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REPORT:

A. Border Related News Media

Deal in works to inspect trucks heading to U.S. in Canada Buffalo News - October 9, 2011

U.S. and Canadian negotiators are nearing agreement on a plan that would allow most trucks crossing into Buffalo on the Peace Bridge to be screened on the Canadian side of the border, Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., said this weekend. If finalized, the deal would mitigate the need for a huge new customs plaza on the U.S. side of the border, a proposal that has prompted vehement opposition from the neighborhood near the bridge — and one that the Peace Bridge Authority abandoned this summer, citing a lack of funds. Details of the pending agreement between the U. S. and Canada remain sketchy, and earlier efforts to reach a similar deal collapsed over concerns about U. S. customs officials carrying weapons on the Canadian side and other issues. Still, Schumer said he is optimistic that an agreement is about to be finalized. “This is a monumental step that will improve the cross-border flow of commerce while preserving security,” Schumer said. “After years and years of failed effort to better integrate border flow, we are poised for a major breakthrough that will greatly speed the maddening backlog of commercial truck traffic at the Peace Bridge by prescreening on the Canadian side.” Despite the past failures in negotiation, Schumer said a 32- point plan for “shared border management” will be announced next month. He said the deal will clear the legal hurdles that for years stood in the way of clearing trucks at the Fort Erie Peace Bridge plaza. “I am thrilled that the agreements will be in place soon so that prescreening can get under way,” Schumer said. Currently all the trucks entering the United States at the Peace Bridge must be inspected in Buffalo. But Schumer said that under the pending agreement, 90 percent of trucks entering this country will be fully cleared on the Canadian side, where a spacious and relatively new truck plaza is already in place. About 10 percent — including any suspicious vehicles — would have to undergo additional screening on the American side. After the deal is completed, the Peace Bridge Authority may be able to move forward on a smaller, \$60 million plaza renovation that could be completed without any additional federal funds. That plan would include 12 or 13 primary inspection booths for trucks, up from seven today, along with six or seven new inspection booths for cars, bringing the total to 17 or 18. Schumer said he is not endorsing any specific proposal for the U. S. plaza but added that prescreening on the Canadian side will give the Peace Bridge Authority more options in terms of what kind of plaza to build. The long-dormant prescreening plan started moving forward again after Schumer this May persuaded Customs and Border Protection to revive the idea. Schumer also asked Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to work with Canada to strike a deal on the issue. Asked if the pending deal could be another one of the seemingly endless chain of false starts to improve traffic flow over the Peace Bridge, Schumer said he is confident an agreement will be finalized. “We’re on the verge of achieving something everybody has wanted for a long time,” he said.

New Policy Could Change Peace Bridge Plans WNED-AM 970 News – October 11, 2011

A new approach to a new Peace Bridge might save \$100 million dollars and require taking less land on the West Side for the plaza. "It would be a reduced footprint and you will still add additional inspection booths on the American side for both passenger and truck vehicles," Congressman Brian Higgins explained to WNED News. With the U.S. and Canada trying to work out an approach for the entire length of the common border, truck processing in Fort Erie has come back and may well be the final plan. It's not that many years ago that Washington quashed the proposal to process trucks on the Fort Erie end, before they went across the bridge. That was called "Shared Border Management." Higgins says that plan "proposed to put all the inspection booths on the Canadian side." "This is a different variation. This is not Shared Border Management." Higgins says if Washington really wants to go along with this plan, construction could start on a much smaller plaza within two years and take around two years to build. A new bridge could come later. "This project needs to start.... We needed to start for the past two decades," Higgins said. He believes the new approach would offer the region "the economic benefit that comes with a border that's predictable, accessible and that people will be encouraged to use."

Depew man and a Canadian charged in sale of OxyContin pills
Buffalo News - October 14, 2011

About a year ago, undercover investigators started seeing a sharp and welcome decline in the amount of OxyContin sold on the streets of Buffalo and its suburbs. When that trend started to reverse itself earlier this year, it soon became clear why: New OxyContin was being smuggled in from Canada. Two men accused of operating a cross-border drug ring — one of them Canadian, the other from Depew — were charged Thursday by a new multi-agency unit dedicated to investigating prescription drug cases across the region. "We think we've cut off the head of the snake," said Dale M. Kasprzyk, agent in charge of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration in Buffalo. The new unit arrested Joseph E. Julien, 56, of Stevensville, Ont., and Kevin Hinca, 20, of Depew, at about 11 a. m. Wednesday in the parking lot of Big Lots on Broadway in Depew. They were charged Thursday in federal court in Buffalo with conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute prescription drugs. Prosecutors said the arrest is proof that, despite a growing awareness about the dangers of prescription drugs, a large number of people continue to abuse them. "This is an epidemic in Western New York," U. S. Attorney William J. Hochul Jr. told reporters Thursday. Julien and Hinca are accused of running a drug operation that resulted in more than 10,000 OxyContin tablets sold over an 18-month period. "That's a lot, a lot of OxyContin," said Kasprzyk. "And they weren't selling Oxy-Contin that's distributed in the United States." Hinca was getting \$80 to \$100 for a single 80-milligram tablet, about double the normal street price, investigators said. The reason is the type of OxyContin he allegedly sold. Unlike the kind now distributed in the U. S., tablets that can't be crushed and snorted, the pills smuggled in from Canada are crushable. "He knew it was a sought-after drug you couldn't get in the U. S." Kasprzyk said of Hinca. Undercover investigators spent several months using informants to buy from Hinca and Julien, and had arranged for the two to appear at another buy Wednesday. That buy resulted in their arrest. Investigators said a lot of Hinca's sales occurred at his home on Brunswick Avenue in Depew. They said neighbors had started noticing a large number of people coming and going from the house. Who was the typical buyer? "Young people," Lancaster Police Chief Gerald J. Gill Jr. said Thursday. "College, high school, adults." Kasprzyk said the unit is still investigating and, as part of that effort, is trying to determine whether Julien had other dealers in the U. S. and where he got his OxyContin. They want to know whether he had his own illegal source or obtained the OxyContin from several doctors in Canada. The OxyContin arrests were the work of the Tactical Diversion Squad, a multi-agency unit that is led by the DEA and includes Buffalo, Lancaster and Amherst police and the Erie County Sheriff's Office. Kasprzyk said the unit was formed because of the growing concern among law enforcement leaders across the region about the prescription drug problem.

