and gay rights laws.

War Of 1812 Symposium This Weekend
Watertown Daily Times – April 28, 2011

So you thought you knew all there was to know about Ogdensburg and the War of 1812? Come to Ogdensburg this weekend and find out. The War of 1812 in this region and its assorted, possibly unknown implications will be topics of discussion by noted U.S. and Canadian scholars at the third annual War of 1812 Symposium on Friday and Saturday at the Freight House Restaurant, 20 Market St. The Fort La Présentation Association-sponsored event will begin Friday with a 7 to 9 p.m. social period for book-signings. Sue Croft will perform on the Scottish harp and hors

d'oeuvres will be served. Association President Barbara O'Keefe said Wednesday that interest in the event is percolating and people are making plans to attend. "We are on our way to having 60 people registered," she said. "Three signed up today and 10 signed up yesterday." Mrs. O'Keefe said the registrations are almost equally divided between Ontario and New York, with several coming from various branches of Parks Canada in Eastern Ontario and more are expected. Two people, she added, are coming from Connecticut. Mrs. O'Keefe said that, for the most part, the symposium's audience is made of War of 1812 buffs. "Most of the people who come to the symposium already know about it," she said. But don't count her in with that group. "I learn something new every year," Mrs. O'Keefe said. The topics of the presentations and their presenters on Saturday are:

* 9:15 a.m., Ogdensburg and Prescott during the War of 1812, by Paul Fortier, of Kingston, Ontario. He worked for 10 years as a military curator and historian for Parks Canada and 10 years after that as a manager at the National Archives of Canada.

* 10 a.m., American supply efforts on Lake Ontario, "Cooper's Ark," by Richard Palmer, of Syracuse. He is a senior editor of "Inland Seas," the quarterly of the Great Lakes Historical Society, and has written some 40 articles for the publication, covering more than 250 years of Lake Ontario's maritime history.

* 11 a.m., Col. Louis and the Native American role in the War of 1812 by Darren Bonaparte, from the Mohawk community of Ahkwesáhsne on the St. Lawrence River. He is a historical journalist, creating the Wampum Chronicles website in 1999 to promote his research into the history and culture of the Rotinonhsión:ni—the People of the Longhouse.

* 1 p.m., the War on the St. Lawrence River by Victor Suthren, of Merrickville, Ontario. He is an author and historian. He served as Director General of the Canadian War Museum from 1986 to 1998, and is an Honorary Captain in the Canadian Navy and advisor to the Directorate of Naval History and Heritage, Department of National Defence.

* 1:45 p.m., Excavation of American Graves at the 1812 Burlington Cantonment by Kate Kenny. She is program historian at the University of Vermont Consulting Archeology Program. She supervises historic artifact analyses and also helps supervise field work, particularly at historic sites.

* 6:45 p.m. The Battle of Sackets Harbor by Patrick Wilder. He is a historian retired from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. He is the author of "The Battle of Sackett's Harbour, 1813."

Other events scheduled for Saturday include:

* A question period at 2:45 p.m.

* At 3:15 p.m., a walking tour of the proposed Fort replication site, videos from WNED on the making of the "War of 1812" miniseries and the Southern Georgian Bay War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee and networking.

* A buffet lunch at 11:45 a.m. and breaks at 10:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

* Dinner will be served at 6 p.m.

Seminar details and registration instructions on the Fort La Présentation Association Web page www.fort1749.org.

B. Border Communications

Owens Announces Construction Will Resume At Churubusco

Border crossing critical to continued economic development, says Congressman

Washington, Apr 28 - CHURUBUSCO – Congressman Bill Owens today announced that construction is planned to resume next month on a new facility at the Churubusco border crossing. Upgrades on the port of entry are expected to be completed in spring of 2012. At this time, Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) plans to operate the port as a one-way crossing, only accepting traffic traveling from Canada into the United States. However, the new facility will be able to support two-way port operations should Canada decide to reopen its border crossing or partner with CBP so that traffic can flow both ways.

“This construction is important to the continued economic development and security in north country border communities,” said Owens. “I plan to continue my work with local leaders on both sides of the border to find a long-term solution that will allow the Canadian government to open their border crossing to two-way traffic. Creating a two-way crossing at this location will provide vital emergency services to the area and allow residents to continue to do their shopping, get their mail.”

Canadian officials closed operations at the Churubusco port on April 1st, 2011, and American upgrades to the border crossing were suspended in August of last year. Now that construction has been slated to resume and the project is estimated to be completed next spring, the region’s safety, security and local development will gain much-needed support from the new facility.

