

Canada – United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada – États-Unis
Section canadienne

Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its participation at the Republican National Convention

Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Cleveland, Ohio, United States of America
18–20 July 2016**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 18–21 July 2016, the Honourable Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair of the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG), led a delegation to the Republican National Convention (RNC) in Cleveland, Ohio. The other members of the delegation were Senator David Wells, Vice-Chair, Mr. Charlie Angus, M.P. and Mr. Phil McColeman, M.P., Vice-Chair.

THE EVENT AND DELEGATION OBJECTIVES

Three main activities occur at an RNC, which is held every four years: the nomination of the Republican Party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates; the formulation and adoption of the Republican Party's platform; and the adoption of rules and procedures in relation to party activities.

Unlike the 2012 RNC, at which a delegation from the IPG's Canadian Section participated through the Republican Diplomatic Partnership, the Canadian Section's delegation was not a part of any official program at the 2016 RNC. As such, delegates attended the political speeches that were held at the convention site each evening and a limited number of other activities sponsored by a range of organizations. This report does not summarize the political speeches; rather, it notes a number of the comments that were made at these other activities.

At the RNC, Mr. Easter had the opportunity to speak with Representative Bill Huizenga, who is the House of Representatives Chairman of the IPG's U.S. Section, and to discuss the nature and scope of Canada–Arkansas trade and investment with Governor Asa Hutchison.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The IPG aims to find points of convergence in respective national policies, to initiate dialogue on points of divergence, to encourage the exchange of information and to promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern. Members of the IPG's Canadian Section meet regularly with their federal counterparts and, in recent years, have attended meetings of governors and state legislators. At these events, Canadian delegates engage in conversations that help the Canadian Section to achieve its objectives, and that further a better understanding of the nature and scope of the bilateral relationship.

Members of the IPG's Canadian Section found the 2016 RNC to be a valuable opportunity to observe the U.S. political process, as well as to speak with Representative Huizenga and Governor Hutchison.

Cleveland State University's Ed Horowitz moderated a panel discussion among Sharon Broussard, of *cleveland.com* and *The Plain Dealer*, Lee Fisher, of Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, Richard Perloff, of Cleveland State University, and Lee Weingert, of LNE Group.

Richard Perloff, *Cleveland State University*

- Politics has always been characterized by negative campaigning and attacks.
- Negative ads can be good for democracy because of the information that they contain about issues.
- Anger is typically framed in terms of aggression, rather than argumentation.
- Increasingly, people who are partisan pay attention to only those news sources that are aligned with their views.
- Ideally, political campaigns provide citizens with an opportunity to focus on major national issues.
- Each debate between or among U.S. presidential candidates should focus on only one issue.
- Citizens should receive training designed to enhance their engagement in political issues.

Lee Weingert, *LNE Group*

- The point in time at which the United States “swapped” bipartisanship for hyperpartisanship is unclear, but it is clear that the “swap” has occurred; the result of hyperpartisanship is dysfunction in the U.S. Congress.
- The extent of dysfunction in the U.S. Congress could be reduced by campaign finance reform and term limits.
- Alongside hyperpartisanship is social polarization.
- The Democrats have never been more liberal and the Republicans have never been more conservative.
- An increasing proportion of Americans have an unfavourable view of the political party that they do not support.
- Between 10% and 20% of U.S. states “matter” during presidential elections.

Sharon Broussard, *cleveland.com* and *The Plain Dealer*

- Some Americans are wondering if it is possible to be elected U.S. president on the basis of 140-character negative tweets, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

- Social media is inexpensive, it allows someone to bypass news outlets and thereby criticism, and it is “where the people are.”
- With social media, there is a “flood” of information, but it is hard to determine its accuracy, context, etc.
- When everyone is a “creator,” it is hard to be heard “above the din.”
- News should be clear, objective and presented in as many formats as possible.

Lee Fisher, *Cleveland-Marshall College of Law*

- The U.S. Congress is dysfunctional, and is “broken like never before.”
- While the President of the United States may be the most powerful person in the world, he/she is less important now than in the past.
- If someone wants to change the world, he/she should start with his/her city; cities should be viewed as the laboratories of democracy, and should be designed with democracy in mind.
- Trust is the “lubricant” of democracy, and democracy needs to “thrive” from the “bottom up.”
- At the local level, leaders should not let what they “know” limit what they can “imagine.”

AMERICAN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COUNCIL – POLICY FORUM ON CONSERVATIVE THOUGHT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Richard Eidlin, *American Sustainable Business Council*

- Environmental sustainability is a “driver.”
- There is no contradiction between “conservatism” and “the environment.”

