



MIKE ALLEN, MP
Tobique-Mactaquac
MP REPORT

Fall 2011

Hello Everyone,

After spending the summer in the riding attending a variety of community events and celebrations and completing a tremendous number of constituent meetings, we returned for the fall session of Parliament in mid-September.

Our government has an ambitious agenda for this fall as we work to honour the commitments we made in last spring's election. The first item tackled was the Safe Streets and Communities Act, as well as tabling the next budget bill that includes items such as the Volunteer Firefighter's Tax Credit. Above all else, we are focusing on jobs and the economy and will be paying very close attention to events in Canada and the around the world as we face the many challenges a world market presents to us here at home.

Inside this MP Report, you will find a summary of the Bill that will be a key step to making our streets and communities more safe and properly penalize criminals for their actions.

As well, I have added some thoughts on recent steps by the United States for dual citizens and Americans living in Canada to file certain tax returns.

The "Did You Know" section provides information on the EcoEnergy Retrofit-Homes program and other funding, and there are a couple of articles we hope you will find of interest on reducing red tape and the border initiatives with the United States.

You will also find information on shale gas and the two studies we are commissioning at the federal level.

Finally, I encourage everyone to observe Remembrance Day on Friday, November 11th, and honour those who have served and continue to serve this great country.

Kind Regards,



Mike Allen, MP

We're Here To Help

My staff in the riding work very hard to help you with any problems that arise regarding Federal programs and services.

Each one specializes in particular areas:

- **Deanna L. Brewer — Canada Revenue, Agriculture Canada and Veterans Affairs**
- **Celine Levesque-Violette — Employment Insurance, CPP, OAS, GIS, Citizenship and Immigration and Canada Student Loans**
- **Wendy Marr — Canada Firearms Registry and Canada Post**
- **Linda Desjardins — Passport Canada**

Staff work to resolve your issue and discuss the progress being made on your file with me on a regular basis.

Staying in Touch

In an effort to keep in touch with people in the riding on a regular basis, I use a number of social networking sites and the internet in general.

Besides my Web site and an e-newsletter that people can subscribe to, I am now tweeting on Twitter and have a regularly updated Facebook account.

Feel free to visit the Web site, subscribe to the newsletter, follow me on Twitter and become my Facebook friend!

Web site: www.mikeallen.ca

E-newsletter: Sign up at www.mikeallen.ca

Twitter: @mpmikea

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mike.allen.mp



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www.mikeallen.ca

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Take Time to Remember



I encourage everyone to take part in community Remembrance Day services on Friday, November 11th, or simply take the time to reflect on the sacrifices made by the men and women in our Armed Forces, both past and present.

Each and every one of them deserve our utmost respect and gratitude for protecting the freedom we in Canada enjoy every day.

Completing the Economic Recovery

Our Government's top priority remains completing the economic recovery.

- With the global economy still fragile, we need to stay focused and continue to implement our low-tax plan to create jobs and economic growth – a plan that is working.
- This fall, our Government will introduce legislation to implement the remaining measures from the Next Phase of Canada's Economic Action Plan, including the job-creating Hiring Credit for Small Business.
- We will also move forward on our ambitious trade agenda by reintroducing legislation to implement important free trade agreements that help open new markets for Canadian businesses and entrepreneurs.
- These measures will help Canada's economic recovery, which has so far seen nearly 600,000 net new jobs created since July 2009.

In addition to the Budget Implementation Act, our Government will move forward with legislation that will:

- keep our communities and neighbourhood's safe.
- improve our democratic system by moving closer to the principle that every vote cast should be of equal value.
- eliminate the wasteful and ineffective long-gun registry.

IRS Requirements for Americans Living in Canada

Canada and the United States are neighbours and have long been the closest of friends. We share a common border and we share many common values. This is especially true in the riding of Tobique-Mactaquac.

One of those values is fighting tax evasion. We believe in fair tax systems. Many Canadians, including a number of folks in the riding, have become concerned about the impact of two proposed pieces of American tax legislation, and I share that concern.

The first is the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, or FATCA.

Another issue, this one affecting more directly the large numbers of dual U.S.- Canadian citizens and their relatives living in Canada, is the IRS's Foreign Bank Account Report (FBAR) filing requirements.

While everyone's tax situation is different, most of these Canadian citizens, many with only distant links to the United States, have little knowledge of their tax reporting obligations to the IRS. These are honest and law-abiding people, including many senior citizens now caught in a nerve-wracking situation. Moreover, because they worked and paid taxes their entire lives, they generally do not owe any taxes in the U.S. in any event. Their only transgression is failing to file the IRS paperwork they were never aware they were required to file.