"The Canadian government was wrong to unilaterally close their side of this crossing," said Garry Douglas, President of the North Country Chamber of Commerce. "We are very pleased that the U.S. construction project at Churubusco will proceed, and we thank Congressman Owens for his active and continuing leadership in this matter. We will continue to encourage our Canadian friends to reverse their action, or perhaps to pursue a shared two-way operation in the new facility on the U.S. side. These rural crossings may not seem important to someone high up in Ottawa, but each of them represents an historic and valued connection between neighbors, and we shouldn't simply accept the loss of any such connections."

Congressman Bill Owens has fought to keep the crossing at Churubusco open in his continued work to promote economic development and cross-border trade in the north country. This year, Owens asked President Obama to discuss with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper the possibility of co-locating joint facilities like the one in Churubusco in advance of the leaders’ February meeting. After meeting with Members of the Canadian Parliament, Owens also wrote to Canadian Minister of Public Safety, Vic Toews, urging the official to reconsider the proposed border closings, and offered cost-effective alternatives including the use of remote processing technology and co-locating joint facilities.

CBP signed a \$6.8 million contract for the modernization of the Churubusco Land Port of Entry, made possible through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In announcing the restart of project construction, CBP cited the need for improved security in the area as the top reason for moving forward.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 27, 2011

**AFTER SCHUMER PUSH – WORK TO RESTART ON CHURUBUSCO
BORDER CROSSING, WILL LEAD TO MODERNIZED BORDER CROSSING
FACILITY CAPABLE OF HANDLING TWO-WAY BORDER TRAFFIC
BETWEEN US AND CANADA**

*DHS Moved to Close Churubusco Crossing After Canadian Government Planned to
End U.S. Entry from that Area*

*Schumer Pushed DHS to Resume Construction to Protect Local Businesses Who
Depend on Canadian Visitors, Construction Jobs Created from Project*

Schumer: Restarted Project Will Create Jobs, Promote Economic Growth

Today, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer announced that the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP) will restart construction on the Churubusco border crossing after Schumer pushed the agency to do so. Just a short time ago, CBP was planning to halt the project after the Canadian government decided to close their side of the port. Schumer contacted DHS and CBP and asked them to reverse course saying that closure would cost the area construction jobs related to the project and cost local businesses who depend on commerce from Canadians. The construction will serve to modernize the facility, and support an expansion that will support two-way travel between Canada and the United States.

“Our businesses and construction workers in the North Country depend on this project to meet their bottom line and provide for their families. The Department of Homeland Security's initial decision to shut down the project just didn't make sense and I'm glad they've changed course,” Schumer said. “Tourists coming from Canada are critical for our local businesses, we've got to do everything we can to support them and this border crossing facility is a big part of that.”

Just last year a new border crossing facility was set to be constructed at the Churubusco, N.Y./Franklin Centre. The facility was slated for a \$6.8 million upgrade- a project that would create jobs and boost economic activity for small businesses in the North Country that depend on commerce from Canada. Work on the project was being done by MCC Construction who subcontracted work out to four local firms. The project was halted when the Canadian government decided to close its side of the border from U.S. border crossers. In response DHS through CBP decided to abandon the project, but after a continued push from Senator Schumer, both agencies reversed course today.

Schumer objected to DHS' decision to halt the project saying that closing the port of entry from Canadian visitors would cost jobs and hurt small businesses. After being pressed by Schumer to restart construction, DHS and CBP announced today they would

resume construction and the project will go forward. The project's completion will keep open an important commercial pipeline for New York's businesses and maintain jobs for construction workers. Schumer also pressed the Canadian government to reverse course and open up their side to New Yorkers – the new construction project slated to begin next month will support potential travel resulting from that decision.

Once the project is completed it will continue to be open to travelers from 8am to 4pm, seven days per week.

Schumer added, "Having Canadians come into New York is important for our businesses, but it's just as important for the Canadian government to allow New Yorkers to pass through. I hope Canada's government changes course and begins to allow New Yorkers to come through Churubusco again. Thanks to today's news, we know we'll have the facilities and security equipment to handle the traffic."

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Congressman Higgins Announces Start of Construction at Coast Guard Site

Work To Provide New Public Access to Waterfront, Historic Lighthouse

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) announced the beginning of construction on a project that will consolidate facilities at Sector Buffalo for the U.S. Coast Guard. The work, made possible with federal funding secured by Congressman Higgins, will allow for public access to a new section of the Outer Harbor including the historic Buffalo Lighthouse.