Magistrate detained by mistake at border
Buffalo News - October 8, 2011

At least once every college football season, Jeremiah McCarthy leaves behind his black judicial robes and treks from Buffalo to Notre Dame to see his beloved Fighting Irish. This year, the Class of '74 alum and U. S.

magistrate judge found himself detained — literally. McCarthy was driving into Port Huron, Mich., from Canada and passing through Customs when a loud siren suddenly went off in the inspection booth. “Put both hands on the dashboard,” the border inspector told McCarthy. Unaware of who was at the wheel, the inspector then ordered McCarthy to step out of the car as his three passengers looked on. “He then said, ‘Now place your hands behind your back,’ ” McCarthy said, “and when I did, I heard the sound of handcuffs closing.” Customs agents, still unaware of whom they had handcuffed, separated the four men and put them in separate interrogation rooms. McCarthy said he kept telling himself that the whole misunderstanding would eventually work itself out and that it was best not to mention his occupation. “I kept thinking, this will all be over soon,” he said. And it was, although it took about 45 minutes before Customs realized they had the wrong guy. Turns out one of McCarthy’s friends, Mike Mann of Williamsville, has the same first and last name and a very similar birth date as a man wanted by police and considered armed and dangerous. Fortunately, Mann had warned McCarthy and the other two passengers, Harry Van Bavel and Brian McCall, both lawyers from London, Ont., about previous problems he’s had at the border. Nevertheless, the extreme reaction by Customs agents came as a shock of sorts to the judge and his passengers. “I eventually told them, ‘Here’s what I do for a day job,’ ” McCarthy said. He said the agents were apologetic, but he doesn’t fault them or anyone else for the misunderstanding. “It’s something I’ll never forget,” he said. “But they were very professional in what they did.” Having said that, he’s not exactly eager to repeat the experience. “It was a first for me,” he said of his encounter with the other side of the criminal-justice system. “And, hopefully, a last for me as well.”

Time For Airport Runway Action Says Brasher Super Watertown Daily Times - October 13, 2011

It's time to stop talking and start taking action to add a runway extension to the Massena International Airport, Brasher Town Supervisor M. James Dawson says. Mr. Dawson told town board members Wednesday that he will be meeting today with Massena Town Supervisor Joseph D. Gray, Mayor James F. Hidy and Business Development Corporation for a Greater Massena Executive Director Jason A. Clark to begin moving forward on those efforts. "I think it's incumbent upon us" to form a strategy to get the runway extension and promote the Massena International Airport as a destination for American and Canadian travelers, he said. Mr. Dawson has been a vocal proponent of extending the runway from 5,600 feet to 6,500 feet to accommodate larger planes, which would allow the airport to compete with other area airports, such as Plattsburgh, Ottawa and Montreal. And, with tourists coming in via the Massena airport, it would benefit the entire county, he said, noting they would spend their money locally and contribute to the sales tax, which is divvied up between towns and villages in the county. "I think it's going to be a whole incubator for tourism and bringing business into this area," he said. Most recently, Mr. Dawson sent a letter to county supervisors and mayors, asking them to pass a resolution in support of the airport extension and to forward an executed copy of their resolution to Massena Town Supervisor Joseph D. Gray. The resolution noted that the Massena International Airport has the potential to attract thousands of Canadian visitors across the border to use the service. That influx of people "creates the potential for creating business for St. Lawrence and Franklin counties, and an increase in sales tax revenue, which will affect everyone in a positive manner." However, the resolution said, the existing runway cannot currently accommodate commercial jet service, and Mr. Dawson asked other municipalities to "support the town of Massena in its efforts to extend the runway to accommodate commercial jet service." "The drawback at Massena is the length of the runway. It needs to be extended from 5,600 feet to 6,500 feet so that commercial jets can land. I believe that the extension will be a real drawing card for our Canadian neighbors and potential companies which may want a presence in the United States," Mr. Dawson told supervisors and mayors in his letter. He suggested that, with an extension of the Massena runway, the airport could compete for traffic with the Plattsburgh airport, which he said had more than 200,000 enplanements in 2008, 80 percent of them from Canada. "The airport in Massena has the potential to bring as many people into our region as Plattsburgh. Massena is much closer to Ottawa, and equally as close to Montreal. Since it is far less expensive to fly from the states than from Canada, successful business for the airport is almost assured," Mr. Dawson said. That move was received favorably by the municipalities, and now it's time to move to the next phase - making it happen, according to the Brasher supervisor. He told his board members Wednesday that, if they wanted to make it happen, local officials had to spearhead the effort. He noted that Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo has designated 10

zones in the state for economic development and among those on the North Country's Regional Economic Development Council are Potsdam Town Supervisor Marie C. Regan, Development Authority of the North Country Executive Director James W. Wright and Garry F. Douglas, president of the North Country Chamber of Commerce in Plattsburgh. But, he suggested, it would be difficult to gain some of their support for the initiative. Mr. Wright was more interested in matters involving DANC, such as fiber optics, Mr. Dawson said, while Mr. Douglas likely wouldn't support a project that would compete with one in his city. "If you think he's going to promote the Massena airport, you've got another thing coming," he said.

Canada, US Plan Patrol Increases
Watertown Daily Times – October 8, 2011

This weekend marks Columbus Day for the United States and Thanksgiving Day weekend for Canada and like most holidays, state police are planning an increased presence on the highway. The international law enforcement effort is called "Safety Without Borders," and will target traffic violations such as speeding, failure to wear seat belts, impaired driving and use of hand-held electronic devices on roads near the border. Sgt. Brian Goetz, traffic supervisor for Troop B, said the focus will be Interstate 81 and 87 and heaviest Friday and Monday. Mr. Goetz said they are looking for people who are tired of bumper to bumper traffic at the port of entry and decided to speed once traffic clears up. He said there will be little if any increase in patrols in St. Lawrence County because it is mainly a rural area. "We are looking for the busiest traffic areas," Mr. Goetz said. "When people think about border safety, they normally don't think about traffic enforcement, but getting there safely is the goal of all travelers," said Major Richard C. Smith Jr., Troop Commander, Troop B in a news release. "We expect international travel to be heavy this weekend, and working with the Provincial Police in Ontario and Quebec." The New York State Police, Ontario Provincial Police, and Surete du Quebec also worked cooperatively on the Safety Without Borders Initiative during three previous holiday weekends at Easter, Independence Day and Labor Day. Canadian enforcement will be focused on controlled-access highways, such as the 401, north of the border. Police said efforts will be focused particularly around the Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Thousand Islands, and Champlain ports of entry. "I am thankful that our partner agencies in Quebec and Ontario are willing to safeguard their roads and highways for the New Yorkers that are headed their way, and we will be doing our best to reciprocate," said Major Smith. "The traffic laws are parallel on both sides of the border, and drivers should expect consistent strict enforcement whether in the U.S. or Canada."

