

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 Summer Meeting
of the Western Governors' Association (WGA)**

Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

**Whitefish, Montana, United States of America
26–28 June 2017**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 26–28 June 2017, the Honourable Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P. led a delegation from the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) to the 2017 summer meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in Whitefish, Montana. The other delegates were Senator Yuen Pau Woo, Vice-Chair, Mr. Randy Hoback, M.P., Mr. Larry Maguire, M.P. and Mr. Randeep Sarai, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. Miriam Burke, the Canadian Section's Executive Secretary, and Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section.

THE EVENT

The WGA includes the governors from 19 U.S. western states (see the Appendix), as well as from American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The Canadian premiers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba also participate in the WGA's activities.

The WGA uses six basic strategies to achieve its goals:

- develop and communicate regional policy;
- serve as a leadership forum;
- build regional capacity;
- conduct research and disseminate findings;
- form coalitions and partnerships in order to advance regional interests; and
- build public understanding and support for regional issues and policy positions.

Each winter and summer, the WGA holds a meeting. This meeting was chaired by Montana Governor Steve Bullock, and was also attended by Governors Doug Burgum (North Dakota), Dennis Daugaard (South Dakota), Gary Herbert (Utah), John Hickenlooper (Colorado), David Ige (Hawaii), Matt Mead (Wyoming), Butch Otter (Idaho) and Brian Sandoval (Nevada).

Governor Bullock chose the National Forest and Rangeland Management Initiative as his focus for his year as WGA chair. Governor Daugaard will be the WGA chair for the coming year; Governor Ige will be the vice-chair. Governor Daugaard has chosen workforce development as his focus.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The Canada–United States 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. In addition to regular meetings with their federal counterparts, in recent years, members of the IPG's Canadian Section have attended national and regional meetings of governors and state legislators. At these events, Canadian delegates engage in conversations that will help to achieve the Canadian Section's objectives, and to communicate various aspects of the bilateral relationship.

At the 2017 summer meeting, the delegation from the IPG's Canadian Section participated in private meetings with Governors Bullock, Burgum, Hickenlooper, Mead, Otter and Sandoval. At these meetings, the delegates highlighted the nature and scope of the relationship that Canada has with each of their states, and discussed such bilateral issues as shared water resources, the North American energy supply and security, facilitation at – and the security of – the common border, U.S. trade policy, modernization of the *North American Free Trade Agreement* (NAFTA), trade in softwood lumber and cross-border tourism.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

During the 2017 summer meeting, the WGA held keynote addresses and roundtable discussions with the following titles:

- Connecting Canada and the West (Roundtable)
- Cybersecurity for the Power Grids (Roundtable)
- Winning the West and the Rest of America: Frank Luntz (Keynote)
- National Forest and Rangeland Management Initiative (Roundtable)
- Federal Public Lands: U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke (Keynote)
- Brewing Up an Economic Force (Roundtable)
- No Kid Hungry (Roundtable)
- Update on the Species Conservation and *Endangered Species Act* Initiative (Keynote)
- Infrastructure (Roundtable).

As well, at the meeting, the WGA governors adopted five policy resolutions that addressed the following topics:

- state wildlife science, data and analysis;
- western agriculture;
- national forest and rangeland management;

- species conservation and the *Endangered Species Act*; and
- workforce development.

This report summarizes the keynote addresses and roundtable discussions at the 2017 summer meeting.

CONNECTING CANADA AND THE WEST

David MacNaughton, *Canada's Ambassador to the United States*

- No relationship is more important to Canada than that which it shares with the United States; the relationship is being renewed and reinvigorated at the federal and state-provincial levels of government.
- Each day, 400,000 people cross the border that Canada shares with the United States, and bilateral merchandise trade was recently valued at \$672.7 billion in 2016.
- Working separately, Canada and the United States can make a difference; working together, the two countries can make history.
- The rhetoric in the United States regarding trade has not been helpful in attempts to reach an agreement on Canada–U.S. softwood lumber trade; many Canadian communities that depend on softwood lumber are being harmed by the current trade dispute.
- The Great Lakes, which are a shared resource, are being affected by invasive species.
- Saskatchewan is a major producer of agricultural products; the province also has oil, uranium and coal, and is a leader in carbon capture and storage technologies.
- North America has significant oil, natural gas, coal and other resources; Canada and the United States should continue to collaborate on energy issues, and to work toward North American energy independence.
- Canada's western provinces and the United States' western states have common challenges and opportunities.
- Canada and the United States have a mutually beneficial trade relationship, and Canada is the primary foreign export market for six of the WGA states; because trade irritants will always exist, it is important to stress the benefits of the relationship.
- The Canada–U.S. relationship is much more than transactional; the countries' economies are integrated.