"With this project we continue to build on our effort to deliver unprecedented access and opportunity to the Buffalo waterfront," said Congressman Higgins. "This work has the dual purpose of beginning the upgrading and reconfiguring Coast Guard facilities, some of which are over 7 decades old, and reviving a portion of the water's edge which is home to one of Buffalo's historic landmarks and has been closed to the public for years."

Congressman Higgins first secured \$3.1 million for the Coast Guard consolidation project in 2008 working in conjunction with then-Senator Hillary Clinton. Later that year, Congressman Higgins secured an additional \$3 million for the work, bringing a total of \$6.1 million to the Buffalo waterfront project.

Phase I of the project will incorporate enhancements to provide park benches, improvements to the existing brick walking path, lighting, and decorative security fencing where consistent with the long-term perimeter of the Sector Buffalo recapitalization plan.

The lead contractor on the site is Iroquois Bar Corp., a local company based in Lackawanna, NY. Iroquois Bar will be working with Union Concrete and Construction Corp., based in West Seneca, Scufari Construction Company out of Niagara Falls and Beardsley Design Associates, Inc. of Syracuse on the Coast Guard project. Iroquois was awarded the contract through the Small Business Administration (SBA) 8(a) Business development program, created to help small businesses compete in the marketplace and gain access to federal and private contracts.

Phase I will cost \$3.8 million and the public access improvements will be completed by this fall to coincide with the October National Preservation Conference in Buffalo. Built in 1833, the Buffalo "Chinaman's Lighthouse," which sits on the Coast Guard property is one of the oldest lighthouses on the Great Lakes. Public Access to the Lighthouse has been limited due to post-9/11 security requirements.

This project is the latest in a series of Outer Harbor improvements advanced by Congressman Higgins. Last fall work was completed on the Outer Harbor Parkway which begins at the entrance to the Coast Guard site. Earlier this month Erie Canal Harbor Corporation awarded \$170,700 in New York Power Authority relicensing agreement funds secured by Higgins for masonry repair and stonework on the actual Lighthouse structure.

Higgins is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security which has jurisdiction over Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Sector Buffalo provides search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine safety and security, aids-to-navigation, recreational boating safety, marine environmental response, and ice operations services to the public. Its area of responsibility includes Lake Erie from Lorain, Ohio to Buffalo, New York, the Niagara River, Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes, the Erie Canal, and the St. Lawrence Seaway to Massena, New York.

Higgins Asks for Deadline Extension While State Department Reviews New Onerous Requirements For Passport Agents

Congressman Wants Mandates on Local Clerks Dropped

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) is continuing to press the U.S. State Department to provide local governments with relief from new and excessive requirements on municipal clerks that provide passport services to local residents.

Higgins said, "Local town and city Clerks have offered passport processing as a service to the federal government and local residents without incident for years. They are duly elected, serve under oath, and handle sensitive documents daily and responsibly as a matter of course. These requirements, which go above and beyond security report recommendations, are unfair and unwarranted."

New regulations require birth records be handled by separate personnel and in a separate workspace than passport acceptance functions. This may cause many municipal clerks to abandon the passport acceptance function or create financial hardships on local governments.

Clerks in Cheektowaga, West Seneca, Aurora, Hamburg, Grand Island, Evans, Eden, North Collins and the City of Jamestown have reached out to Congressman Higgins' office expressing frustration with the new policies which burden offices with additional costs associated with staffing and office reconfiguration.

Congressman Higgins first issued objections to the new mandates in a [letter](#) issued last month. He further [questioned the State Department Inspector General](#) about these requirements during a House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee meeting. Still waiting for a formal response,

the Congressman sent a new [letter](#) to the Secretary of State asking for an extension of their May 1 deadline pending further review.

Below is a copy of Congressman Higgins' letter:

April 25, 2011

Dear Secretary Clinton:

In my letter to you on March 24th of this year and in my comments before the House Foreign Affairs Committee to Deputy Inspector General Geisel I indicated my strong opposition to the State Department mandating local clerk's offices in Western New York to physically separate their facilities for passport acceptance functions in order to continue their eligibility to be a passport issuance facility. I have reviewed the GAO reports that directly investigated these potential security vulnerabilities. I have also reviewed the Department of State's Office of Inspector General report dated July of 2009 in regards to passport offices within the Bureau of Consular affairs. In that report the Department of State Inspector General makes several recommendations including continual training for local issuance officers and monitoring of facilities to track problems or poor performing sites for closure.