Toronto man gets almost 4 years for smuggling Ecstasy
Buffalo News - October 11, 2011

A Toronto man convicted of trying to smuggle more than 2,000 Ecstasy pills over the Rainbow Bridge into the United States last year was sentenced Tuesday to 46 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara. Leonardo Coleman, 25, was arrested on a bus in Niagara Falls on May 25, 2010 by Customs and Border Protection officers after a search turned up more than \$51,000 worth of the illegal drug hidden in Coleman's pants, said Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas S. Duszkiewicz, who handled the case. Coleman will be deported back to Canada after the completion of his sentence.

Border Caucus Launched
Watertown Daily Times – October 8, 2011

A group of state legislators and federal lawmakers from Canada are getting together to try to iron out cross-border disputes before they fester and sour relations between the United States and Canada. State Sens. Patricia A. Ritchie, R-Heuvelton, and Joseph A. Griffo, R-Rome, and Canadian Sen. Robert W. Runciman, Brockville, Ontario, met at the Frederic Remington Art Museum Friday to hatch what the two state lawmakers call the International Border Caucus. The bipartisan, multi-national group consists of 11 state senators and five Canadian lawmakers. The issues that have been raised in recent months include U.S. fishermen running afoul of Canadian border enforcers, visitors from Canada having to pay a 100 percent tariff on wines bought in Northern

New York and not enough visitors from across the border to Singer Castle on Dark Island in the town of Hammond. The fishing incident occurred May 30 when Thousand Island Park seasonal resident Roy M. Anderson was forced to pay a \$1,000 fine after he was stopped by Canada Border Service Agency officers who accused him of not reporting his trip to the Gananoque Narrows to a Canadian port of entry. He was eventually refunded all but \$1 of the money. While that incident was settled, Mr. Runciman said there is still "widespread concern" among fishing enthusiasts that misunderstood interpretation of the law could discourage the leisure sport on both sides of the river. Mr. Runciman has proposed a public meeting before the start of the 2012 fishing season - perhaps in Clayton - at which U.S. and Canadian officials could at once explain the law and calm any fears. He said a licensed fisherman shouldn't have any problem. "As long as they phone in," Mr. Runciman said. Mrs. Ritchie hopes it is as simple as that. She has heard from fishermen who say Canadian officials have told different versions of what is required. "I think that the fishermen are getting conflicting information," she said. Another area of concern came to Mrs. Ritchie's attention from area vineyards. Their Canadian customers have to pay a 100 percent tariff on wine bought here before they can re-enter their country. The winemakers are worried that losing Canadian customers will hurt an industry that is robust. "And it's getting bigger all the time," she said. Mr. Runciman and the state legislators will also push to install Customs inspectors at Singer Castle on Dark Island in the St. Lawrence River opposite Chippewa Bay. The castle attracts an estimated 20,000 visitors annually. By contrast, Boldt Castle in Alexandria Bay attracts 150,000 visitors annually. There are inspectors there, making it easier for Canadians to visit. Another issue that the two groups of lawmakers hope to settle was rooted in Mr. Runciman having to wait 40 minutes Friday before crossing the Ogdensburg-Prescott International Bridge. He and Mrs. Ritchie agreed something needs to be done on both sides of the span to quicken the pace of the crossings. Ogdensburg Mayor William D. Nelson, who attended Friday's meeting, agreed. "We got a cross-border traffic that we need to maintain and strengthen," the mayor said. Mr. Griffo called the fishing and wine incidents "isolated issues" that were nevertheless components of the caucus group's mission. "We need to improve our communications," he said. Asked about the whether the absence of Assemblywoman Addie J. Russell, D-Theresa, was rooted in partisan politics, Mrs. Ritchie said she was not left out of Friday's meeting for political reasons, and will be invited later with other lawmakers and officials. "We are building a relationship," Mrs. Ritchie said of the meeting and the committee, which includes seven other Republican state lawmakers and two Democrats.

Defense Company Plans City Headquarters Watertown Daily Times – October 13, 2011

A Canadian defense contractor plans on making Ogdensburg its new corporate headquarters, a move that could create 220 jobs in the city over the next two years. "It would result in a sizable number of jobs; 220 is the estimate based on the business plan," said City Manger Arthur J. Sciorra. Mr. Sciorra has been involved in discussions with General Propulsion Inc., an Ottawa, Ontario firm that develops technologies for the Canadian and American navies as well as a host of private companies including Rolls-Royce, Siemens and Westinghouse. "We have an agreement in place with the city," said John Hensler, General Propulsion vice president. "We are looking at moving operations so we can work with the U.S. Navy." General Propulsion's investment in the community could be long term and large scale. "We would like to make Ogdensburg a major headquarters," said Mr. Hensler. "Over the next five years we want to grow by 50 percent every year. We have growth in mind." Mr. Hensler said that American law places restrictions on business between government and foreign companies. By relocating to American soil, it will become easier for his company to work with the U.S. Navy, he said. "I have worked with General Propulsion to make contacts with U.S. military procurement possibilities," Mr. Sciorra said. The company became interested in Ogdensburg due to its proximity to Ottawa. The Canadian capital is 45 miles away. "We needed a location based in the U.S.," said Mr. Hensler. "We are looking at production on a larger scale, so we need shipping connections, rail, port and highway access." Mr. Hensler also said that Ogdensburg's proximity to Fort Drum was a factor in the company's decision. The company plans on hiring 20 workers in the next six months. "It will be a combination," said Mr. Hensler. "There will be a lot of blue-collar-type jobs with general labor. We will also need some administrative staff. It will be half and half at first." If conditions are right, the next step will be expanding the Ogdensburg facility and hiring another 200 workers. "We will be making a wide range of products," said Mr. Hensler. "The first item we want to start up is

a vehicle power take-up device that can turn cars into electric generators." The device, called a self-contained electric gear, is contained within the rim of a vehicle's wheels. It can produce enough electricity to power homes, farms and fuel stations, a city news release said. It is a commercial application of technology developed to silently propel warships. "We want to create a conversion package that can operate electronics off of a vehicle," said Mr. Hensler. "We would like to produce a platform by which manufacturers can put this in their own vehicles." General Propulsion also intends to make aluminum-powered fuel cells in Ogdensburg, which it says will offer clean, affordable energy for both transportation and power-generation use, and has not ruled out Ogdensburg as a location to manufacture other projects in the future. "I can tell you that several other products have been developed in conjunction with Canadian Navy applications with a proven technology track record," Mr. Sciorra said. Mr. Sciorra said the company will buy a 14,000 square foot building at the end of the 200 block of Ford Street. The company is also looking at other property in Ogdensburg. "There is another city-owned, 19,000-square-foot building I am considering," said Mr. Hensler. "I am working with General Propulsion to assist with preparing a grant application to the Regional Economic Development Council," said Mr. Sciorra. "If the grant application were successful, manufacturing could move ahead very quickly." Mr. Sciorra said the grant is sought to fund the start-up process for manufacturing the power device.

