

CHRONOLOGY 2008

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Aboriginal Peoples

10 January <i>Aboriginal Peoples</i> <i>Health</i> <i>Delivery of services</i>	Federal Minister of Health Tony Clement reveals that the Government of Canada will invest \$3.7 million to ensure public health services be delivered more efficiently and effectively in First Nations communities across Ontario.
30 January <i>Aboriginal Peoples</i> <i>Nunavut</i> <i>Government funding</i>	Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl unveils new investments in the economic development of Nunavut. The federal government will provide the territory with \$2.75 million for the Government of Nunavut's Community Survey Project. The two year-project aims to survey parcels of land in communities across the territory that will be affected by future mineral development.
17 March <i>Aboriginal Peoples</i> <i>B.C. land claims</i>	Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl and Seton Lake Indian Band Chief Larry Casper Jr. jointly announce a final agreement of a longstanding land claim in British Columbia dating back to the early 1900s. Under the agreement, the Seton Lake Indian Band will receive \$600,000 from Canada and 31.6 acres of land from the Province which

Minister Strahl will recommend be added to the reserve under the department's Additions to Reserve Policy. If the Band acquires other lands in the area, the Minister will, subject to the terms of the Additions to Reserve Policy, recommend the addition of up to another 168 acres of rural land in the area.

18 March
Aboriginal Peoples
Nishnawbe Aski Nation
Ontario

Leaders of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation suspend talks with officials from the province of Ontario over the exploration of mineral riches after six members from its reserve are jailed during protests. The six-month jail sentences end a long-standing fight between the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Platinex Inc., which holds claims to explore for minerals on their traditional lands.

01 April
Aboriginal Peoples
Federation of N.L.
Indians

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians ratifies a plan to create a new Mi'kmaq band under the federal *Indian Act*. The plan allows for the registration and enrolment of eligible individuals in federal Aboriginal support programs.

02 April
Aboriginal Peoples
First Nations

The Assembly of First Nations unanimously condemns the federal Conservative government's plans to modify its Indian Affairs policy. Under the new policy, all transfers to band and tribal councils will contain a clause allowing the department to audit the money after the fact to determine whether it was well spent.

12 April
Aboriginal Peoples
B.C.-Lil'wat
First Nations

The Government of British Columbia and the Lil'wat First Nation sign a historic land-use agreement covering almost 800,000 hectares between Squamish and Pemberton. The six new conservancies will protect biologically and culturally significant areas where industrial logging, mining, hydroelectric development, new roads, and commercial development will be forbidden, but will allow for future "acceptable uses" agreed on by both parties. The agreement also includes: the protection of 59 Lil'wat "spirited ground areas" such as village sites, archaeological sites, spiritual places, gathering areas, campsites and traditional training areas.

08 May
Aboriginal Peoples
Federal funding
National Anti-Drug
Strategy

Federal Health Minister Tony Clement and Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs, unveil federal funding of approximately \$30.5 million over five years to support the National Anti-Drug Strategy which aims to bolster services for First Nations and Inuit who suffer from drug addictions.

13 May
Aboriginal People
Whitefish First Nation
Lawsuit

The Whitefish Lake First Nation launches a \$550 billion lawsuit against the federal government and the province of Ontario, claiming that dozens of mines operating around Sudbury are on native land. The figure, which is the largest Canadian claim ever made, is based on years of mining revenue in Sudbury as well as money from forestry.

<p>21 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples Canada, B.C. First Nations Leadership Council</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia, and the First Nations Leadership Council sign a historic Memorandum of Understanding, agreeing to work together to develop a comprehensive approach to improve housing for First Nations communities, individuals and families both on and off reserves.</p>
<p>24 May <i>Aboriginal Peoples Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan First Nation</i></p>	<p>Federal Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl, Ontario Minister of Northern Development Michael Gravelle, and Chief Yvette Metansinine unveil the creation of a new reserve for the Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek First Nation in Northwestern Ontario.</p>
<p>05 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Quebec, NL Innu eviction</i></p>	<p>More than 100 Quebec Innu families occupying land in Labrador are evicted by the government of Newfoundland as part of an escalating confrontation over land rights involving resource development and hydroelectric projects in the region.</p>
<p>11 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Federal Government Statement of Apology</i></p>	<p>In a historic gesture, Prime Minister Stephen Harper rises before the House of Commons to offer a formal Statement of Apology to students of Indian Residential Schools. The Residential School Program, shut down in 1995, has generated thousands of victims of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse in Aboriginal communities across the country.</p>
<p>12 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Nunavut Land Claims Agreement amendment</i></p>	<p>Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl announces an amendment to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement aimed at eliminating duplication in federal environmental assessment processes in the territory. The amendment confirms that the assessment process established by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is the sole process that applies within the Nunavut Settlement Area.</p>
<p>13 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations Federal Funding</i></p>	<p>The federal government announces that it will give \$17 million each to the Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations to ensure they can properly benefit from the hosting of the 2010 Olympic Games in their region. The two bands had earlier crossed sides to express their support for the games despite widespread protests by other Aboriginal groups in the area.</p>
<p>17 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Indian Oil and Gas Act</i></p>	<p>Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl introduces amendments to the <i>Indian Oil and Gas Act</i>. The amendments are intended to modernize dated regulations, ensure environmental protection of First Nations lands, increase regulatory compliance, and facilitate the collection of royalties and other monetary compensation due to Aboriginal bands.</p>
<p>18 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Specific Claims</i></p>	<p>The federal government passes the <i>Specific Claims Tribunal Act</i>. The Act creates an independent tribunal with binding powers to resolve specific land dispute claims. The tribunal, to be made up of sitting</p>

<i>Tribunal Act</i>	superior court judges, can award compensation on claims worth up to \$150 million.
19 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Canadian Human Rights Act</i>	House of Commons passes legislation that repeals section 67 of the <i>Canadian Human Rights Act</i> , ending a gap that left many individuals living on reserves without full access to the Act.
27 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement Act</i>	Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl announces the passage of the <i>Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement Act</i> . The agreement, which devolves power to the Tsawwassen First Nation, represents Canada's first modern urban treaty and is the first treaty to be ratified under the British Columbia Treaty process.
27 June <i>Aboriginal Peoples Fishery Rights</i>	Indicating that the disadvantage of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is indisputable, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously rules that an exclusive Aboriginal-only fishery on British Columbia's Fraser River did not violate the constitutional rights of non-native fishermen. As such, it finds that the federal government was within its rights to give native groups a head start on the commercial fishing season by allowing Aboriginal bands a 24-hour salmon fishery on rivers while non-native fisherman remained at the dock.
29 July <i>Aboriginal Peoples Sliammon First Nation Lawsuit</i>	The Sliammon First Nation in Powell River, British Columbia, files a lawsuit against a northwest forestry company and the provincial and federal governments "to compel cleanup of damage caused to its Toquana Reserve" in a 1995 landslide.
12 August <i>Aboriginal Peoples Residential School Claims</i>	Merchant Law, a law firm in Regina, Saskatchewan, wins a court battle to recover from the federal government at least part of a \$40 million legal fee for its work on First Nations residential-school claims. In his decision, Court of Queen's Bench Justice Neil Gabrielson directed Ottawa and Merchant Law to iron out their differences and settle on a sum. Compensation money began flowing to former students in 2007. Individuals can receive \$10,000 for the first year in school and \$3,000 extra for each additional year of residence. According to the federal government, 66,495 payments had been issued as of mid-July. The agreement, later approved by a judge, set out that if the two sides could not agree on an amount, Merchant Law would get a minimum of \$25 million and a maximum of \$40 million, as determined by action in the Court of Queen's Bench.
28 August <i>Aboriginal Peoples British Columbia</i>	The British Columbia Supreme Court finds the provincial government acting unconstitutionally when renewing licences that granted the right to log in public forests in northern B.C. The provincial Forestry

Forestry

Ministry acted without meaningful consultation or adequate accommodation of Aboriginal interests. Further, it failed to acknowledge the distinctive political features of the Gitanyow First Nation's Aboriginal society when issuing the licences, and failed to recognize the Aboriginal right to expect the forest would not disappear while disputes over their claim to ownership of the land continue.