While I agree that continued training and monitoring of sites will result in better more efficient services, nowhere in the report's recommendations does it raise a security concern necessitating physically separated facilities to ensure the legitimacy of the passport issuance function. In addition the need to have separate staffing to divide passport issuance staff from performing other functions in a facility is neither specified in the report nor is it feasible to municipal clerk offices that cannot afford to designate separate staff or move to a different location to maintain their passport issuance status.

I agree with the goal of having a secure and well maintained system to issue passports that meet the needs of those in my community to travel and conduct their business. However, these overly burdensome mandates on local municipalities will cripple their ability perform these essential services and will result in making passport services less accessible to the Western New Yorkers who depend on them. I am requesting an extension of the May 1 deadline pending a review and response to my previous letter. I further hope you reconsider these excessive mandates and ultimately suspend the separate staff and space requirements which seem to exceed the appropriate security requirements given the report recommendations and outstanding record of service and standards demonstrated by municipal clerks serving as local passport agents.

Sincerely,

Brian Higgins

Member of Congress

CBP Announces Seasonal Opening of Cape Vincent, N.Y. Port of Entry

(Thursday, April 28, 2011)

Alexandria Bay, N.Y. – U.S. Customs and Border Protection today announced that the Cape Vincent port of entry will open April 29 for the season, through October 31. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. until 8 p.m.

The port works with the Horne's Ferry Service that provides a ferry service to Wolfe Island, Ontario, Canada during the open season of operation. The ferry, which is under contract to the Canadian Ministry of Transportation, transports vehicles, including buses and pedestrian passengers. CBP provides inspection services to the ferry dockside prior to the release of passengers and vehicles.

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. (getyouhome.gov)

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.

CBP Announces Delay in Rouses Point Boat Inspection Station Opening

(Thursday, April 28, 2011)

Champlain, N.Y. – U.S. Customs and Border Protection today announced a delay in the opening of the Rouses Point, N.Y. boat inspection station located at the junction point of the Richelieu River in Quebec and the northwest corner of Lake Champlain.

The boat inspection station was scheduled to be opened April 29, but will be delayed until further notice due to high water levels in the inspection station area.

In the interim, boaters can report for CBP inspection at either Gaines Marina or Barcombs Marina. CBP Officers are available to inspect reporting boats from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

In the event boaters report for inspection outside of this timeframe, they should contact the Champlain Port of Entry at **(518) 298-8346**.

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P R E S S R E L E A S E - -
For more info: (518) 563-1000

April 26, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

fDi RANKS PLATTSBURGH #3 IN AMERICAS FOR ECONOMIC POTENTIAL - -

The North Country Chamber of Commerce is welcoming news that fDi Magazine (Foreign Direct Investment), a publication of the Financial Times in London, has ranked Plattsburgh #3 among all micro cities in North and South America for Economic Potential. In addition, Plattsburgh was ranked #5 for Human Resources and #7 for Business Friendliness. The city rankings are released every two years as part of an analysis of major, large, small and micro cities in the Americas, with micro cities being those with less than 100,000 population.

"This is an especially important form of recognition for our area," states Garry Douglas, President of the North Country Chamber of Commerce, "because the whole emphasis is on identifying communities of the future, and highlighting those communities and their strengths to the global investment community. To be compared with like sized communities across the entire western hemisphere and be seen as #3 for our economic potential, backed up with high marks for our workforce support system and for our friendliness to business is not only gratifying, but puts an international spotlight on us that is invaluable."

fDi's Cities of the Future rankings are created by an independent collection of information on 405 cities across North and South America, sorted and analyzed in six categories. Among the criteria for assessing Economic Potential were population forecasts, GDP, total inward and outward foreign direct investment, and the number of new projects and jobs, among other factors.

"It's certainly no coincidence that neighboring Montreal was ranked as the #6 major city," states Douglas. "Our successful efforts to position our area as Montreal's U.S. partner has helped us to stand out among other micro cities when it comes to international business. These rankings give us strong encouragement to continue the economic and workforce development strategies we have been pursuing, as we have confirmation from no less than the foreign direct investment community that what we are doing is what they want to see."

Douglas credits the area's economic development team for achieving the high rankings, including the Chamber, the City and Town of Plattsburgh, the Clinton County Legislature, Empire State Development Corp., the Development Corporation, the North Country Workforce Investment Board, the Small Business Development Center, Clinton Community College, SUNY Plattsburgh, CV-TEC and others involved in economic and workforce development.

