

Message from President

Dear Valued Member

The majority Conservative government is now in power with a redefined and unknown NDP opposition. This majority government will provide more stability and allow stakeholders including the HAC to engage more effectively. The days of the opposition simply objecting to topple the government are over.

The Hotel Association of Canada in concert with the National Roundtable on Travel and Tourism (NRTT) – the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, the National Airlines Council of Canada, the Airports Council of Canada and the International Air Transport Association - is now implementing our post-election coordinated government relations and public policy program. Our message is clear and straight forward. The success of travel and tourism depends on “Getting People to Canada”.

The election results indicate a vote against the elites. The Liberals and Bloc Quebecois simply failed to connect with ordinary Canadians. The Conservative and NDP success is a direct reflection of their ability to win the hearts of rank and file ordinary Canadians around the kitchen table.

In our HAC and NRTT lobbying strategy we stress the economic advantages of travel and tourism – **Jobs** - to average Canadians.

The Harper majority places the travel and tourism sector in a good position to build on the momentum gained the months preceding the election. The Conservatives had a number of tourism projects in progress prior to Parliament's dissolution including their campaign promise of the implementation of the Federal Tourism Strategy. The Conservatives stated, "Canada is facing increasingly stiff competition in the global tourism market. We will build on our efforts to attract more visitors to Canada and encourage Canadians to explore our magnificent country. We will announce and implement a Federal Tourism Strategy to ensure consultation and collaborations among all industry stakeholders. We will promote events including the Calgary Stampede and the Grey Cup".

The new Cabinet will be sworn-in in the next week. This will be followed with Parliament reconvening in late May or early June followed immediately by the Speech from the Throne and re-tabling of the Budget.

The HAC and the NRTT have a number of items to address in the short term including, reconnecting with the Tourism Minister or his replacement, the implementation of the Federal Tourism Strategy and the briefing of key Cabinet Ministers.

We will be reaching out to numerous departments and agencies that impact our sector. The possibility of a Deputy Minister shuffle could add increased relevancy to these meetings.

This summer the HAC and TIAC are implementing a comprehensive Grassroots Program for all members across Canada under the message of “Getting People to Canada”. We are building on a senior executive strategy to get buy-in and meaningful support from the most influential members of our sector. The HAC President will provide a lobby Webinar for members. The opportunity to raise tourism awareness in the minds of MPs this spring and summer will directly impact the action of MPs as they return to Ottawa in the fall.

Electronic and print media are an important cog in the wheel. The HAC and NRTT are looking to establish with business and editorial pages, talk radio and television with the message that travel and tourism is key in Canada’s economic agenda in the coming years.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the new Parliament, I encourage you to contact me.

Sincerely,

Anthony P. Pollard
President