

Election Issues Briefing Kit II

Make the Canadian Construction
Vote Count!



Building and Construction Trades Department , AFL-CIO, Canadian Office



40th General Election
October 14, 2008

Contact Local Political Candidates Today !

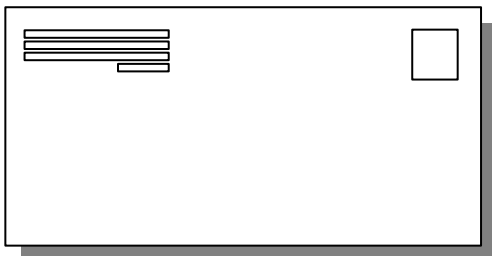
The Canadian Building Trades is an organization that is built on local action and opportunity. Our affiliates and members need to reach out to people who are on the ground in communities. The construction vote is the backbone of communities across Canada. You need to talk to the candidates and ask them questions that are important to you and your family. As an organization of 420,000 people you have the ability to impact elections and the process.

Your grassroots lobby effort should focus on 3 key themes:

1. **EQUAL TAX TREATMENT** for construction workers across Canada
 - The Income Tax Act needs to be ammended to allow travel expenses to be deducted when tradespersons have to travel to another region for work and are retaining their primary residence
2. **NATIONAL WORKFORCE STRATEGY** and the industry / government response to shortages
 - Apprenticeships and Apprenticeship Incentive Grants
 - Interprovincial Red Seal Program
 - Government and industry consultation
 - Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)
3. **LARGE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS** in your region
 - Oil and Natural Gas extraction and refining
 - Nuclear Power Plants
 - Green techonolgy
 - Bridges, roads and other public infrastructure
 - Upgrade or process resources here in Canada, don't export high value Canadian jobs

If you are meeting with a candidate formally or informally let them know:

- where you work
- who you represent and talk about the industry issues outlined above.
- tell them you are part of the Building Trades and you have colleagues from all across Canada who are concerned about these issues
- tell them how many tradespeople live in their ridings – they may not know you are an influential block of voters
- take a colleague from another trade or a contractor with you to illustrate industry partner cohesion on these issues.



We encourage you to write a letter to the editor on one of these topics. Call us for a list of media in your area – a letter to the editor can have an impact in a campaign. We can help you get your letter published.

Other “Non-Construction” issues in the 2008 campaign facing our members

Ask the candidates questions on these important national topics

Health Care and the Canada Health Act

→The modernization of our system while following the spirit of the Canada Health Act and promoting the universal application of the law needs to be a priority of Government. In Canada, a shift to patient centric care versus a rationed medical services model would serve the best interests of Canada’s people. We need a system that is wellness based and is preventative in nature. Canada’s provinces need to be accountable for service delivery of this national program. A government that is committed to the facilitation of training medical professionals and attracting new practitioners to Canada should be a priority. We should be consulting with the medical community and asking practioners for solutions to better patient care.

Arctic Sovereignty and responsible stewardship

→Canada needs to assert our soverienty and protect our interests in the North. We need a plan to develop and protect the resources of the Canadian Artic in a responsible way. The Northwest Passage is a Canadian inland waterway and will be an important trade route that impacts the Canadian economy and people. We need a made in Canada solution respecting Native populations and traditions.

Security at home and abroad

→We need a plan to keep Canada safe from threats both on the international and domestic scene . Part of this plan is promotion of the use of Canadian techonology and manufacturing for our defense systems. The employment of a Canadian workforce to build, service and deliver these techonologies should be part of the Canadian plan.

Financial Security for Canadians

→Given the current global economic uncertainty the promotion of a culture of saving and smart investing ought to assist the economy and Canada’s people. The regulation of financial markets to protect consumers, small business and our financial system across Canada should be a national responsibility. The Federal Government should be responsible for regulating, enforcing and monitoring through a national securities regulator, more commonly known as a Common Securities Regulator. The promotion of Defined Benefit pension plans and increased personal savings rates among Canadians through RRSPs and newly introduced Tax Free Savings Accounts (TFSA’s).

Right to Repair

→Proprietary industrial goods (like automobiles, construction equipment and commercial HVAC systems) should be sold with complete techical information required for repair and diagnostics by the end user. These documents and processes are not intended to be used for replication of the product or reverse engineering but to allow end users the freedom to choose who performs repair work. The Competition Act should be amended to include this technical information as part of the product sold to the end user. The competition tribunal should be enabled to enforce compliance on behalf of consumers.