21 September
Aboriginal Peoples
Métis
Alberta
Funding agreement

Métis leaders and Alberta Aboriginal Relations Minister Gene Zwozdesky signs an \$18 million interim funding agreement for the eight settlements over the next three years. Funds can be used for training council members and administrators, setting up a Métis accountability office and for education, community policing and small business development. The terms of the agreement came after years of negotiations between the Métis communities and the province. Alberta's Métis settlements were formed in 1938. In 1990, they won an amendment to the *Alberta Act* writing their existence into law.

07 October
Aboriginal Peoples
Saskatchewan
First Nations
University

Saskatchewan has stepped in to bail out the First Nations University of Canada to address what Advanced Education, Employment and Labour Minister Rob Norris called an "acute financial situation." According to the one-time funding agreement, the province has allocated \$1.6 million to assist the First Nations University in honouring its collective agreement that would see faculty members' wages increase to be more at par with University of Regina faculty. Faculty at the financially troubled university have been paid up to 15 percent less than their colleagues at other post-secondary institutions, according to First Nations University vice-president of administration Al Ducharme. First Nations University president Charles Pratt pointed to the withdrawal of \$550,000 in annual top-up funding provided by the federal government as part of the reason for the deficit. The university has been trying to get help from the federal and provincial governments to pay down that deficit since 2005.

16 October
Aboriginal Peoples
Huron-Wendat
Nation
Land Claim

The Huron-Wendat Nation presented a potentially costly claim against Quebec and the federal government over a 24,000-square-kilometre stretch of land that encompasses the cities of Trois-Rivieres and Quebec City. Based on historical research, the Huron-Wendat claim their ancestors occupied the vast territory that includes the two cities, as well as most of the Laurentides Wildlife Reserve and three Quebec provincial parks. The nation will seek a retroactive financial settlement for past development on the territory. While it declined to put a figure on the claim Thursday, the Huron-Wendat Nation received \$12 million in 2000 from the federal government for a specific land claim settlement over a 2.5-square-kilometre territory located outside Quebec City. The Quebec Minister for Aboriginal Affairs acknowledged that the claim, if upheld, could end up being costly for both governments. Benoît Pelletier said the federal government will review the claim when it is officially filed and said the

province will get involved in negotiations with Ottawa if there are any. Max Gros-Louis, chief of the Huron-Wendat Nation, said a comprehensive land claim will be filed in the spring over the traditional territory occupied by the Huron-Wendat over the past 300 years.

18 October
*Aboriginal Peoples
Central Urban
Métis Federation
Funding*

The Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. (CUMFI) will receive a one time capital grant of \$50,000 in provincial funding to help pay for a new central office in Saskatoon. Founded in 1993, CUMFI offers health, wellness, nutrition and addictions counseling, along with referral services and life skills and job readiness programming. The non-profit organization also provides emergency, transitional and affordable housing.

23 October
*Aboriginal Peoples
Federation of
Saskatchewan Indians*

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) has been brought back from the brink of financial ruin, said FSIN Chief Lawrence Joseph. The FSIN will still be \$1.4 million in debt at the end of this year. In addition to internal cost-cutting, the federal government's Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has increased the FSIN's funding for the first time since 1996. The FSIN remains under the federal government's remedial management program. Its goal is to pay off \$250,000 per year until the debt is eliminated.

13 November
*Aboriginal Peoples
British Columbia
Tla-o-qui-aht First
Nations
Treaty Negotiations*

The British Columbia government signs an agreement with a Vancouver Island native group, giving it land and money to use as leverage to further treaty negotiations. Premier Gordon Campbell announces the deal with the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations at a resort owned by the band in Tofino, on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The four-year agreement includes 65 hectares of land and \$600,000, which will be handed out in stages as negotiations reach predetermined milestones. The provincial government is currently negotiating treaties with more than four dozen communities across B.C., where lands were never legally ceded by native bands. The interim Tla-o-qui-aht deal does not involve the federal government, but the money and land will become part of the final settlement. Mr. Campbell said the agreement is the first of many such deals, and shows the province is committed to finding flexible, creative ways to reach treaty agreements.

12 December
*Aboriginal Peoples
Federal Government
Aboriginal Participation
And Upskilling
Initiative*

Representatives from the federal and provincial governments announce a \$1.2 million pilot project aimed at helping employers train and retain Aboriginal workers in Saskatchewan. The Aboriginal Participation and Upskilling Initiative (APUI) was unveiled by Desnethe-Missinippi-Churchill River MP Rob Clarke and Lyle Stewart, the province's minister of Enterprise and Innovation. The project, which will provide skills upgrading for 150 existing Aboriginal workers and forge partnerships with more than 40 employers, will be cost-shared by the federal and provincial governments. Human Resources and Social Development Canada will contribute \$900,000, while Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis

Relations and the Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission each pledged \$150,000.

Agriculture

- 25 February
Agriculture
Canada Wheat Board
- The federal government loses its court battle over the Canadian Wheat Board. The Federal Court of Appeal upholds a previous court ruling made last year which stated that the Conservative government exceeded its power when it tried to strip the Wheat Board of its monopoly.
- 3 March
Agriculture
Federal government
Canada Wheat Board
- The Government of Canada introduces amendments to the *Canadian Wheat Board Act* in the House of Commons. The amendments will clear the way for barley marketing freedom and introduce a requirement respecting commercial dispute resolution.
- 14 April
Agriculture
Farming funds
- In an unprecedented move to control food prices, the federal government announces that it will pay hog farmers up to \$50 million to slaughter as many as 150,000 breeding hogs. Farmers will receive approximately \$225 for every hog killed, but must eliminate their entire breeding herd and agree to stay out of the hog business for three years.
- 14 June
Agriculture
Federal funding
Saskatchewan
AgriRecovery
- The federal government announces that it will provide up to \$9 million in financial assistance to farmers in southwest Saskatchewan affected by years of drought. Federal assistance is being made available under AgriRecovery and will be delivered through the Saskatchewan Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program.
- 20 June
Agriculture
Canadian Wheat Board
- The Federal Court rules that the Conservative government violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms by ordering the Canadian Wheat Board not to spend money to defend its marketing system. The ruling overturns a 2006 cabinet order forcing the Board not to defend its monopoly on grain sales.
- 11 July
Agriculture
"Growing Forward"
Shared cost
Program
- Agriculture ministers sign a new framework for farm programs, "Growing Forward." The federal government still has to work out details with each province. Funding for everything in the framework but the farm safety net programs will total \$1.3 billion over five years, cost shared on a 60-40 basis between Ottawa and the provinces. Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz said the agreements will allow for more flexibility to better suit local needs. Bilateral agreements are expected to be launched before April 1. Growing Forward replaces the Agricultural Policy Framework. Business risk management programs have also been changed and renamed under the Conservative government as part of Growing Forward.