These people are not the targets of a crackdown on tax evasion. These are people who have made innocent errors of omission that deserve to be looked upon with leniency.

Faced with the knowledge that they do have an obligation to file U.S. tax returns, they want to do the right thing. But the threat of fines for simply failing to file a return they were unaware they had to file, is a frightening prospect that is causing unnecessary stress and fear among law abiding hardworking dual citizens.

We appreciate efforts to combat tax evasion. But FATCA would turn Canadian banks into extensions of the IRS and would raise significant privacy concerns for Canadians.

Canada respects the sovereign right of the U.S. to determine its own tax legislation. But quite frankly, people do not flock to Canada to avoid paying taxes. We have existing ways of addressing these issues with the U.S. through our Bilateral Tax Information Exchange Agreement.

I support efforts to crack down on legitimate tax evasion. These measures, however, do not achieve that goal.

Did you know?

New Horizons for Seniors Funding

The New Horizons for Seniors program helps ensure that seniors can benefit from, and contribute to, the quality of life in their communities through active living and participation in social activities.

In Budget 2011, the program received an additional \$10 million in funding and has been enhanced to focus on five objectives. These are:

1. promoting volunteerism among seniors and other generations;
2. engaging seniors in the community through the mentoring of others;
3. expanding awareness of elder abuse, including financial abuse;
4. supporting the social participation and inclusion of seniors; and
5. providing capital assistance for new and existing community projects and/or programs for seniors.

For more information on New Horizons for Seniors, or to track the deadline dates, visit the Web site: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/community_partnerships/seniors/index.shtml .

Funding for Fairs and Festivals

Groups planning seasonal festivals and celebrations should be aware of application deadlines for funding through Heritage Canada.

- Local Festivals:
 - Deadline was **SEPTEMBER 30, 2011** for events starting between April 1, 2012 and August 31, 2012.
 - Deadline is **APRIL 1, 2012** for events starting between September 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013.

For application forms and more information, visit the Web site: www.pch.gc.ca .

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Did you know?

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EcoEnergy Retrofit Program Renewed

The ecoENERGY Retrofit – Homes program provides grants up to \$5,000 to help homeowners make their homes more energy efficient and reduce the burden of high energy costs. The Government of Canada has renewed the program from June 6, 2011, until March 31, 2012.

How the Program Works

To be eligible for upcoming retrofits, new participants and past participants must first obtain a registration number. This may be done by calling 1-877-953-5454 or visiting the Web site <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/grants.cfm>.

- All participants require a pre-retrofit evaluation (since April 2007) before starting renovations, a post-retrofit evaluation and a **signed grant application form by March 31, 2012.**
- Participants must present all retrofit receipts at the post-retrofit evaluation.
- New participants are only eligible for product purchased on or after June 6, 2011, and installed after a pre-retrofit evaluation.
- Past participants are only eligible for products purchased and installed on or after June 6, 2011.

If you do not have an e-mail address or if you are a past participant who cannot find your ecoENERGY file number, you can call 1-877-953-5454 for assistance, but please note that due to high call volumes, you should expect delays. If possible, obtain an e-mail address and complete the online form at: <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/grants.cfm>.

The most popular improvements to date have been upgrades to heating systems (350,000 households), air sealing (260,000 households), windows (220,000 households), and attic insulation (180,000 households).

Shale Gas Development: a Federal Perspective

The Government of Canada recognizes the strategic importance of natural gas in the long run, including the positive environmental benefits as a fossil fuel replacement for the prominent use of oil and coal.

While the resource can provide numerous economic benefits to Canada and the abundant supply of cleaner burning natural gas would help strengthen Canada's position as a clean energy superpower, we do recognize that a healthy environment and a strong economy go hand in hand.

Our government has taken action in several areas to ensure stewardship of our natural environment, including our action plan for clean water and our clean air regulatory agenda.

The regulation of Natural Resource development ultimately lies with the province to determine how, or if, shale gas resources will be developed in a sustainable way. Provinces also manage environmental impacts of resource development through their regulatory systems.

Federal involvement falls under the mandate of several departments, agencies and boards. Environment Canada works within its jurisdiction to examine potential environmental issues related to shale gas development to further our commitment to the conservation of Canada's natural heritage and the safe, responsible and sustainable development of our nation's natural resources.