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A Strong Partner for Strong Business in the North Country

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Email: chamber@westcom.com Web Site: northcountrychamber.com

CTA Questions Rationale for Proposed Tanker Wetline Regulation

OTTAWA - In its official comments to the US Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on behalf of Canadian transborder tank truck carriers, the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) argues that there is no clear-cut rationale for a

proposed regulation on wetlines and suggests that the current regulatory proposal should be withdrawn.

Wetlines are metal tubes that run along the underbelly of tank trucks used to transfer fuel into and out of the tanker. Wetlines are known to contain residue amounts of liquids following the loading process. PHMSA has proposed that for tank trailers containing flammable liquids, a limit of one litre of residue per line should be allowed, or the tank trailer should be fitted with bottom damage protection devices.

In its analysis of the proposed regulation, Hazardous Materials: Safety Requirements for External Product Piping on Cargo Tanks Transporting Flammable Liquids, CTA concluded that the cost-benefit study accompanying the proposal did not present any clear evidence to justify regulation. CTA noted that a previous attempt to regulate wetlines in 2006 was also withdrawn because it could not be justified on a cost-benefit basis. “All proposed regulations require a careful analysis of the costs and benefits associated with the proposal, as well as a consideration of policy alternatives,” said CTA Vice President, Ron Lennox who worked with tank truck carriers in developing CTA’s position. “It is the responsibility of CTA to work with regulators and in the United States with ATA and others in the industry to develop regulations designed to meet safety objectives; in this instance, the proposed regulation falls short.”

In addition to concerns surrounding the cost-benefit analysis, CTA raised questions about the lack of industry experience with proposed wetline purging methods, and with the absence of a discussion in the proposed rule about safety hazards associated with retrofitting tank trailers.

“CTA is a strong advocate of reasonable regulations designed to enhance safety as evidenced by our history of supporting, and in some cases, initiating regulatory change,” said Lennox. “However, this proposed wetline regulation is deficient in a number of fundamental aspects and it is CTA’s position that it should be withdrawn.”

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Leveraging Binational Commercial Opportunities

Exploring the U.S.-Canada Relationship

Presented by:

The Consulate General of Canada, the U.S. Department of Commerce and World Trade Center Buffalo Niagara

Wednesday, May 18, 2011

3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

The Buffalo Club

**Featuring Keynote Speaker:
Consul General Marta Moszczenska
Consulate General of Canada**

The binational U.S.-Canadian trade relationship is the largest in the world with an estimated 600 jobs in Ontario and 800 jobs in New York state dependent upon trade crossings between the U.S. and Canada. With the explosive growth occurring in Southern Ontario and beyond, learn from experts on how to maximize your cross border potential.

Panel Session 1 - Ask the Expert

Thomas Cummings, Export-Import Bank of the United States

Rosanna Masucci, U.S. Department of Commerce

Ron Bee, Senior Officer, Trade Compliance, Canadian Border Services Agency

Panel Session 2 - Business Roundtable

Featuring various companies who engage in cross-border commerce

Click [here](#) for more details on this event and to register.

Canada Institute News

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Welcome to the April 28 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

**"Any Changes Coming? Implications of the May 2 Canadian Federal Election for
Canada and Canada-U.S. Relations"**

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

The Canada Institute and the [Canadian American Business Council](#) 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. [View event details](#) and [RSVP](#).

- Interested in watching the election with friends? On Monday, May 2 come watch live election coverage at [Elephant and Castle, 1201 Pennsylvania Ave. NW](#), starting at 7:00pm; Results from 9:30pm. [View more information from Connect2Canada](#).

"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](#), explore Canada's prospects for exporting oil to the Asian market. The forum examines the anticipated completion of two major pipeline projects, and 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 hosts a meeting with the [National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism](#) (START), to explore the vulnerability of the Canada-U.S. border 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

Fences, Walls, and Borders: State of Insecurity?

Tuesday, May 17-Wednesday May 18, 2011, 8:30am-7:00pm ([see full program](#))

*Agora Hydro-Québec, Complexe des sciences Pierre Dansereau,
175, avenue Président-Kennedy, Montréal, Québec*

The [Raoul Dandurand Chair](#) for Strategic and Diplomatic Studies at the [Université du Québec à Montréal](#), in coordination with the [Association for Borderland Studies](#) and the Canada Institute, host a 2-day conference on border relations. The forum will address the "walls" along the Mexico-U.S. border and in Israel-Palestine, and questions the role of border walls in the context of security and friendly relations. [Read more information](#), [view the conference website](#), and [RSVP](#).

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

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- C. Editorials/Columns**
 - D. Citizens Views (write-in letters)**