<p>01 August <i>Agriculture</i> <i>Tobacco farmers</i></p>	<p>Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announces the federal government will pay tobacco farmers more than \$300 million in an effort to help farmers find new crops and get out of the tobacco industry altogether. The announcement follows long-standing demands by area farmers for upward of \$1 billion to help get them out of the tobacco business. Some \$286 million is being provided for the Tobacco Transition Program, plus \$15 million for community development initiatives “to help communities transition to a non-tobacco-based economy.”</p>
<p>06 August <i>Agriculture</i> <i>Potato growers</i></p>	<p>Alberta seed-potato growers who had their valuable export business shut down by a soil pest will receive up to \$23.5 million in compensation from the federal and provincial governments. The United States and Mexico banned all Alberta seed potatoes last October after the potato cyst nematode was found at two Edmonton area farms. The borders were reopened in March, in time to plant this year's crop. However, Alberta's 60 producers had lost an estimated \$35 million in sales, according to Potato Growers of Alberta.</p>
<p>06 September <i>Agriculture</i> <i>Canadian cattle</i> <i>Farmers</i> <i>Compensation</i></p>	<p>Canadian cattle farmers win a judge's approval to sue the government as a group to try to recover losses resulting from a 26-month ban on beef and cattle exports to the United States. The farmers lost an estimated \$4 billion as a result of the ban, which was put in place after a cow in Alberta was discovered to have bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), more commonly known as mad cow disease. The Canadian government argued that farmers can take advantage of provincial and federal compensation programs already in place. Critics said that would not provide the remedies the farmers seek because they cannot apply retroactively.</p>
<p>10 November <i>Agriculture</i> <i>Farmers' Market</i></p>	<p>Guy Lauzon, Member of Parliament for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, on behalf of Gerry Ritz, Federal Agriculture Minister, announces the creation of a new organization, to be known as Farmers' Markets Canada (FMC). It will look at national issues impacting farmers' markets across Canada and it will undertake activities to increase the number of farmers' markets. FMC will also develop a network of industry and community partners to share knowledge and expertise, and find community/industry-driven solutions to support national and rural economic development. The new organization is conducting a market study to develop a profile of shoppers and vendors at farmers' markets. Their recommendations will be developed and the results shared with provincial and territorial partners by February 2009.</p>
<p>05 December <i>Agriculture</i> <i>Potato Farmers</i> <i>Emergency income</i></p>	<p>Potato farmers facing difficulties in the wake of severe rains in fall 2008 are eligible for emergency income support through a new joint Canada-Prince Edward Island Potato Assistance Program, Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced. Excessively wet weather created a number</p>

Support of problems for P.E.I. producers including harvesting challenges, potatoes standing in water and disease. The \$12.4 million P.E.I. Potato Assistance Program is jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments on a 60-40 basis.

Budget

14 January
Budget
Federal government
Online consultation Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty launches an online public consultation program for the upcoming federal budget. The program allows Canadians to provide input into the development of Budget 2008.

19 February
Budget
B.C. The Government of British Columbia tables its 2008-2009 budget. The budget is hailed as a landmark in the country and will see the province invest more than \$1 billion in climate action initiatives including the introduction of North America's first full-fledged carbon tax on heavily polluting industries. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2008/default.htm

20 February
Budget
Nunavut Nunavut Finance Minister Louis Tapardjuk tables the territory's 2008-2009 budget. Details of the budget can be found online at: www.gov.nu.ca/finance/mainbudgets/2008.shtml

26 February
Budget
Federal government Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty tables the Conservative government's 2008-2009 budget. The budget includes \$6 billion in new investments over 3 years, a new tax shelter for individual savings, and aid for struggling manufacturers and auto plants. Full details of the federal budget can be found online at: www.budget.gc.ca/2008/home-accueil-eng.asp

28 February
Budget
Federal government President of the Treasury Board Vic Toews tables the 2008-2009 Main Estimates in the House of Commons which details \$220.6 billion in government expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year.

13 March
Budget
Quebec Quebec's minority Liberal government tables its \$62.9 billion 2008-2009 budget. The budget aims to boost economic performance and provide aid for seniors and working families. However, it offers no personal income tax cuts. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.budget.finances.gouv.qc.ca/Budget/2008-2009/index_en.asp

18 March
Budget
N.B. New Brunswick Finance Minister Victor Boudreau tables the province's 2008-2009 budget. The balanced budget contains no tax increases and shows a modest surplus of \$19 million. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.gnb.ca/cnb/Promos/Budget2008/index-e.asp

19 March <i>Budget</i> <i>Saskatchewan</i>	Saskatchewan Finance Minister Rod Gantfoer tables the province's 2008-2009 budget. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.finance.gov.sk.ca/budget/
20 March <i>Budget</i> <i>Yukon</i>	The Government of the Yukon tables its 2008-2009 budget. Details of the budget can be found online at: www.finance.gov.yk.ca/general/publications.html
25 March <i>Budget</i> <i>Ontario</i>	Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan tables the province's controversial 2008-2009 budget. During the lead up to the budget's unveiling, federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty had been embroiled in a dispute with the province over its high unemployment and poor economic performance. The budget, which projects just 0.4 percent of additional revenue and calls for just 0.2 percent of additional spending in the 2008-2009 fiscal year, does not include Flaherty's proposed reduction in Ontario's general corporate income tax rate of 14 percent. Full details of the budget can be found online at: ontariobudget.ca/english/
09 April <i>Budget</i> <i>Manitoba</i>	Manitoba Minister of Finance Greg Selinger tables the province's 2008-2009 budget. The budget contains strategic tax cuts for manufacturers, small businesses, and families in hopes of encouraging steady economic growth. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.gov.mb.ca/finance/budget08/index.html
22 April <i>Budget</i> <i>Alberta</i>	Alberta Finance Minister Iris Evans tables the province's 2008-2009 budget. The \$37 billion budget contains increased spending to cover the rising cost of oil production in the province. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.finance.gov.ab.ca/business/budget/index.html
23 April <i>Budget</i> <i>P.E.I.</i>	The Government of Prince Edward Island tables its 2008-2009 budget. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.gov.pe.ca/budget/2008/index.php
29 April <i>Budget</i> <i>N.S.</i>	Nova Scotia Finance Minister Michael Baker tables the province's 2008-2009 budget. Full details of the budget can be found online at: www.gov.ns.ca/finance/en/home/budget/default.aspx
29 April <i>Budget</i> <i>N.L.</i>	Thomas Marshall, Finance Minister of Newfoundland and Labrador, tables the province's 2008-2009 budget. Full details can be found online at: www.budget.gov.nl.ca/budget2008/
22 May <i>Budget</i> <i>NWT</i>	Northwest Territories Finance Minister Floyd Roland unveils the territory's 2008-2009 budget. Full details of the budget can be found online at: http://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/