Environment Canada provides expertise and advice on both federal and provincial environmental assessments. This would be the case for Shales Gas Development in New Brunswick.

To help understand any potential environmental impacts of shale gas development, the Minister of the Environment has undertaken the following two initiatives:

1. He has proposed to the Council of Canadian Academies for an independent, expert panel assessment of the state of scientific knowledge on potential environmental impacts from the development of Canada's shale gas resources.
2. Environment Canada officials have been asked to develop an in-house work plan to examine any potential environmental aspects of shale gas development.

It should be noted that in a September 6th announcement by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) of its guiding principles for hydraulic fracturing, CAPP announced that it will support the proactive disclosure of fracturing fluid additives.

Around The Riding



Mike and Fisheries Minister Keith Ashfield during a visit to the Beechwood Dam.

Mike and his co-host Mike Allen of Perth-Andover with Miss New Brunswick 2011 Chelsea Grant of Nackawic.



Mike with Plaster Rock Mayor Judy St. Peter and Victoria-Tobique MLA Wes McLean.



Taking advantage of the Bayshore Health booth at the 50-Plus Expo in Hartland.



Saying hello to Anavets members during the Old Home Week Parade in Woodstock.



Mike and York North MLA Kirk MacDonald judging the NB 4-H competition.

With Grand Falls-Drummond-Saint-André MLA Danny Soucy (left) looking over the crop damage from a hail storm in Drummond.



Around The Riding



Taking part in the Grand Falls Potato Festival Parade with MLA Danny Soucy.



Working the Stanley Fair canteen with Chris MacDonald (left) and Wayne Flinn.



On the parade route during North Lake Field Days.



Mike and Premier David Alward (back, right) pose with members of the Debec Fire Department following the Redneck Parade.



Physical labour was the order of the day at the Johnville Picnic.



Speaking with constituents at the N.B. Day barbecue he co-hosted with York North MLA Kirk MacDonald.

Keeping Our Streets and Communities Safe

In the first week of the current sitting of the House of Commons Justice Minister Rob Nicholson introduced the Safe Streets and Communities Act. This re-introduces the following reforms which were debated by Parliament during the previous session but never became law:

- The Protecting Children from Sexual Predators Act (former Bill C-54) which proposes increased penalties for sexual offences against children as well as creates two new offences aimed at conduct that could facilitate or enable the commission of a sexual offence against a child;
- The Penalties for Organized Drug Crime Act (former Bill S-10) which would target organized crime by imposing tougher sentences for the production and possession of illicit drugs for the purposes of trafficking;
- Sébastien's Law (Protecting the Public from Violent Young Offenders) (former Bill C-4) which would ensure that violent and repeat young offenders are held accountable for their actions and that the protection of society is a paramount consideration in the treatment of young offenders by the justice system;
- The Ending House Arrest for Property and Other Serious Crimes by Serious and Violent Offenders Act (former Bill C-16) which would eliminate the use of conditional sentences or house arrest, for serious and violent crimes;
- The Increasing Offender Accountability Act (former Bill C-39) which would enshrine a victims' right to participate in parole

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hearings and address inmate accountability, responsibility and management under the Corrections and Conditional Release Act;



- The Eliminating Pardons for Serious Crimes Act (former Bill C-23B) which would extend the ineligibility periods for applications for a record suspension (currently called a “pardon”) from three to five years for summary conviction offences and from five to ten years for indictable offences;
- The Keeping Canadians Safe (International Transfer of Offenders) Act (former Bill C-5) which would add additional criteria that the Minister of Public Safety could consider when deciding whether or not to allow the transfer of a Canadian offender back to Canada to serve their sentence;
- The Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and related amendments to the State Immunity Act (former Bill S-7) which would allow victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism, including listed foreign states, for loss or damage that occurred as a result of an act of terrorism committed anywhere in the world; and
- The Preventing the Trafficking, Abuse and Exploitation of Vulnerable Immigrants Act (former Bill C-56) which would authorize immigration officers to refuse work permits to vulnerable foreign nationals when it is determined that they are at risk of humiliating or degrading treatment, including sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

Making Trade and Travel Easier

Our government was elected with a strong mandate to secure Canada's economic recovery – speeding up trade and travel between Canada and the U.S. will help to accomplish this.

- Our government sought input from Canadians on the Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness through public consultations in spring and summer 2011.
- More than 1,000 Canadians provided input and almost 200 submissions from groups and organizations were received.
- At the end of August, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird released the result of these consultations in two reports.
- The reports summarize public input received on two important issues: regulatory cooperation between the two countries and security and trade across the shared border.
- This feedback will help ensure Canada's interests are protected as we work towards an agreement.