Blackberry outage spreads to U. S. Buffalo News - October 13, 2011

BlackBerry users across the world were exasperated Wednesday as an outage of email, messaging and Internet services on the phones spread to the United States and Canada and stretched into a third day for Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa. It was the biggest outage in years for BlackBerry users and strained their relationship with an already tarnished brand. It came on the eve of the launch of a mighty competitor — a new iPhone model. Research In Motion Ltd., the Canadian company that makes the phones, said a crucial link in its European infrastructure failed Monday, and a backup didn't work either. The underlying problem has been fixed, but a backlog of emails and messages has built up, and the company has yet to work it down. Meanwhile, emails and messages from other regions to Europe are piling up in RIM's systems in the rest of the world, like letters clogging a mailbox. That's causing the outages in the U. S. and Asia, said David Yach, RIM's chief technology officer for software. RIM is already struggling with delays in getting new phones out, a tablet that has been a dud and shares that are approaching a five-year low. In the latest quarter, it sold 10.6 million phones, down from 12.1 million during the same period last year. The duration of the latest outage could force large businesses to rethink their use of BlackBerrys, said Gartner analyst Carolina Milanesi. Many of them have stuck with the phones because of the quality and efficiency of RIM's email system, but that's now in question, she said. Unlike other cellphone makers, RIM handles email and messaging traffic to and from its phones. That allows it to provide services that other phones don't have, optimize data service and provide top-class security. But when it encounters a problem, a large share of the 70 million BlackBerry subscribers worldwide can be affected all at once. BlackBerry outages tend to occur several times a year, but they usually last for less than a day. One of the BlackBerry's big attractions is the BlackBerry Messenger, or BBM, which works like text messaging but doesn't incur extra fees. That service was affected by the outage, and to make matters worse for RIM, Apple Inc. was releasing software Wednesday for its iPhones that works like BBM. RIM shares fell 53 cents, or 2.2 percent, to close New York trading at \$23.88 as major indexes rose. The shares hit \$19.29 a week ago, the lowest level since 2006.

Canada to commemorate War of 1812 Buffalo News – October 11, 2011

Canada's Conservative government announced Tuesday that it plans a permanent memorial in the nation's capital to commemorate next year's bicentennial of the War of 1812, which it calls a defining event in Canada's history. Heritage Minister James Moore said Tuesday that Canada owes its existence as an independent, bilingual country to the defense of its territory against U.S. invasions 200 years ago. Plans call for a permanent 1812 monument in Ottawa and up to 100 events, festivals and re-enactments, as well as commemorative stamps and coins. In 1812, British troops and residents of what is now Canada prevented several U.S. attempts to

overrun the then-British territory. The Battle of Queenston Heights, the war's first major battle and a decisive British victory, was fought across the Niagara River from New York. "We were invaded, we repelled the invasion and we endured," Moore said in a telephone interview. Moore said there are those who could in a "very cheap and immature way" gloat about a failed American invasion, but he said the commemoration is meant to raise Canadian awareness of a defining and neglected moment. He said Prime Minister Stephen Harper has been personally involved. "Mature Canadians, I'm sure recognize, that grotesquely taking shots at the United States is not in Canada's interest and this is not what this project is about," Moore said. Harper aims to foster a conservative national identity that celebrates its historical roots. He has focused on shifting Canada's ideological bearings from center-left to center-right by stressing such traditional Canadian symbols as the military, its past victories and the monarchy. Plans call for spending more than \$27 million on the war's commemoration, much of it on refurbishing 40 national historic sites. On June 18, 1812, President James Madison and Congress declared war on Great Britain. For more than two years, the Americans and British battled across North America before reaching peace by signing the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium.

Buffalo tops ratings for PBS' 'War of 1812'
Buffalo News - October 13, 2011

Buffalo and Denver led the nation in the number of households tuned in to "War of 1812," the WNED-TV Buffalo-produced documentary Sunday night that was seen in 54 public broadcasting markets across the country. Buffalo's 4.1 share more than tripled the national average of 1.3, and nearly doubled Denver's 2.6 share, according to Donald Boswell, president of WNED-TV Buffalo/Toronto. The PBS national prime-time average is 1, reported Suzanne Masri, senior director of station relations for WETA-TV in Washington. Other top markets were: Nashville, Cleveland, Oklahoma City, Columbus and Dayton, Ohio and Austin, Texas. The two-hour documentary will be rebroadcast in December, station executives announced Wednesday. "War of 1812" is the latest film from WNED-TV Buffalo/ Toronto to mark next year's bicentennial of the war, fought on both sides of the border. "Glorious Battle: Siege of Fort Erie," a 27-minute film directed by Paul Lamont, premiered in June.

Lakes report
Watertown Daily Times – October 12, 2011

The National Wildlife Federation has sounded a warning on the ecological health of the Great Lakes. Fish populations are decreasing, the group says, due to excessive nutrients in bays and areas near the shoreline. Algae blooms are increasing, especially on Lake Erie but also on Lake Huron's Saginaw Bay and Lake Michigan's Green Bay. Green algae along Lake Michigan's coast may be linked to botulism poisoning of fish and birds. Algae blooms may be causing a "dead zone" in the central basin of Erie, reducing oxygen to the point that fish cannot survive, the Associated Press reported. In deeper waters, invasive species such as quagga and zebra mussels are causing the opposite problem: they are eating microscopic plants and animals from the water, leaving little for other species that bigger fish feed on. Explaining the study, report author Julie Mida Hinderer said: "Rapid and drastic ecosystem changes are altering the Great Lakes from top to bottom. The impacts we're seeing are a sign that the Great Lakes need urgent help." This follows a 2005 report on the Great Lakes that cited the dangers of species invasions and degraded water quality. The problems warrant careful attention by the states and Canadian provinces along the Great Lakes basin. The lakes are a tremendous resource on many levels, calling for diligent stewardship to maintain their health for future generations.

Natural gas cost to drop this winter in NY
Buffalo News - October 14, 2011

New York regulators say natural gas prices are expected to be 4 to 6 percent lower this winter and utilities have plenty of supply to get through the season. The Public Service Commission says Thursday its staff assessed the status of companies serving the state's 3.9 million gas heating customers and found they have adequate supply to meet demand during severe winter conditions. The price drop is based on a review of market conditions, the

cost of gas already stored by utilities and contracts for future purchases. The PSC regulates what utilities charge to deliver gas, but not the price of the commodity itself. It says almost 90 percent of natural gas used in the state is imported, mostly from the Gulf of Mexico and Canada.