Economy

- 30 May
Economy
Intergovernmental Relations
Ministers of Finance Meeting
- A meeting between federal, provincial, and territorial ministers of finance concludes in Montreal with a commitment to working together to reduce the government debt burden, streamline immigration policies, promote economic growth, and protect the Canadian economy from increased inflation.
- 04 June
Economy
Federal Government
Auto bailout
- Amidst increasing inflationary prices and a soaring Canadian dollar, the federal government announces that it will provide Ontario's ailing auto sector with a \$250 million fund to help keep Oshawa auto-plants open and competitive. The package comes as General Motors announces that it will be closing its operations in Oshawa, eliminating 2,600 jobs.
- 03 September
Economy
Ontario
Deere & Co.
Plant closing
- Ontario's reeling manufacturing sector takes another big hit as global farm equipment giant Deere & Co. reveals the closing of its major plant in Welland and the elimination of about 800 jobs. Company and union officials primarily blamed a continuing high Canadian dollar, which makes exports to the American market more expensive, for the closing of the plant.
- 07 September
Economy
GM investing
- General Motors Canada will invest another \$290 million in the manufacturing cities of St. Catharines and Oshawa. The federal and provincial governments confirmed GM's investment and noted the auto giant would not receive any more public financial assistance to go along with it. However, they added GM would receive a temporary break on paying millions of dollars in penalties for not meeting job commitments under earlier government aid packages. GM's investment arrived on the eve of a federal election and an earlier announcement by the Conservative government that it would provide up to \$80 million in a "repayable contribution" to help reopen a Ford engine plant in Windsor. Union officials questioned the timing of the two announcements in view of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's plan to call an election today.
- 23 October
Economy
Ontario
Budget
- The province of Ontario, impacted by the global economic slowdown, expects to move from a budget surplus to a deficit of \$500 million in the current fiscal year as it projects revenues to be \$918 million less than what was forecasted in March. The provincial government announced it will reduce spending on some programs and cut internal government expenditures to help limit the size of its first budget shortfall in four years. Measures, such as delaying the hiring of nurses and cutting government travel, should preserve \$108 million in the remaining five months of the fiscal year. But overall spending in 2008-09 is expected to hit \$96.3 billion, or \$132 million higher than previously planned, due to rising health care-related expenses, it said.

<p>26 November <i>Economy</i> <i>British Columbia</i> <i>Forestry</i></p>	<p>Forecasts for British Columbia's stumpage revenues have dropped 30 per cent, the worst decline on record, Forests Minister Pat Bell says as he sounds a warning that the province's main economic engine is in need of support. Bell says stumpage revenues for 2008-2009 were forecasted to be \$952 million at the beginning of the year, but now have been revised to \$652 million. Stumpage, or money paid to the government for the right to harvest trees, is an easily trackable but small piece of forestry's total contribution to government coffers, normally close to \$3 billion a year.</p>
<p>26 November <i>Economy</i> <i>Ontario</i> <i>Task Force on</i> <i>Competitiveness,</i> <i>Productivity, and</i> <i>Economic Progress</i></p>	<p>Ontario's Liberal government rejects a recommendation from its own expert panel that corporate taxes be cut to help struggling businesses. Premier Dalton McGuinty adds that he has no plans to implement other measures suggested by the province's Task Force on Competitiveness, Productivity and Economic Progress in its annual report, including harmonizing the 8 percent provincial sales tax with the 5 percent federal goods and services tax.</p>
<p>27 November <i>Economy</i> <i>Federal Government</i> <i>Economic Update</i> <i>Global Credit Crisis</i></p>	<p>Finance Minister Jim Flaherty delivers his economic update to the House of Commons. He moves to ease the strain caused by the global credit crisis, pledging an additional \$700 million for two federal lenders and legislative housekeeping that would give the government authority to buy shares in banks. Mr. Flaherty also said that he would double the time period under which companies must make up for shortfalls in federally regulated pension plans. The measures reflect the continued fallout of the global financial crisis, which has caused banks around the world to record write downs of about \$1 trillion this year. Those losses, combined with worries about financial institutions' exposure to assets linked to the United States housing market, are making banks reluctant to lend and have contributed to the collapse of international stock markets. In other steps aimed at shoring up confidence in Canada's banks, Mr. Flaherty said he would increase the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation's borrowing limit to \$15 billion from \$6 billion. Mr. Flaherty also said he would rewrite Canada Deposit's mandate to give the agency's board of directors more flexibility to react to a systemic failure in the financial system. The Conservatives also proposed eliminating taxpayer subsidies of political parties and suspending equal pay claims, a move designed to save taxpayers approximately \$28 million a year but one that helped spark a political and constitutional crisis that led to talks regarding the formation of a Liberal-NDP coalition with support from the Bloc Québécois.</p>
<p>20 December <i>Economy</i> <i>Federal Government</i> <i>Ontario</i> <i>Auto Bailout</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty announce that the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario would provide \$4 billion in loans payable to General Motors of Canada Limited and Chrysler Canada Inc. through Export Development Canada (EDC). There will be conditions to the financing extended to</p>

automakers. The federal and provincial governments will exercise oversight over the use of taxpayer money as part of its ongoing due diligence. Every stakeholder in the auto industry will also be expected to do their part to reduce structural costs and ensure a viable auto industry in Canada. The Prime Minister announces two additional steps the federal government will take to support the overall competitiveness of the auto industry. Automotive suppliers will have greater access to accounts receivable insurance through EDC coverage to compensate for the reduced availability of credit. In addition the Government of Canada will create a new facility to support access to credit for consumers with particular attention paid to improve the accessibility of car loans and dealer financing.

22 December
Economy
Federal Politics
Auto bailout

Jim Arnett, a special auto industry adviser to Prime Minister Stephen Harper resigns after less than three weeks on the job. However, he will continue to advise Premier Dalton McGuinty on restructuring the auto industry. The development suggests Canada is unlikely to follow American president-elect Barack Obama's lead and appoint a so-called car czar to oversee the companies. The move came on the eve of the announcement that Ottawa and Queen's Park are lending \$4 billion to General Motors of Canada Ltd. and Chrysler Canada Inc. The provincial official said Mr. Arnett was "supportive" of Saturday's announcement, which he helped develop.

28 December
Economy
Federal Government
Ontario
Alberta
Quebec
Commercial paper

The federal government, in co-ordination with the Ontario, Quebec and Alberta governments, agrees to provide \$4.45 billion in backstops to ensure the \$32 billion restructuring of insolvent commercial paper proceeds. In confirming that all key stakeholders were in agreement, the announcement by the committee overseeing the restructuring raises hope that investors who have had their asset-backed commercial papers frozen for the past 16 months could get access to their money as early as mid-January. The committee leading the court-supervised reorganization had originally requested a \$9.5 billion standby facility from the federal government. Ottawa had been in talks in December with the provinces to seek their participation in contributing to the line of credit. Those three provinces have Crown-owned entities that hold the insolvent commercial paper, led by Quebec's big pension fund, the Caisse de dépôt et Placement.

Environment

24 January
Environment
Alberta Climate Action

The Government of Alberta unveils its new climate change action plan. The plan shifts the government's focus for emissions reductions from its booming oil industry and coal power utilities to new consumer efficiency

<i>Plan</i>	strategies. The announcement comes a week before the provincial and territorial premiers are expected to meet at a climate change summit in Vancouver.
28 January <i>Environment Council of the Federation Climate change</i>	Meeting at the annual Council of the Federation in Vancouver, provincial and territorial premiers focus specifically on issues of climate change. British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell and Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty reveal that they will push their colleagues to reach a national accord on how to adapt to the impact of global warming which is already affecting the country's forests, lakes and wildlife. Shortly after the meetings begin, Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach walks out, stating that the Province of Alberta will develop its own environmental strategy in order to maintain its high levels of economic growth. A further provincial-territorial summit on climate change will be held in the spring in Toronto.
30 January <i>Environment Manitoba, B.C., Quebec, Ontario Cap and trade agreement</i>	The premiers of Manitoba, British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario sign a cap and trade agreement on greenhouse gas emissions. The new system, unveiled at the conclusion of the Vancouver summit on climate change, will limit the amount of greenhouse gases individual polluters can emit. Companies that exceed the limits will pay a fee to those who come in under the limit.
06 February <i>Environment Federal government Beaufort Sea</i>	The federal government announces that it will begin accepting bids for exploration parcels for oil in the Beaufort Sea.
20 February <i>Environment Federal government Provinces to regulate GHG emissions</i>	In the wake of British Columbia's groundbreaking new comprehensive carbon tax scheme, the Government of Canada reverses its previous opposition to allowing the provinces to regulate greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Environment Minister John Baird announces that, in the future, each province will be free to chart its own course in tackling emissions.
29 February <i>Environment Canada, Saskatchewan Natural Areas Conservation Program</i>	Environment Minister John Baird and Saskatchewan Environment Minister Nancy Heppner announce the protection of the environmentally sensitive Qu'Appelle Valley region of Saskatchewan. The announcement is part of the Government of Canada's \$225 million Natural Areas Conservation Program.
6 March <i>Environment Federal government Federal commissioner</i>	Ron Thompson, Federal Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, tables his Status Report in the House of Commons. The report criticizes the Conservative government for failing to comply with a Cabinet directive on the environmental assessment of policy, plan, and program proposals.