- It is time to modernize NAFTA.
- Buy American provisions in U.S. legislation harm Canada.
- Invasive species do not respect international or provincial/state borders.

CYBERSECURITY FOR THE POWER GRIDS

Travis Kavulla, *Montana Public Service Commissioner*

- Disruptions of critical infrastructure, such as that which occurred in Ukraine, are a significant issue.
- Most of the severe threats to critical infrastructure are matters of foreign policy; that said, spending, oversight, etc. in relation to infrastructure are often state responsibilities.
- Communication networks must be open, and collaboration and coordination must exist among regulators, governments and those that are regulated.
- A compliance-based regime focuses on a checklist of standards that must be met, while a regime that is risk assessment–based focuses on actions that would make systems more secure.
- Critical infrastructure must be protected.

Scott Aaronson, *Edison Electric Institute*

- In matters of security, including the protection of critical infrastructure, everyone has a role to play and partnerships are important.
- It is not possible to protect all things from all threats all of the time.
- U.S. states excel at response and recovery; that said, it is important to have a plan in place to stop incidents from becoming catastrophes.
- During infrastructure’s construction phase, it is important to “build in” resiliency.

WINNING THE WEST AND THE REST OF AMERICA

Frank Luntz, *Luntz Global LLC*

- The United States is very divided and many Americans are angry; there is a need to find words that will unite the country.
- Often, Americans do not vote “for” a candidate; rather, they vote “against” the other or another candidate.

- Because Americans feel that “the closer the government, the better the government,” they have faith in – and trust – their governors; they do not trust the federal government or the U.S. Congress.
- Better infrastructure leads to a better quality of life, and cleaner, healthier and safer communities; everyone, everywhere benefits from improved infrastructure.
- The notion of repairing the United States’ crumbling infrastructure has almost universal support across geographical, demographic and political “divisions”; Americans want immediate action, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability to ensure that projects are completed on time and on budget.
- Regarding infrastructure, deferred maintenance is analogous to deficit spending.
- Polling reveals that Americans are willing to pay more for improved infrastructure, including through a sales tax increase for this dedicated purpose.
- Every child deserves an equal opportunity to receive an effective and exceptional education that equips him/her for college, a career and success in life; this type of education should be a policy goal.
- With education, the focus should not be the amount that is spent, but rather the manner in which that amount is spent.
- Teachers who are effective should be recognized, respected and rewarded.
- Students should be inspired, encouraged and challenged.
- Teachers should be motivating, committed and passionate.
- Americans want their health care system to be repaired, rather than replaced, and to provide them with the information that they need to make an informed choice from among a variety of high-quality, affordable options.

NATIONAL FOREST AND RANGELAND MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Tom Tidwell, *U.S. Forest Service*

- Working together is a “force multiplier”; by working together, people can accomplish more, and in a better way.
- In a variety of areas, federal, state and local governments, as well as tribes, citizens and communities, have shared stewardship.
- There is a need to take the actions that are needed today, and to do so effectively and efficiently, for the benefit of tomorrow.
- The pace and scale of restoration of public lands should be increased.

Leonard Jordan, *Natural Resources Conservation Service*

- The United States' forests and rangelands are at risk.
- Invasive species, fires, etc. do not stop at state boundaries.
- Farmers, ranchers and forest owners rely on the land for their livelihood.
- Resources and skills must be shared, and collaboration must occur; partnerships allow results to be achieved through collective efforts.

Marc Brinkmeyer, *Idaho Forest Group*

- Federal forest lands are important, and progress must continue to be made regarding their management.
- There is a need to increase the scale of forest management, and to focus on partnerships and collaboration.
- Wood is an emerging construction material for this century; this trend started in Europe and is being adopted in the United States.