Canada confident US will approve oil pipeline
Buffalo News - October 13, 2011

Canada's natural resources minister said Thursday he is confident the Obama administration will approve a Canadian company's plan to build a massive oil pipeline from western Canada to the Gulf Coast despite "noise" from environmental opposition groups. Minister Joe Oliver said Thursday it's more likely it will be approved after the State Department recently released its positive final Environmental Impact Statement. Oliver said the Canadian government is making strides in lobbying U.S. officials. "In spite of the noise, we are making significant headway in conveying the considerable advantages of Keystone to the U.S in terms energy security, jobs and economic growth," Oliver said. Calgary-based TransCanada wants to build the \$7 billion Keystone XL pipeline to carry crude oil extracted from the oil sands in Alberta, Canada, to refineries in Houston and Port Arthur, Texas. The underground pipeline would carry an estimated 700,000 barrels of oil a day, doubling the capacity of an existing pipeline from Canada. The project has become a flashpoint for environmental groups, who say it would will bring "dirty oil" that requires huge amounts of energy to extract and could cause an ecological disaster in case of a spill. Environmental activists, including actress Daryl Hannah and NASA scientist James Hansen, have been arrested in ongoing protests outside the White House. But the Obama administration appears likely to back the 1,700-mile (2,735-kilometer) pipeline. Oliver said Alberta's oil sands represent just 0.1 percent of total global emissions, an amount equal to the emissions produced by coal-fired plants in the state of Wisconsin. He also said oil sands emissions have declined 30 percent over the past 15 years. "The total impact is not going to destroy the planet, as some would argue," Oliver said at a breakfast meeting of the Toronto Board of Trade. Oliver later told reporters he doubted opposition to the pipeline is representative of the U.S. population. He said not everyone can be convinced of its merits. "There are some people who are utterly committed to opposing any form of hydrocarbon development and I don't know whether any fact will change their mind," Oliver said. The State Department has authority over the project because it crosses the border. U.S. officials are reviewing testimony from the hearings and public comments submitted to the department's website and are expected to make a recommendation by the end of the year. Oliver said it will create 20,000 construction jobs immediately in the U.S. and will reduce U.S. dependence on Middle Eastern oil. He said it would create over 140,000 additional jobs per year in Canada and over \$600 billion more in economic activity over the next 25 years. Oliver called Canada an emerging energy superpower because of the oil sands. He said Canadians stand to benefit enormously and said it must be developed. Alberta has the world's third largest oil reserves, more than 170 billion barrels. Daily production of 1.5 million barrels from the oil sands is expected to nearly triple to 3.7 million in 2025. Overall, Alberta has more oil than Russia or Iran. Only Saudi Arabia and Venezuela have more. "Our long-term supply of oil is critical in a world where supply risks are growing, due to unstable geopolitics, declining production and uncertainties in key oil-producing regions," Oliver said. "On the other hand, demand for oil in countries like China and India is growing rapidly. So the opportunities are immense, but to achieve our full potential we have to make major investments in infrastructure." Oliver has also previously said Canada needs Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline to the Pacific coast to be built so that it can diversify its energy exports to Asia. The Northern Gateway Project would connect Alberta's oil sands oil to a port on the coast of British Columbia, where tankers could transport it to Asian customers. The project is undergoing a regulatory review. Aboriginal and environmental opposition to the Pacific pipeline is also fierce. "The U.S. is basically our only customer. Tapping international markets is also essential as we continue to grow our status as a global energy superpower," Oliver said.

Clinton vows fair review on pipeline
Buffalo News - October 11, 2011

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Tuesday she has "no reason to believe" that the State Department is biased in favor of a Canadian company's plan to build a massive oil pipeline from western

Canada to the Gulf Coast, as some critics charge. In an interview with The Associated Press, Clinton said a decision on the \$7 billion Keystone XL pipeline will be fair and based on years of work by numerous government agencies. Clinton dismissed allegations by environmental groups that her decision is tainted by a past relationship with a TransCanada executive who served as an aide in her 2008 presidential campaign. Emails released in recent weeks show friendly exchanges between a State Department official and TransCanada executive Paul Elliot. Critics also have cited the State Department's decision to hire an environmental consulting firm that had previously worked on projects with TransCanada. Houston-based Cardno Entrix worked on the environmental impact study for the 1,700-mile pipeline and helped conduct a series of public hearings this month. Asked whether there is merit to the conflict-of-interest claim, Clinton said, "I have no reason to believe that." Clinton said the State Department, "both here in Washington and in Ottawa, has been very much in listen and outreach mode" in recent weeks. Officials have conducted meetings with a large number of interested groups and have concluded public meetings in Washington and in each of the states affected the pipeline: Montana, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. "This is a very emotional decision, and you have people who feel very strongly on both sides, as has been evident" at the hearings and in news coverage of the pipeline project in the United States and Canada, Clinton said. "You have states that are welcoming it, states that are rejecting it. This is an issue that raises very local concerns." Wendy Nassmacher, a spokeswoman for the State Department, said Cardno Entrix was hired to help with the State Department's review of the pipeline project. In addition to the public hearings, Cardno Entrix helps maintain a State Department website on the project and helped research and write an eight-volume environmental impact statement released in August, Nassmacher said. The report found that the project is unlikely to cause significant environmental problems during construction or operation. Calgary-based TransCanada wants to use a 36-inch pipeline to carry crude oil extracted from tar sands in Alberta, Canada, to refineries in Houston and Port Arthur, Texas. The underground pipeline would carry an estimated 700,000 barrels of oil a day, doubling the capacity of an existing pipeline from Canada. Supporters say the line could significantly reduce U.S. dependence on Middle Eastern oil, while opponents say it would bring "dirty oil" that requires huge amounts of energy to extract and could cause an ecological disaster in case of a spill. Damon Moglen, climate and energy director at Friends of the Earth, an environmental group that opposes the pipeline, said Cardno Entrix has a clear conflict of interest on the pipeline because of its previous work with TransCanada. Moglen said it was "no surprise" that a report largely researched by the firm "grossly understated the damage likely to be caused by this pipeline." Shawn Howard, a spokesman for TransCanada, denied a claim by Friends of the Earth that Cardno Entrix was hired at TransCanada's urging. "We were not involved in the decision or provide direction on who should be hired," Howard said. "Claims by professional activists are the furthest thing from the truth." The State Department has authority over the project because it crosses the border. Officials are reviewing testimony from the hearings and public comments submitted to the department's website and are on track to make a recommendation by the end of the year, Nassmacher said. When the decision is made, "it will be very much rooted in the work that has been done," Clinton said. "And I think people have been extremely careful and thoughtful, and it's a process that I am trying to respect until it reaches its conclusion."

B. Border Communications

Countdown to comply with eManifest requirements begins November 1, 2011, for highway carriers

Ottawa, Ontario, October 12, 2011 – The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) today announced that the eManifest implementation timeline for highway carriers will begin on November 1, 2011. This means on November 1, 2012, highway carriers that do not comply with the requirement to electronically transmit cargo and conveyance data ahead of arrival at the border will be denied entry and will face zero-rated (non-monetary) penalties. Subsequently, on May 1, 2013, highway carriers that do not comply with the requirements will be denied entry to Canada and face monetary penalties.