<p>10 March <i>Environment</i> <i>Federal government</i> <i>Turning the Corner</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada publishes details of <i>Turning the Corner</i>, its climate change action plan. The strategy includes new draft rules aimed at imposing stricter emission limits on coal-fired electricity and oil sands projects. Projects starting operations in 2012 and beyond will now be required to reduce emissions using carbon capture and sequestration technology.</p>
<p>25 March <i>Environment</i> <i>Canada-Saskatchewan</i> <i>Carbon capture system</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces that the federal government will provide \$240 million to partner Saskatchewan in developing one of the world's first commercial-scale carbon capture and storage demonstration projects.</p>
<p>11 April <i>Environment</i> <i>Manitoba</i> <i>Kyoto targets</i></p>	<p>Manitoba Premier Gary Doer announces that the province will be the first in Canada to legislate its commitment to reaching the Kyoto targets for greenhouse gas emissions by 2012. Manitoba will now reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels, as called for in Canada's original commitment to the Kyoto Protocol.</p>
<p>21 April <i>Environment</i> <i>B.C. Marine Protected Area</i></p>	<p>Minister of Natural Resources Gary Lunn announces that British Columbia's Bowie Seamount area will be designated as Canada's newest Marine Protected Area.</p>
<p>20 May <i>Environment</i> <i>Federal Government</i> <i>Port Hope</i> <i>Clean up initiative</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada announces that it will commit an additional \$30 million in funding in an ongoing effort to clean up local low-level radioactive waste in the Port Hope region in Ontario. The Port Hope Area Initiative is part of the federal government's wider efforts to support environmental clean-up initiatives across the country.</p>
<p>30 May <i>Environment</i> <i>Federal funding</i></p>	<p>Minister of Canadian Heritage Josée Verner announces that municipalities in Quebec will receive federal funding to support environmentally sustainable infrastructure to promote clean air, water, and greenhouse gas reductions.</p>
<p>04 June <i>Environment</i> <i>Federal Government</i> <i>Clean Air Foundation</i> <i>National Vehicle Scrappage Program</i></p>	<p>Environment Minister John Baird announces that the federal government, in conjunction with the Clean Air Foundation, will launch a National Vehicle Scrappage Program. The initiative will offer financial incentives to consumers who retire their 1995 or older model vehicles in order to improve average vehicle emissions standards.</p>
<p>01 July <i>Environment</i> <i>B.C. Carbon tax</i></p>	<p>The British Columbia government's Climate Action Plan comes into force, requiring drivers to pay an extra 2.4 cents per litre at the gas pumps. The carbon tax will be phased in over five years, rising to 7.24 cents per litre by 2012. The tax applies to all fossil fuels, including gasoline, diesel, natural gas, coal, propane and home-heating fuel. The tax is revenue-</p>

neutral with all revenue generated returned to individuals and businesses through reductions to other taxes. The government says it will reduce income taxes by more than \$1.8 billion -- the same amount estimated to be raised through the carbon tax over the next three years.

08 July
Environment
Alberta
Climate change plans

The Alberta government will spend \$4 billion to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions as Premier Ed Stelmach's government strives to improve its environmental credentials amid heightened Canadian and international scrutiny. Two billion dollars will go to bolster public transit, to help cities buy new buses, build expanded train systems and construct park-and-ride lots. The other \$2 billion will go to projects that capture industrial greenhouse gas emissions and store them underground.

17 July
Environment
Ontario joins
Western Climate
Initiative

The Ontario government announces at a Quebec City meeting of the Council of the Federation that it has been accepted into the Western Climate Initiative (WCI), a climate-change program led by California. WCI would set limits on greenhouse gas emissions, but allow companies that pollute too much to buy credits from those who come in below their targets. Ontario is the fourth Canadian province to join the WCI, after Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia.

17 July
Environment
B.C.
Solar water heating

The Government of British Columbia announces it will invest \$5 million in a program aimed at boosting solar water heating more than six-fold to 3,000 roofs across the province by 2010. The government program comes just weeks after the province began offering solar water heating rebates and grants to homeowners. It offers \$20 million for cities and residents to apply for if they wish to install solar water heating.

14 August
Environment
British Columbia
Natural Gas

Liquefied natural gas tankers have no place travelling up and down British Columbia's Inside Passage, Victoria Capital Regional District (CRD) directors say. The CRD yesterday endorsed a resolution supporting the Powell River Regional District in calling on the federal government to ban LNG tankers from using the Inside Passage -- one of the most heavily travelled waterways in North America. A similar resolution has been passed by the Islands Trust. The resolution, which is to go to the Union of B.C. Municipalities for support this fall, also calls on the provincial government to require no greenhouse gas emissions be allowed from gas-fired generating plants.

27 August
Environment
British Columbia
Recycling Project

Ida Chong, Minister of Technology, Trade and Economic Development, along with Susan Gimse, President of the Union of British Columbian Municipalities and Jack Peake, Chair of British Columbia's Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) announce a recycling project. CVRD will receive \$1,236,497 from the federal Gas Tax Fund covering nearly 75% of the cost. This new investment from the Gas Tax Fund will enable completion of three key solid waste infrastructure projects: a new

full-service recycling drop-off depot; new buildings and equipment for managing hazardous wastes and organic materials; and a comprehensive recycling drop off.

09 September
Environment
Alberta
Oil Spill

An Alberta oil well spill kills up to 500 ducks and swallows. The birds died after landing in the spill, which was found at an out-of-service conventional oil well in the southwest corner of CFB Suffield in south-eastern Alberta. The well is operated by Calgary-based Harvest Energy Trust. The new deaths occur at a bad time for Canadian oil companies, whose public image was tarnished earlier this year when 500 ducks and other waterfowl strayed into a waste pond at the Syncrude Canada Ltd. oil sands facility. Pictures of those oil-covered birds made international headlines, as environmental groups use the incident to illustrate the hazards resulting from oil sands development.

09 December
Environment
Alberta
Water Pollution

Oil sands production is releasing four billion litres of contaminated water into Alberta's groundwater and natural ecosystems every year, according to a new national report that was immediately dismissed as "false" by the provincial government. The annual volume of water pollution in 2007 would have been enough to fill the Toronto Rogers Centre, but could be stopped if the federal government started enforcing its *Fisheries Act*, the report says. The report is the first comprehensive examination of water pollution from the mines in the Alberta industry and was prepared using the figures from environmental assessment applications submitted by oil sands companies.

Federal Politics

04 January
Federal Politics
Lobbying Act

President of the Treasury Board Vic Toews announces the coming into force of the *Lobbying Act*, delivering on one of the key components of the *Federal Accountability Act*. The proposed regulations set out the new registration requirements under the *Lobbying Act*, including the types of lobbying communications that must be registered in monthly returns.

