

Building and Construction Trades Department, Canadian Office, AFL-CIO (613) 236-0653
Government and Regulatory Affairs

Upcoming Articles

New Campaign Financing Rules – How do they affect you?

Strategic Voting

Where are the leaders?

Alberta Oilsands – Opportunity or Squeezed too hard?



Federal Election 2007?

Speech From the Throne

Canada's Members of Parliament have returned to Ottawa for a Speech from the Throne which will outline the Harper Government new priorities and a new Legislative Session. The minority Government will have to work with the other Parties to broker progress on their legislative agenda.

Specifically, the Speech touched on five priorities guided by these themes:

Strong Leadership – A better Canada

1. **Strengthening Canada's Sovereignty and Place in the World**

2. **Strengthening the Federation and our Democratic Institutions.**

3. **Providing Effective Economic Leadership for a Prosperous Future**

4. **Tackling Crime and Strengthening the Security of Canadians**

5. **Improving the Environment and Health of Canadians**

A Throne Speech is deemed to have major importance as it is a Confidence motion – this means that a majority of MPs must vote to approve the speech in order for the government to survive. In addition, Mr. Harper has indicated each of the major pieces of legislation stemming from the document will be matters of confidence in the House of Commons. Essentially, the Conservatives are using the Throne Speech as a mandate to govern.

The New Democratic Party (NDP) and Bloc Quebecois (Bloc) have indicated in advance they will vote against the Speech on principle. All eyes are on the Liberal Party as their vote will decide the fate of this Parliament. **If the Throne Speech is defeated Parliament will dissolve and**

there will be a Fall Election campaign with and early December vote date.

It is interesting to note that the themes of the Throne Speech did not highlight any real issues facing Canadians in the Construction industry, all except a brief discussion on a Federal plan to fast track the industrial project approval process in the mining and resource sectors. This could mean a single portal of application for a new refinery project – this has the potential to impact our trades in the sense of less waiting time before construction of a project commences.

The tone of the Throne Speech sounded very much like a majority government paving the way for change and legislative reform – not a conciliatory doctrine which reflects the fragile state of a minority government.

Stay tuned!!