"When fully implemented, eManifest will be a virtually paperless process that starts before shipments even reach the border and will improve two-way communications between trade and the CBSA," said Cathy Munroe, Vice-President, Programs Branch. "By rigorously performing risk assessments on advance commercial information, the CBSA's border services officers will be better able to ensure that shipments identified as being of unknown and high-risk are examined and low-risk, legitimate goods cross the border more efficiently."

CBSA also recently made electronic data transmission requirements easier to achieve with the launch of its internet-based eManifest Portal. The eManifest Portal allows businesses to electronically submit their cargo and conveyance data to the CBSA via its Web site.

eManifest is a major Crown project that is improving the way commercial goods coming into Canada are processed while enhancing the safety and security of Canadians and international trade.

For more information on eManifest requirements, visit the CBSA Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca.

OCTOBER 13, 2011

BUFFALO, NY

2 men arrested, charged with selling oxycodone

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Two men were arrested and charged with possession, distribution and importation of oxycodone into the United States. Each charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine up to \$1 million. Joseph Julien, 56, of Stevensville, Ontario, and Kevin Hince, 20, of Depew, N.Y., have both been charged.

According to court documents, in April 2011, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) began an investigation into the large scale trafficking of prescription medication from Canada into the Buffalo-area. According to the complaint, between September and October 2011, the DEA utilized a confidential source to make three undercover purchases of 140 pills from Hince. Also according to the complaint, Hince was getting the pills from Julien. It is estimated that Julien provided at least 10,000 pills for distribution in the Buffalo-area over the last year.

Hince and Julien made an initial appearance before Magistrate Judge H. Kenneth Schroeder, Jr. Judge Schroeder ordered the defendants to be detained. Julien is scheduled to appear in court on Oct. 17, 2011 at 2 p.m.

The complaint is the result of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations, the Lancaster Police Department, the Amherst Police Department, the Buffalo Police Department and the Erie County Sheriff's Department.

Hochul, Higgins and Slaughter Announce \$1.2 Million for Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority

Oct 12, 2011 Issues: [Jobs and Economy](#), [Local Issues](#)

WASHINGTON - Western New York's congressional delegation, Reps. Kathy Hochul (NY-26), Brian Higgins (NY-27) and Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today announced that \$1.2 million has been awarded to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) to evaluate transportation alternatives in the Amherst-Buffalo Corridor. The funding, awarded through the Federal Transit Administration's Alternatives Analysis program, will be used to identify ways to increase the ease, speed and convenience of commuting in this well-travelled area.

In July, Slaughter, Hochul and Higgins wrote to US Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, in support of the NFTA request for funding. Citing the great strides Western New York has made in sustainable and smart transportation options, the Western New York Representatives asked LaHood to give NFTA's proposal full and careful consideration.

"Today's announcement is wonderful news for the students and commuters who travel the Amherst-Buffalo Corridor each and every day," said Congresswoman Hochul. "This funding will go a long way in determining how we can relieve congestion and make the trip easier and more convenient for thousands of commuters. On top of the convenience, I am sure that updating our transportation system will help move goods faster and therefore help grow our economy."

“We are continuing to see significant investment and economic development along the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and throughout our higher educational institutions,” said Congressman Higgins. “This will allow us to look at how our transportation infrastructure can better support and link the exciting growth underway.”

"I'm delighted to announce this new funding for a project that is vital to increasing convenient transportation options for thousands of Western New Yorkers," said Congresswoman Slaughter. "With the significant growth of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus including UB's Medical School moving downtown, along with the growth at UB's North and South Campuses, it is vital that we're ready to accommodate the thousands of commuters and residents who wake up every morning hoping for a quicker, easier daily commute."

Significant developments at the University of Buffalo, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, and private industry are changing the traffic patterns in the Buffalo-Amherst corridor. The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus will soon have over 12,000 employees commuting to their downtown location, with even more students commuting downtown once the University of Buffalo moves their medical school to the same downtown campus. The analysis to be completed with today's federal funding will ensure that this economic growth is supported by the best transportation options possible.

The full text of the letter to Secretary LaHood is below.

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590-001

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's (NFTA) proposal being submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for funding from the Fiscal Year 2011 (FY 11) Alternatives Analysis (AA) Program. NFTA is proposing an analysis of the Amherst-Buffalo Corridor, in partnership with the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) and with support from key stakeholders including Erie County, City of Buffalo, Town of Amherst, University at Buffalo (UB) and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC).

Funding will allow NFTA to conduct an evaluation of all reasonable public transit, multimodal alternatives and general alignment options to address transportation needs, problems and opportunities along this corridor. BNMC will soon have over 12,000 employees commuting to their downtown location and will see an influx of new students once UB moves their medical school to the campus. We must support innovative transportation options and this corridor holds the potential to spur economic development around UB's South Campus, in Buffalo's Fruit Belt neighborhood and in Amherst's Eggertsville area.

The Amherst-Buffalo Corridor includes NFTA Metro's highest ridership levels and is a continuation of Buffalo's Main Street Light Rail Rapid Transit system. Significant developments at UB, BNMC, and private investment throughout the corridor have created a wide array of transportation needs and opportunities. A fully developed analysis is needed to ensure that these new economic engines are served by the best transit model possible, now and in the future.

The NFTA and GBNRTC simply cannot fund this study in addition to addressing extensive capital and operational needs. FTA assistance is necessary to complete this important task. A FY 11 AA award will help expand transportation choices, enhance economic competitiveness, and reduce congestion and pollution at a critical time.

The Region is making great strides to incorporate sustainability principles and has been actively developing policies and pursuing strategies that support smart and sustainable growth across all sectors. We are confident that this proposal will greatly improve livability in the Buffalo-Niagara Region and act as a model initiative that could assist transportation providers throughout the nation.

We are pleased to write in support of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's proposal and ask that their application be given full and careful consideration. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Congresswoman Hochul Offers Amendment That Would Require Department Of Homeland Security To “Make It In America”

Oct 12, 2011 Issues: Local Issues, National Security

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, the House Committee on Homeland Security met to produce a bill that would provide funding to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for Fiscal Year 2012.

Congresswoman Hochul offered an amendment to ensure that agencies under the DHS that require their employees to wear uniforms ensure that such uniforms are made in America.

“My amendment provided the Committee with the rare opportunity to enhance security while protecting, and potentially creating, American jobs,” said Congresswoman Hochul. “During these times of stubbornly high unemployment, we must do anything we can to create new jobs here in America, thereby giving U.S. workers the opportunity to ‘Make It In America.’ As a strong supporter of U.S. manufacturing, I believe it is our duty to protect American jobs through our support of businesses that manufacture high quality products here in the United States.”