10 January
Federal Politics
Auditor General
Atomic Energy of
Canada Ltd

Auditor General Sheila Fraser releases her assessment of Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd (AECL). It cites significant deficiencies in the Chalk River nuclear reactor's structural safety. The reactor is used in the creation of many of the world's medical isotopes and was shut down by the AECL for four weeks in November 2007 over safety concerns. This decision prompted Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn to criticize Linda Keen, president of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, for not restarting the reactor sooner.

<p>16 January <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Nuclear Safety</i> <i>Commission</i></p>	<p>Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn replaces Linda Keen as President of the Nuclear Safety Commission. Lunn cites Keen's decision to continue the extended shut down of the Chalk River reactor as the primary reason for her dismissal.</p>
<p>21 January <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Infrastructure</i> <i>funding</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada reveals that an additional \$19.8 million will be provided to rail and urban transit operators in Canada's largest urban centres for the development of new training programs, updated security technology, communication equipment and the development of a risk assessment and security plan. The funding will be provided under the Government's \$80 million Transit-Secure initiative.</p>
<p>22 January <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Boeing and Lockheed</i> <i>Martin funding</i></p>	<p>Minister of Industry Jim Prentice reveals that Boeing and Lockheed Martin will provide \$294 million in contracts to companies in Atlantic Canada as part of a public-private partnership to honour the company's industrial benefits commitments to Canada.</p>
<p>22 January <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Panel on Canada's</i> <i>Future role in</i> <i>Afghanistan</i></p>	<p>The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, headed by former Liberal Cabinet Minister John Manley, releases its report. Among the Panel's recommendations is the suggestion that Canada should extend its military involvement in Afghanistan to 2011 on the condition that other NATO members provide additional troops.</p>
<p>05 February <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Security certificates</i></p>	<p>The federal Conservative and Liberal Party's join forces to push through new legislation on security certificates for terrorism suspects after the Supreme Court prepares to invalidate the old system later in the month. The new legislation allows suspected terrorists to be deported without having access to the evidence against them.</p>
<p>14 February <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Homelessness</i> <i>Partnering Strategy</i></p>	<p>Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Monte Solberg announces that the federal government will fund 505 projects worth approximately \$150 million across Canada under the government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.</p>
<p>22 February <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Funding for security</i></p>	<p>Defence Research and Development Canada reveals that it will receive an investment of more than \$30 million by the federal government for 20 new research projects aimed at strengthening the country's response to potential chemical, biological, and explosive threats.</p>
<p>25 February <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Saskatchewan carbon</i> <i>capture</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada commits \$240 million to the construction of a clean-coal power plant in Saskatchewan, which would capture carbon emissions and permanently store them underground.</p>
<p>15 April <i>Federal Politics</i></p>	<p>Executing a search warrant requested by Election Commissioner William Corbett, RCMP officers raid the federal Conservative Party headquarters</p>

<i>RCMP election Investigation</i>	in downtown Ottawa. They were searching for information related to Mr. Corbett's investigation into whether dozens of Conservative candidates improperly claimed advertising expenses that should have been declared by the national party. The probe is unprecedented in the history of Elections Canada.
<i>02 May Federal Politics Funding Vancouver-based Fuel cell & hydrogen Industry</i>	Industry Minister Jim Prentice and Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn announce that the federal government will invest \$13.6 million in the National Research Council's (NRC) Vancouver-based fuel cell and hydrogen industry. The announcement is part of a larger \$118 million Government of Canada investment in six NRC technology cluster initiatives – Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Technologies in Vancouver; Nanotechnology in Edmonton; Plants for Health and Wellness in Saskatoon; Biomedical Technologies in Winnipeg; Photonics in Ottawa and Aluminum Transformation in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region.
<i>12 May Federal Politics Defense Strategy</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper unveils the federal government's new 'Canada First' defense strategy. The strategy will aim to substantially strengthen the Canadian Armed Forces through increased troop and reserve recruitment, the replacement of ageing equipment, and improved surveillance of Canada's land and coastal borders.
<i>14 May Federal Politics Arctic Sovereignty</i>	Gary Lunn, Minister of Natural Resources, and Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs, announce that the federal government will make significant investments in research projects to promote Canadian sovereignty in the far north. The \$25 million investment will include \$20 million for seabed mapping to support Canada's submission on the outer limits of its continental shelf.
<i>21 May Federal Politics "Product of Canada" "Made in Canada" Guidelines</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces significant changes to the federal guidelines governing the use of "Product of Canada" and "Made in Canada" labels to ensure they clearly identify the Canadian content in food products. Under the current guidelines the label can be applied to products containing imported ingredients as long as they are processed in Canada.
<i>23 May Federal Politics Funding for Pine Beetle infestation</i>	The Government of Canada is increasing its spread-control funding to combat the mountain pine beetle in British Columbia. The additional funding, totalling more than \$2.3 million, will be used to support three local research projects at the University of Northern BC to study long-term control measures.
<i>26 May Federal Politics</i>	Maxime Bernier resigns as Foreign Affairs Minister after weeks of controversy. Bernier admitted to leaving classified documents relating to an upcoming NATO summit at the apartment of his former partner, Julie

Couillard. Bernier is replaced by David Emerson, former Minister of International Trade.

04 June
Federal Politics
Quebec, B.C.
Safe injection site

Health Minister Tony Clement sparks protests in British Columbia by announcing that the federal government will not necessarily oppose the opening of a safe-injection site in Quebec. Last month, Clement had stated that the federal government would appeal a BC Supreme Court ruling in favour of keeping open the safe-injection site in Vancouver's downtown eastside.

18 June
Federal Politics
Canada Marine Act

Minister of Transport Lawrence Cannon announces amendments to the *Canada Marine Act*. The amendments strengthen the operating framework for Canada Port Authorities by modifying the current borrowing regime, providing access to contribution funding, and clarifying some aspects of governance.

18 June
Federal Politics
RCMP
Conducted Energy Weapons

Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day commits the federal government to reviewing current guidelines for the use of Conducted Energy Weapons by the RCMP. The commitment comes after the release of the final report of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP on the use of tasers, following the death of a Polish immigrant, Robert Dziekanski, last year. Among the recommendations is the requirement of 5 years experience before an officer can be issued a taser.

19 June
Federal Politics
Access-to-information
Law

Canada's Federal Court rules that the country's access-to-information law does not apply to the offices of the Prime Minister or Cabinet Ministers. In a decision in an omnibus test case that some fear will dramatically reduce the scope of citizens' rights to obtain government documents, the court said some records created by ministers' aides could be disclosed when they are controlled by the bureaucracy, but are off limits in a minister's office or in the PMO.

19 June
Federal Politics
Linguistic Duality

Minister of Canadian Heritage Josée Verner releases the *Roadmap for Linguistic Duality in Canada 2008-2013: Acting for the Future*. The roadmap contains an unprecedented government-wide investment of \$1.1 billion over five years to encourage linguistic duality among Canadians and offers support to official-language minority communities.

24 June
Federal Politics
Airport Screening
Kelowna

The federal government launches a pilot-project in Kelowna with new airport screening technology that would see through a person's clothes to detect hidden objects. The launch, supported by the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, is heavily criticized by federal Privacy Commissioner Jennifer Stoddart, who stated that body-scanning technology violates Canadian privacy standards.