Nan Hayworth, *ConservAmerica*

- While human potential is limitless, terrestrial resources are limited.
- When governments impose as little as possible on citizens, citizens can derive as much as possible.
- A great nation should aspire to protect its resources to the greatest extent possible.
- U.S. states, communities and people should be empowered to “do the right thing.”

- “Sensible” investments designed to “protect earth” should be made.

Rob Sisson, *ConservAmerica*

- The adoption of sustainable practices, such as LED municipal lights, can lead to savings that can be passed on to citizens.
- Sustainable practices and products affect the “bottom line” in a positive way.

Bill Shireman, *Future 500*

- The “right” understands “how” and the “left” understands “why”; “independents” may be able to bring the “how” and the “why” together.
- Republicans have environmental solutions, and Republican lawmakers need businesses to “stand with them” in protecting the environment.

Howard Williams, *Construction Specialties*

- There is no “disconnect” between “conservative thought” and “sustainability”; they are joined by humanity, which is the “glue.”
- Each political party tends to politicize issues that are not “political issues.”
- There is a need to take care of finite resources, and to consider what is being passed on to the next generation.
- Because people spend about 90% of their time within buildings, interior spaces should be improved for them.
- It is possible to “rethink” architecture and design; for example, solar shading to reduce heat gain can be considered.

David Anthony, *Naturepedic*

- Profits can be made by doing things in the “right” – meaning “sustainable” – way.
- People should “do the right thing” because it is: the “right thing to do”; profitable; demand by the marketplace; and needed in order to be competitive.
- The use of chemicals should be minimized.

Joe Paterniti, *Key Bank*

- Sustainability can be viewed as a business responsibility.
- “Strong business” is, or can be, consistent with “environmental business.”

Rod Richardson, *Grace Richardson Fund*

- Supply-side economics can be applied to climate change; for example tax reductions can incentivize desired behaviours.
- Risk management is important, and one way in which investors manage risk and increase their returns is through diversification.
- Technologies can make fossil fuels “cleaner.”

Michele Combs, *Young Conservatives for Energy Forum*

- “Energy” can be used to “fortify” the “Republican brand” and appeal to various groups of voters.
- Republicans “need a narrative” about clean energy.
- Millennials grew up with recycling, and they understand environmental issues.
- There is a need to be energy efficient, economical and conservation-minded.

Alex Bozmoski, *Energy & Enterprise Initiative*

- Republicans care about climate change.
- Republicans have climate change solutions that are better than those of the Democrats.

Jerry Taylor, *Niskanen Center*

- There is no ideological view of science; there is simply science.
- The debate is not about whether climate change is occurring; the question is: how hot will it become?
- Climate change is a very serious problem that demands a serious policy response.
- Industrial emissions are a significant “driver” of climate change.
- A key question is how to address the full range of possible climate change outcomes in a “sea” of uncertainty.

Catrina Rorke, *R Street Institute*

- Markets “work” for everything, including energy.
- Ozone is created both naturally and by human activities.
- The U.S. *Environmental Protection Act* is “outdated” in a number of ways.

- Fossil fuels can play a role in making the “energy future” more secure.

MICROSOFT AND THE HILL – THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE: A POLICY DISCUSSION ON STEM AND COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

Peggy Johnson, *Microsoft*

- More computer science training is needed; some “computer science jobs” are unfilled because of insufficient people having the required skills.
- About 25% of U.S. schools teach computer science.
- More children need to become interested in computer science, and this interest should be developed at a young age.

Governor Asa Hutchison, *State of Arkansas*

- Some students have an aptitude for computer science and coding.
- Demand for coding should be created among students, and teachers should then meet that demand.
- Existing teachers need to be retrained in order to teach science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and new teachers who already have this knowledge should be hired.
- A national effort to support coding is needed.
- Coding has applications in a broad range of economic sectors, including agriculture, other resources and health care.
- Science, technology, engineering and mathematics – including computer science – are strategically important for national security; the United States cannot be secure without a focus on computers, data analytics, etc.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald,
Senator, Co-Chair
Canada–United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P.,
Co-Chair
Canada–United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Republican National Convention
DESTINATION	Cleveland, Ohio, United States of America
DATES	18–20 July 2016
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. David M. Wells, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair Mr. Charlie Angus, M.P. Mr. Phil McColeman, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 6,666.98
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 13,114.15
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,644.64
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 1,064.11
TOTAL	\$ 22,489.88