Lynn Scarlett, *The Nature Conservancy*

- Many acres of public lands are at risk.
- Reliable funding is a prerequisite for progress to be made in managing public lands.
- Partnerships, integrated science and landscape stewardship should be priorities.

Bill Crapser, *Wyoming State Forestry Division*

- Forest and rangeland management issues are complex, and federal and state governments need to work together in developing solutions.
- Partnerships are one way in which to make progress on forest and rangeland issues.

FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS

Secretary Ryan Zinke, *U.S. Department of the Interior*

- People need to be able to trust that their governments will be stewards of resources; currently, citizens do not seem to have this trust.
- Regarding lands, there are some jurisdictional challenges and various agencies differ in their biological opinions on a number of matters.

- The United States' national parks are experiencing a backlog in relation to maintenance and repair.
- President Theodore Roosevelt had a vision that federal public lands should be multiple use and protected in perpetuity.
- There is a need for energy that is abundant, reliable and affordable; fossil fuels are part of the United States' energy mix.
- The United States should not be “held hostage” by other countries as it tries to meet its energy needs, and the country should not “go to war” for energy that it already has.
- Partnerships and collaboration are key, and all problems are fixable.

BREWING UP AN ECONOMIC FORCE

Acacia Coast, *Brewers Association*

- Nearly 80% of Americans live within 10 miles of a craft brewery, and 427 Congressional districts have at least one small brewery; that said, more than 70% of the U.S. beer market is “big beer.”
- U.S. beer sales are static, and consumers are seeking more flavour and greater choice.
- Export markets for small, independent brewers are expanding.
- One brewery job generates 34.5 indirect jobs.

Tim O'Leary, *KettleHouse Brewing Company*

- Many breweries grow from having a single employee to having multiple facilities and dozens of employees.

John McKee, *Headframe Spirits*

- Small distillers create jobs, add value to agricultural products and attract tourists

NO KID HUNGRY

Lisa Davis, of Share our Strength, posed questions to – and moderated a discussion among – WGA governors and Jeff Bridges, actor and national spokesperson for No Kid Hungry.

Jeff Bridges, *No Kid Hungry*

- Child hunger is an enormous, but solvable, problem; existing solutions should be expanded to more schools and to more states

- The United States has the financial resources and the “know-how” to resolve the problem of child hunger, but the political will is sometimes lacking; resolving this problem is a bipartisan issue.
- The United States cannot be a strong country if its children are hungry.
- Children lack concentration when they are hungry.

Governor Steve Bullock, *State of Montana*

- Hunger is a moral and a social issue.
- Children cannot learn and grow if they are hungry.
- “Breakfast After the Bell” programs reduce the stigma associated with hunger.
- States can partner with private companies to help feed children.
- When children are not hungry, they are more attentive and less likely to misbehave.
- In resolving the issue of child hunger and being leaders on the issue, governors should access federal resources, focus on the problem on a school-by-school basis, and bring relevant people and organizations together.
- Hunger does not cease to be a problem at the end of the school year; initiatives are needed to ensure that children can be fed during the summer months.

First Lady Lisa Bullock, *State of Montana*

- In addition to “Breakfast After the Bell” programs, “backpack” programs that provide children with food for dinner and on weekends can be successful in addressing child hunger.
- There is a need to increase awareness about the issue of child hunger; people are willing to help solve the problem of hunger, and to ensure that children have everything they need to succeed.
- Food connects people, and people need to feel connected.

Governor Brian Sandoval, *State of Nevada*

- In the United States, there are children who are hungry; “Breakfast After the Bell” programs can help to reduce hunger, thereby enhancing the benefits of school instruction, improving educational performance and reducing disciplinary or behavioural issues.
- With the goal of reducing child hunger, states should access federal resources and may give schools grants to purchase equipment, hire staff, buy food, etc.

- It is important to recognize that children are not responsible for their hunger.

Governor Gary Herbert, *State of Utah*

- Some parents need to be provided with skills; parents may be unaware of the consequences of child hunger, the resources that are available, etc.
- Poverty is the root cause of the problem of child hunger; that said, situational poverty, such as that which results from the loss of a job, should be distinguished from generational poverty.
- States are the best vehicle for addressing the issue of child hunger.