<p>25 June <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Cabinet shuffle</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces a formal cabinet shuffle following the resignation of Maxime Bernier last month. David Emerson is confirmed as Minister of Foreign Affairs in his place, with Michael Fortier replacing him as Minister of International Trade.</p>
<p>27 June <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Lobbying Act</i></p>	<p>Treasury Board President Vic Toews announces the coming into force of the <i>Lobbying Act</i>, delivering another component of the Federal <i>Accountability Act</i>. Starting July 2, the <i>Lobbying Act</i> creates the new position of Commissioner of Lobbying and requires lobbyists to publicly disclose their lobbying activities on the web site of the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying.</p>
<p>27 June <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Gomery Inquiry</i></p>	<p>The Federal Court strikes down the conclusions of the Gomery Inquiry, which had stated that former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his top aide bore responsibility for the sponsorship scandal. The ruling stated that Judge John Gomery's public comments and newspaper interviews showed bias, and that he prejudged the issues before the hearings closed. Justice Max Teitelbaum ordered that all sections of his 2005 fact-finding report dealing with Mr. Chrétien and his former chief of staff, Jean Pelletier, be considered void.</p>
<p>25 July <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>By-elections</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper calls federal by-elections in three ridings in Quebec and Ontario for September 8. The Liberals held the ridings of Guelph and Westmount-Ville-Marie, while the Bloc Québécois held Saint-Lambert on Montreal's South Shore. This by-election was later pre-empted by Harper's September 7 general election writ.</p>
<p>11 August <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Parolees</i> <i>Tracking device</i></p>	<p>The federal government will fund a one-year trial program placing irremovable tracking devices on the ankles of parolees, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day announced. Beginning September 1st, 30 federal prisoners will be "strongly encouraged" when paroled to agree to wear the ankle device equipped with a Global Positioning Satellite system.</p>
<p>11 August <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>Skilled Foreign Workers</i></p>	<p>The Harper government announces a new fast-track immigration route for skilled foreign workers and students already proven employable in Canada: an effort to prevent an erosion of talent as global competition heats up for higher-value labour. The goal is to improve the quality of immigrants and retain the most valuable workers and educated students.</p>
<p>17 August <i>Federal Politics</i> <i>By-elections</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces that a by-election would be held on Monday, September 22, 2008 in the riding of Don Valley West (Ontario). This by-election was pre-empted by Harper's September 7 general election writ.</p>
<p>25 August <i>Federal Politics</i></p>	<p>Human Resources Minister Monte Solberg unveils reforms to the country's student loan and grant programs, announcing more than \$1</p>

*Student Loan
and Grant Program*

billion in funding over the next four years. Ottawa promised the changes in the 2008 federal budget. The major reform is a new Canada Student Grant program where students from low-income families can receive a cheque for \$250 per month of their program's duration while students from middle-income families are eligible for \$100 each month they are enrolled in their program. Students who qualify for the Canada Student Loan Program and are studying in university, college or trade schools are automatically eligible for the grant, and can receive it throughout the duration of their programs.

*04 September
Federal Politics
Defecting Contraband
Tobacco products*

The Honourable Gordon O'Connor, Minister of National Revenue, unveils a new state-of-the-art tool to target the market of contraband and counterfeit tobacco in Canada. The Tobacco Compliance Strategy and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) produced a new excise duty stamp for tobacco products that contains a number of overt and covert security features, much like those found on Canadian currency. Once fully implemented, the detection tool will allow authorities to more easily identify legitimate tobacco products and detect counterfeit or contraband products.

*07 September
Federal Politics
Dissolving Parliament*

Prime Minister Stephen Harper asks Governor General Michaëlle Jean to dissolve Parliament, setting the stage for an October 14 federal election. The move ended 31 months of Conservative minority rule and will send Canadians to the polls for the third time in just over four years. Harper said a weakening economy and a gridlocked House of Commons were ample reason to end Canada's 39th Parliament. But in calling the snap election, critics suggest that Harper ignored his own fixed-election-date law, which he said would stop prime ministers from manipulating the electoral calendar to their advantage.

*11 September
Federal Politics
Passing*

Former Prince Edward Island premier and federal Cabinet minister Bennett Campbell dies after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 65. Campbell succeeded Alex Campbell, no relation, as leader of the Liberal party and premier of the province in 1978, but the Progressive Conservatives defeated his short-lived government a year later in 1979. He entered federal politics, winning the seat left vacant by the death of Cardigan MP Daniel MacDonald in 1980. He later took over MacDonald's portfolio as Minister of Veterans Affairs. He lost his seat in the 1984 Conservative sweep, and was later defeated in the riding of 3rd Kings in the provincial election held on April 21, 1986.

*14 October
Federal Politics
Federal election
Conservative minority*

Stephen Harper and his Conservatives win a stronger minority government on the strength of gains in Ontario and British Columbia. But the Conservatives paid for campaign missteps in Quebec, as their failure to make gains there was a big reason they fell short of a majority.

Voter turnout was 59 percent, the lowest in federal election history. The Liberal Party also received the lowest seat and vote count in the party's modern history.

20 October
Federal Politics
Liberal Party of
Canada
Dion Resigns
As Leader

Stéphane Dion announces in Ottawa that he will step down as Liberal leader after the party selects a replacement for him at a leadership convention expected in May. He says he wanted to hold onto his job temporarily to begin rebuilding the Liberal organization so the next leader will not be as vulnerable to negative Conservative advertising as he was. He attributed his disappointing loss in the October 14 election to the Liberals' inability to combat the massive Conservative advertising onslaught against him personally, and against his carbon-tax-based Green Shift environmental policy.

27 October
Federal Politics
Public Service
Appointments

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces changes in the senior ranks of the Public Service: Margaret Bloodworth, Associate Secretary to the Cabinet and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, is retiring. Marie-Lucie Morin, formerly the Deputy Minister for International Trade, became Associate Secretary to the Cabinet and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister. Louis Lévesque, formerly the Deputy Minister (Intergovernmental Affairs), Privy Council Office, became Deputy Minister for International Trade. John Knubley, formerly Associate Deputy Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, became Deputy Minister (Intergovernmental Affairs), Privy Council Office.

19 November
Federal Politics
Speech from the Throne

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, delivers the Government's Speech from the Throne to open Canada's 40th Parliament. In her speech, the Governor General outlines a broad agenda the Government of Canada will follow to protect Canada's future in a time of global economic instability. She announces that the Government of Canada will follow a five-pronged plan to protect Canada's economic security: Reform global finance by working with allies and trading partners to re-examine and renew the rules that underpin the global financial system. Ensure sound budgeting so Canada does not return to ongoing, unsustainable structural deficits while putting all federal expenditures under the microscope of responsible spending. Secure jobs for families and communities by encouraging the skilled trades and apprenticeships, supporting workers facing transition, and providing further support to the automotive and aerospace industries. Expand investment and trade by modernizing investment, competition and copyright laws while working with the United States to address shared challenges and pursuing trade agreements in Europe, Asia and the Americas. Make government more effective by reducing red tape, fixing procurement, improving program and service delivery, and improving the management of federal agencies, boards, commissions and Crown

corporations. To read or watch the speech in full, please see <http://www.sft-ddt.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1383>

27 November
Federal Politics
Liberal-NDP coalition

Opposition parties claim they have lost confidence in the government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper after the November 27 economic update when Finance Minister Jim Flaherty failed to provide a stimulus package. The Liberals soon enter into negotiations to form a coalition with the NDP. Flaherty also announces the government would deliver its budget on January 27, about a month before one is normally tabled in the House of Commons.