To read the reports visit the Web site: <http://www.borderactionplan-plantionactionfrontalier.gc.ca/psec-scep/index.aspx?lang=eng>

Eliminating Red Tape for Business

In September, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism) Maxime Bernier, who serves as chair of the Red Tape Reduction Commission released the What Was Heard Report.

The report captures the key issues that were identified during the consultation process that took place between January and March 2011 with small business owners and entrepreneurs. Many examples of the challenges small businesses face due to red tape were identified. These challenges affect their ability to concentrate on their businesses, to innovate and to compete successfully.

Members of the business community are now invited to send their views on the recommended solutions to the Commission through an online questionnaire available at <http://reducedredtape.gc.ca>. A copy of the What Was Heard Report and more information about the Commission is also available at this site.

The Commission intends to make its final recommendations to the Government in the coming months on how best to address the issues set out the report.

Be Aware of Elder Abuse

Seniors from all walks of life are vulnerable to elder abuse and it is happening in communities across Canada, including in Tobique-Mactaquac.

Elder abuse is any action by someone in a relationship of trust that results in harm or distress to an older person. Commonly recognized types of elder abuse include physical, psychological and financial, as well as neglect. Financial abuse is the most commonly reported type.

Such abuse can be caused by a family member, a friend, someone who provides assistance with basic needs or services or health care providers in institutional settings. In many situations, the abuser is dependent on the older adult for money, food or shelter.

Elder abuse and neglect can be very difficult to detect. The following signs and symptoms may indicate that an older adult is being victimized or neglected:

- fear, anxiety, depression or passiveness in relation to a family member, friend or care provider;
- unexplained physical injuries;
- dehydration, poor nutrition or poor hygiene;
- improper use of medication;
- confusion about new legal documents, such as a new will or a new mortgage;
- sudden drop in cash flow or financial holdings; and
- reluctance to speak about the situation.

The Elder Abuse Awareness component of the New Horizons for Seniors Program helps non-profit organizations develop national or regional education and awareness activities to reduce the incidence of abuse of seniors.

The Family Violence Initiative promotes public awareness of the risk factors of family violence and the need for public involvement in responding to it. It also strengthens criminal justice, health and housing systems responses, as well as supporting data collection, research and evaluation efforts to identify effective interventions.

To find out more about this serious issue, visit the Website: <http://www.seniors.gc.ca/c.4nt.2nt@.jsp?cid=154> or call: 1 800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232).

Celebrating A Milestone?

If you or someone you know is celebrating a milestone birthday or anniversary, you can request congratulatory letters or certificates from Mike Allen, the Prime Minister, the Governor General and the Queen for the following celebrations:

Message from Mike Allen:

Any birthday or anniversary

Message from the Prime Minister of Canada:

65th birthday and over (in intervals of five years)

25th wedding anniversary and over (in intervals of five years)

Message from the Governor General of Canada:

90th birthday and over (in intervals of five years)

50th wedding anniversary and over (in intervals of five years)

Message from Her Majesty the Queen (proof of marriage date or birthday is required):

100th birthday and over (in intervals of five years)

60th wedding anniversary and over (in intervals of five years)

***Please note:** Certificates should be requested a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of the celebration to ensure timely delivery.*

Contact Us

Call Toll-Free:

1-800-671-6160

Email:

allenm@parl.gc.ca

Visit the Web site:

www.mikeallen.ca

Have Your Say

During the last election campaign and over the summer, a number of people spoke to me about the Employment Insurance (EI) system and the need for change.

Feedback has come from employers and employees. I have heard a wide range of views from those who think benefits should be enhanced to those who believe the system doesn't provide enough incentive to work.

As many people are aware, EI benefits are not funded through tax dollars, but through payroll deductions from employee wages and employer contributions. So, it is important to consider that any changes to the system could mean higher or lower payroll deductions.

As we work to deal with a situation where we have jobs looking for people and people looking for jobs, I would like to have feedback on the EI system.

1. Are you a: <input type="checkbox"/> Business Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Business Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Employee
Do you believe the EI system is: <input type="checkbox"/> Fair and reasonable as it currently stands <input type="checkbox"/> Weak and should be enhanced, meaning greater benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Too rich and should be streamlined and costs reduced for employees and employers
If you were to change the system, what would be the one key recommendation you would make?
To help us communicate with you better please fill out this form: Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

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Mike Allen, MP
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