Governor Matt Mead, *State of Wyoming*

- States can benefit from private-sector food donations.
- In addition to food provided at school, children need access to food on weekends and during the summer months.

Governor David Ige, *State of Hawaii*

- Children who are hungry are not learning all of the skills that they need to succeed.
- Behavioural challenges result from child hunger.
- Summer food programs for children are important.

Governor Doug Burgum, *State of North Dakota*

- It is important to address the root causes of child hunger.

Governor Dennis Daugaard, *State of South Dakota*

- Food connects families.

UPDATE ON THE SPECIES CONSERVATION AND *ENDANGERED SPECIES* ACT INITIATIVE

Governor Matt Mead, *State of Wyoming*

- There is a responsibility to protect species, wildlife and habitat, partially to improve Americans' quality of life.
- Protecting species, wildlife and habitat is a bipartisan issue.
- Regarding endangered species, efforts should be directed to avoiding the listing of species and to delisting species that are listed.

- When a species is no longer in danger, it is important to delist it quickly in order to reallocate resources to other uses and priorities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Governor David Ige, *State of Hawaii*

- Airports and harbours are “lifelines” for Hawaii.
- Many of the consumer goods needed by Hawaii’s residents and tourists must be imported.
- Tourism is a key contributor to Hawaii’s gross domestic product.
- Critical infrastructure must be built, maintained and renovated, all of which require financing.

Governor Butch Otter, *State of Idaho*

- Idaho’s focus is maintaining its infrastructure.
- Idaho adds value to products, and the only economical way in which to get value-added goods out of the state is by highway.
- Federal infrastructure funds should not be limited to new projects; funds should also be available for the maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- Deferred maintenance is tantamount to deficit spending.

Governor Dennis Daugaard, *State of South Dakota*

- South Dakota is mostly concerned about maintaining the state’s existing highways and bridges.
- Private-public partnerships often do not work well in rural states, including South Dakota.
- Reliable federal funding sources are needed, and funding should not be allocated on the basis of population.
- It should be recognized that some states are a “bridge” between large centres, an example of which is South Dakota between Chicago and Denver.
- Citizens might support a tax increase if it was clear that the resulting funds would be spent on infrastructure.

Governor Steve Bullock, *State of Montana*

- In states such as Montana, toll roads are not feasible.

- Communities are only viable if they have the infrastructure, including water and sewers, that they need.
- Long-term investments in infrastructure allocate requirements over time.

Governor Gary Herbert, *State of Utah*

- Americans want infrastructure.
- The process for permitting should be streamlined.
- Taxpayer funds should be used effectively.

Governor Matt Mead, *State of Wyoming*

- The United States is falling behind the rest of the world in terms of surface transportation.
- Citizens understand the importance of infrastructure, and may be willing to pay higher taxes in order to finance it.
- Connectivity throughout the United States is important.
- States require federal infrastructure funds to be predictable.

Governor Doug Burgum, *State of North Dakota*

- States should be able to spend federal funds on maintenance; spending should not be limited to new projects.
- Permitting should occur in a more timely manner.
- Initiatives that have strong social support should be funded.
- Regarding infrastructure, private-public partnerships are not a viable option in all cases.

Respectfully submitted,

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

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

Inter-Parliamentary Group

Inter-Parliamentary Group

Appendix

U.S. STATES REPRESENTED IN THE WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Alaska	New Mexico
Arizona	North Dakota
California	Oklahoma
Colorado	Oregon
Hawaii	South Dakota
Idaho	Texas
Kansas	Utah
Montana	Washington
Nebraska	Wyoming
Nevada	

ASSOCIATION	Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Summer Meeting of the Western Governors’ Association (WGA)
DESTINATION	Whitefish, Montana, United States of America
DATES	26–28 June 2017
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Hon. Yuen Pau Woo
HOUSE OF COMMONS	The Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P. Mr. Randy Hoback, M.P. Mr. Larry Maguire, M.P. Mr. Randeep Sarai, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Miriam Burke, Executive Secretary Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 12,848.69
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 5,541.37
PER DIEMS	\$ 1,878.35
MISCELLANEOUS/ REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 8,227.08
TOTAL	\$ 28,495.49