After more than five hours of debate and 13 recorded Democratic votes, Congresswoman Hochul’s amendment was one of only two Democratic votes successfully adopted.

In Letter to Appropriators & Speech on House Floor Higgins Calls for Protection of Great Lakes

Calling the Great Lakes “one of America’s most overlooked and underappreciated assets” Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) is stressing the economic and environmental significance of the Great Lakes and calling for Great Lakes funding to be protected from cuts proposed by the Supercommittee.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds are currently supporting \$4.6 million toward a \$5.9 million project to restoration of the Buffalo River in Congressman Higgins’ district.

Below is the text of the [letter](#) Congressman Higgins sent to leaders of the Appropriation Committee:

Dear Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Dicks, Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Moran:

As you ready recommendations to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, I write to urge you to protect funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

The Great Lakes are one of America’s most overlooked and underappreciated national assets. They are the largest source of surface fresh water in the world, provide more than 30 million people in the region with drinking water, and boast a multi-billion boating, shipping, fishing, recreational and tourism economy. The Great Lakes fishery alone generates \$7 billion in economic activity and supports 75,000 direct jobs.

Yet, in order to provide safe drinking water and sustain these economic activities, the Great Lakes need to be healthy. The Great Lakes face many challenges to that end, including contaminated sediment, agricultural runoff, sewer overflows, and invasive species. Lake Erie in particular, which as the shallowest of the Lakes has greatest exposure to agriculture runoff and point source pollution, is exceptionally vulnerable to excess nutrients and phosphorus. This pollution leads to toxic algal blooms that rob the water of oxygen that fish and other aquatic species need to survive, negatively impacting the associated fishing industry and limiting the recreational use of the waterways. According to a recent report by the National Wildlife Federation, this past summer Lake Erie saw the most severe algal blooms since the 1960s. Leaving these threats unaddressed will lead to the degradation of the Great Lakes ecosystem and threaten the progress we are making in Buffalo toward reclaiming our waterfront as an engine of recreational and economic activity.

The GLRI represents our nation’s recognition of the economic significance and environmental vulnerability of the Great Lakes. Fully funding GLRI will not only restore and protect the ecological health of the Great Lakes, it will lead to long-term economic benefit. A Brookings Institution report shows that for every \$1 invested in Great Lakes restoration results in a \$2 return in the form of increased fishing, tourism and home values. Buffalo alone would see economic gains between \$600 million to \$1.1 billion if the Great Lakes are restored.

I understand the challenge you are tasked with in making recommendations for spending cuts, but respectfully submit that for the reasons outlined above, the GLRI is a cost effective program that is worthy of America’s investment. I urge you to encourage the Joint Committee to protect this essential economic and environmental investment in the Great Lakes. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Brian Higgins

Below are the remarks Congressman Higgins delivered on the House Floor:

"Mister Speaker, The Great Lakes are one of America's most overlooked and underappreciated assets. They are the largest source of surface fresh water in the world, provide more than 30 million people with drinking water, and host a multi-billion dollar boating, shipping, fishing, and recreation economy.

"The Great Lakes fishery alone generates \$7 billion in economic activity and directly supports 75,000 jobs.

"Yet the Lakes are threatened by toxic algae blooms fueled by agriculture runoff, sewer overflows and other pollution. Lake Erie in particular, as the shallowest of the Lakes, is exceptionally vulnerable to excess nutrients and phosphorus.

"According to a recent report by the National Wildlife Federation, this summer Lake Erie saw the most severe algal blooms since the 1960s.

"Mr. Speaker the Brookings Institution reports that every dollar invested in Great Lakes restoration results in a \$2 dollar return in the form of increased fishing, tourism and home values.

"This program is cost effective, and I urge Congress to reject cuts for Great Lakes restoration."

Congressman Higgins' Western New York district borders Lake Erie. He is a member of the Congressional Great Lakes Caucus and staunch supporter of Great Lakes protection, including a recent effort [calling on](#) the Ohio Governor to veto legislation that would have siphoned 5 gallons of water a day from Lake Erie.

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

C. Editorials/Columns

Moszczenska: Canada can be greater energy supplier to U.S. Charleston Gazette-Mail - October 8, 2011

When you turn on your stove or fill up your car, do you ever take a minute to wonder about where the energy actually comes from? When you turn on your stove or fill up your car, do you ever take a minute to wonder about where the energy actually comes from? Not that likely, although in this world of ever increasing expectations around affordability, environmental performance and security of energy, it might just be a good idea. Did you know that your neighbour to the north, Canada, is now the largest energy supplier to the United States? Growing this relationship makes sense. The dynamism of the Canada-U.S. energy relationship is often forgotten as we charge our blackberries or fill our vehicles; yet behind our wall plugs and under our gas pumps the footprint of Canada's energy relationship with the United States and West Virginia is clear. Canada has an enviable supply of hydro, natural gas, oil, uranium and wind, and our exports are largely flowing south. We're the third largest producer of hydroelectricity in the world and almost all the electricity that the United States imports comes from Canada. Canada holds the third largest reserves of oil after Saudi Arabia and Venezuela at 174 billion barrels. Eighty percent of the world's known oil reserves are state controlled or managed by national oil companies. However, the government of Canada does not run our oil sector. We are not members of OPEC. And of the 20 percent of the world's oil supply that is openly accessible to market based development, 60 percent comes from Canada's oil sands. Canada provides an affordable, reliable, and sustainable source of energy for West Virginia and the rest of the United States. That is good for both countries. In fact, 8 million American jobs depend on trade with Canada. Our relationship is a good news story given the geopolitical situation of many other major exporting countries, and the shared values Canadians and West Virginians hold regarding energy extraction and use. Groups are actively campaigning against the construction of Keystone XL, a pipeline that would carry Canadian oil to the United States. There is no question that Keystone XL is a massive engineering project, but it has been subjected to a comprehensive environmental review, and will be going far beyond existing U.S. pipeline safety regulations. As for projects in Canada's oil sands, these are also subject to extensive environmental and regulatory review. We manage water use by setting withdrawal limits from the river. We work with a wide range of stakeholders to regulate water quality, health and better understand aboriginal considerations. All land disturbed by the oil sands must be reclaimed by law. Between 1990 and 2008, greenhouse gas emissions per barrel of oil were reduced by 29 percent, and there are

technologies under development that will further reduce emissions. The oil sands are a key strategic resource, an economic engine contributing substantially to employment and GDP on both sides of the border. More than 900 American companies, large and small provide goods and services to the oil sands. In short, expanding the capacity and increasing deliveries from Canada's oil sands mean good things for West Virginia jobs. Our two countries have signed on to exactly the same greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, and Canada has adopted the tail pipe emissions standard that originated in California. Canada already has a clean electricity system with fully 78 percent of Canadian electricity production derived from non-emitting sources such as hydropower and nuclear. I would note that in the United States, 70 percent of electricity comes from coal, natural gas and petroleum. Canada and the United States have a long history of integration within energy markets and infrastructure, and we share an extensive secure cross-border network of pipes and transmission lines. Given the integration and mutual benefits to both West Virginia and Canada, the question really is how do we strengthen and further diversify this energy dialogue? Canada recognizes the environmental challenge before us and is acting to regulate and invest in science and technology improvements for energy production. Unlike many energy exporters, we are committed to transparency in the way we assess energy projects. Canada is proud of its diversified energy relations with the United States and we look forward to debate and dialogue on the future of our energy partnership. - *Moszczenska is Consul General for Canada in Buffalo, N.Y.*

Slippery pipeline: The Keystone XL project deserves closer scrutiny
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette - October 14, 2011

The question of whether the United States should permit the construction of a 1,700-mile pipeline across the middle of the country to permit the transport of crude oil from Canada to Texas is complicated enough already. Now it appears that the State Department, the government body which will make the decision since it is an international matter, has also introduced lobbying and potential conflict-of-interest elements into the process. We believe that compromises the department's integrity. The proposal would allow the oil company TransCanada to build a pipeline called Keystone XL between the tar sands of Alberta, Canada, to Port Arthur, Texas. The route would cross Montana, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas and the pipeline would carry an estimated 700,000 barrels a day of corrosive "diluted bitumen" crude oil. The basic U.S. interest to be weighed is the balance between the jobs and profits that would emanate from the construction and maintenance of the pipeline, and the risks to the environment that would be posed by possible spills, blowouts and sabotage, now and in the future. A particularly important piece of the decision-making process involves the U.S. government's consideration of an environmental impact statement. That part may now have been corrupted since Cardno Entrix, the company chosen to do the environmental study, describes in its advertising the pipeline's prospective builder, TransCanada, as one of its "major clients." Cardno Entrix submitted an environmental impact statement at the end of August that gave TransCanada a green light. The second questionable element at play here is that TransCanada's top Washington lobbyist, Paul Elliott, was the deputy campaign director for Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's 2008 presidential run. Trans-Canada has registered 14 leaks in various pipelines in the United States in recent years, including one in May in North Dakota. The Keystone XL pipeline would pass through a number of important sources of mid-America's water, including the famous Ogallala aquifer, which stretches between western Texas and South Dakota and underlies eight states. Landowners from the states that would host the pipeline have also complained that, in seeking to acquire land, Trans-Canada has told them that it has a U.S. government pledge that "eminent domain" will be applied if they don't sell what is necessary to complete the project. The Department of State is scheduled to hand down a decision by the end of the year, and environmentalists who have put up strong opposition predict that the Obama administration will approve the plan. It is essential, however, given the importance of the decision to America and the role played in it so far by Cardno Entrix, TransCanada's important client, and Mr. Elliott, Ms. Clinton's former campaign aide, that a new and truly independent environmental impact statement be prepared on Keystone XL before the matter goes any further. At this point the affair is giving off a very foul odor.

Trade pacts could boost region's economy
Rochester Democrat & Chronicle – October 11, 2011

A little known fact is that international trade represents a huge segment of the Rochester region's economy. Its relatively low-profile local status, however, could start to change this week pending the outcome of congressional action. After five years of dithering, Congress, persuaded that more unemployed Americans will be helped than hurt, should finally vote to adopt three trade agreements that could create tens of thousands of jobs nationwide. Rochester, on a per capita basis, is the third largest export region in the nation and No. 1 in New York. The pacts, reached under President George W. Bush, and sent to Congress last week by President Obama after working out kinks, would give the United States greater access to markets in South Korea, Colombia and Panama. The biggest gains would be made in South Korea, where the U.S. has slipped to third among exporters. Besides stiffer competition from China, the U.S. has been hurt by a 6.2 percent average tariff that it currently pays to South Korea. Under the new pact, tariffs for more than 95 percent of U.S. exports would be eliminated within five years. As a result, U.S. exports to South Korea are expected to increase by \$11 billion and support more than 70,000 American jobs. Similarly, the U.S. is likely to gain from the new trade pacts with Colombia, the third largest economy in South America, and Panama, which also is one of the largest growing economies in Latin America. Competitors such as Canada will roll with new trade agreements in January. The U.S., especially Rochester with its still sizable manufacturing and agriculture industries, must not be left lagging.

D. Citizens Views (write-in letters)

Megan Connelly: Modern system requires modern governance Buffalo News - October 11, 2011

Earlier this year, the Buffalo Common Council adopted a resolution calling on federal, state and Canadian officials to review operations of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission and the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority and to identify the process to merge these entities so that our border crossings can be managed more efficiently and cost-effectively. Efforts to develop Buffalo's waterfront have been plagued by inter-agency conflicts and inefficiencies for more than 30 years, and many groups and leaders have repeatedly called for a merger. The late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan proposed it in the early 1990s. In 2002, government and business leaders on the Niagara Bi-National Region Economic Roundtable—a project funded by local governments on both sides of the border — also recommended a merger. These agencies are relics of an early 20th century economy and not set up to facilitate competition at the global scale. Many unresolved issues surrounding the Peace Bridge project stem from this history of fractured governance and uncoordinated planning, procedures and reviews. Good oversight of these entities is complicated, if not impossible. The Bridge Commission was created as an international entity and the Bridge Authority, while created as a New York entity, asserts it is not subject to state law except as directed by a joint agreement between Ottawa and Washington. It doesn't make sense to have two separate bureaucracies managing four border crossings within 20 miles of each other. Merging the authorities would cut costs and promote efficiencies such as being able to use Nexus at all four crossings. Reducing complexity and duplication would make the work of these "shadow governments" easier to understand and oversee. We cannot ignore the detrimental effect of this current system on our community. The West Side is an environmental justice community that incubates asthma and respiratory disease largely because two different entities resulted in an unjust distribution of truck traffic. Merger is an important step toward the better and more just Peace Bridge project that the 100 partner groups in the Partnership for the Public Good made one of its top priorities. The authority has stymied such efforts in the past, citing various objections and the need for legislation in both countries. Now is time for action and collaboration. The opportunity to create a better border crossing is real — and a better, more efficient and transparent bridge authority is necessary. Our elected leaders, particularly Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, Mayor Byron W. Brown and Rep. Brian Higgins— each of whom has shown a commitment to reforming outdated agency structures in various parts of government — should strongly support the merger of the Bridge Commission and the Bridge Authority. - *Megan Connelly is director of programs and development for the Partnership for the Public Good.*