28 November
Federal Politics
Immigration

Canada will stay the course on immigration in 2009, admitting between 240,000 and 265,000 new permanent residents, Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, announces. The 2009 plan includes up to 156,600 immigrants in the economic category; 71,000 in the family category; and 37,400 in the humanitarian category. Retroactive to February 27, 2008, the date specified by the Federal Budget, the Action Plan for Faster Immigration includes issuing instructions to visa officers reviewing new federal skilled worker applications to process those from candidates who are in 38 high-demand occupations such as health, skilled trades, finance and resource extraction; or have an offer of arranged employment or have already been living legally in Canada for one year as a temporary foreign worker or international student.

30 November
Federal Politics
Liberal-NDP coalition
Reaction to
Economic Update

Rumored discussion about the creation of a Liberal-NDP coalition agreement that would replace the minority Conservative government is confirmed by Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion. Dion reveals that the NDP would hold 25 per cent of cabinet positions, while the finance minister and the deputy prime minister would be Liberals. The Bloc Québécois would not officially be a part of the coalition, but the new government's survival would depend on their support. Public reaction to the coalition is mixed, owing to the general lack of understanding regarding parliamentary rules and procedure, as well as the media campaigns waged by both the government and the potential coalition parties.

04 December
Federal Politics
Government Prorogued

Governor General Michaëlle Jean grants a request from Prime Minister Stephen Harper to suspend Parliament until January 26, a move that avoids a confidence vote set that could have toppled his minority government. Harper would not reveal the content of the discussion, citing constitutional traditions, but he said the first order of business when Parliament resumes would be the presentation of the federal budget. A looming confidence vote could have precipitated the rise of a proposed Liberal-NDP coalition, supported by the Bloc Québécois, or could have resulted in another election, depending on the Governor General's response.

08 December
Federal Politics
Liberal Party of Canada
Stéphane Dion resigns

Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion announces he will immediately step down as leader, changing his plans to hold onto the leadership until a spring convention. The party wants a new leader in place before the House of Commons returns at the end of January for a federal budget and a critical confidence vote. Dion was to step down after a May 2 leadership vote, but Liberals opt to install a new leader in place before a vote on the federal budget January 27 that could plunge the country into another election or replace the Conservatives with a coalition government. Michael Ignatieff and Bob Rae emerge as the frontrunners.

10 December
Federal Politics
Liberal Party of Canada
Michael Ignatieff
New Leader

Michael Ignatieff is named leader of the Liberal Party and Her Majesty's Official Opposition following a vote of the party's national executive, a day after leadership opponent Bob Rae withdrew from the race. Liberal Senators and MPs vote unanimously at a national caucus meeting later in the day. Ignatieff replaces Stéphane Dion as Opposition and party leader.

24 December
Federal Politics
Ontario Court of
Appeal ruling

It will be easier to sue the federal government as a result of an Ontario Court of Appeal ruling that rejected what it described as a Dickensian series of obstacles that the federal Crown was trying to uphold. A lawsuit seeking financial damages against the federal government or one of its agencies may generally be launched in the Superior Court of any province, rather than in the Federal Court of Canada, the appeal court decided in a ruling issued on Christmas Eve. The Court of Appeal decision followed a consolidated hearing earlier this year stemming from four unrelated lawsuits -- three involving companies suing the federal government and one filed by one of the country's most notorious bank robbers.

Health

11 August
Health
Organ donation

The federal and provincial governments agree to spend \$35 million to set up a national organ-donation system run by Canadian Blood Services. The agreement covers all the provinces and territories except Quebec. More than 4,000 Canadians are on waiting lists for organ transplants and last year, 193 patients died while waiting for transplants. Graham Sher, chief executive of Canadian Blood Services, said the formal agreement means there can be national action on organ donation, rather than just study and advice. Canadian Blood Services plans to start its new role by building three new national databases to try to save more lives. One registry will be for the most urgent transplant cases. A second registry will be for kidney patients whose medical condition is such that only a small number of donated kidneys are a match. A third registry will be for paired exchanges. Finally, the national agency is to tackle the

question of how to handle donations from people who die unexpectedly, a question that is managed differently from province to province.

19 November
Health
Vancouver
Blusson Spinal
Cord Centre

The \$45 million Blusson Spinal Cord Centre, the world's largest facility for spinal cord injury care and research, opens at the Vancouver General Hospital campus. Spinal surgeon Dr. Marcel Dvorak says the centre will get up to 16,000 patient visits a year and one-stop health care means those with paralysis will no longer have to see doctors and other health providers at multiple locations throughout the province. Federal partners (Canada Foundation for Innovation) and the provincial government each contributed nearly \$13 million, the University of British Columbia gave \$8.15 million and Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute gave \$2.3 million.

14 December
Health
Alberta
Senior services

Senior citizens who can afford it will be able to pay for extra services in the facilities of their choice under a new long-term care strategy announced by the Alberta government. Some seniors and Medicare advocates criticize the plan as costly and a clear step towards privatization. However, Health Minister Ron Liepert says it is necessary, given that within 20 years, one-fifth of Alberta's population will be over 65. Until recently, the province has kept a tight constraint on how much care providers could charge for accommodation, making private development not financially viable, he explains. Under the new plan, seniors could take flat-rate funding from the government based on their needs and use it to “shop for their own health providers.” They could then pay out of their own pockets for extra services.

Intergovernmental Relations

10 January
Intergovernmental
Relations
Canada, N.B.
Community Development
Trust

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, joined by New Brunswick Premier Shawn Graham, announce that the Government of Canada will provide New Brunswick with \$30 million as part of a new national Community Development Trust designed to help provinces and territories assist communities and workers suffering economic hardship caused by the current volatility in global financial and commodities markets.

11 January
Intergovernmental
Relations
FMC, Economy
Employment Insurance

At the First Minister's Conference, Canada's economic performance topped the agenda. During the meetings, Premiers Dalton McGuinty of Ontario and Jean Charest of Quebec accuse Prime Minister Harper of playing politics with a \$1 billion federal aid program that will be unveiled in the upcoming federal budget. The premiers also call on the Prime

<i>Program</i>	Minister to use the \$54 billion Employment Insurance Premium to increase access to benefits to people laid off in the manufacturing and forestry sectors.
23 January <i>Intergovernmental Relations Labour Minister's Meeting on health in the Workplace</i>	The annual meeting of Canada's federal, provincial and territorial labour ministers is held in Quebec City. During the meetings, the ministers underscored their commitment to promoting safe and healthy workplace environments and improving protection for workers.
8 February <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada – Nunavut Infrastructure</i>	The governments of Canada and Nunavut announce the signing of a Framework Agreement worth \$242 million under the Government of Canada's new long-term infrastructure plan.
21 February <i>Intergovernmental Relations Ontario labour</i>	Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Monte Solberg and Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges, and Universities John Milloy sign an agreement that will see \$1.2 billion invested into Ontario's labour market over the next six years.
06 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Manitoba Development Trust</i>	Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty and Manitoba Premier Gary Doer announce that the Government of Canada will provide Manitoba with \$41.9 million as part of a new national Community Development Trust, which will create new employment opportunities for vulnerable communities and laid-off workers.
10 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada- NWT Community Development Trust</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper reveals that the Government of Canada will provide the Northwest Territories with \$4.2 million as part of the national Community Development Trust.
14 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Saskatchewan Police Officer's Recruiting Fund</i>	Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day announces that the federal government will provide the province of Saskatchewan with an additional \$11.7 million as part of a new Police Officers Recruitment Fund.
14 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Quebec Homelessness Partnership Strategy</i>	Minister of Canadian Heritage Josée Verner reveals that the Government of Canada will invest \$24.7 million for new housing projects in Quebec under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

<p>17 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Yukon Infrastructure</i></p>	<p>The governments of Canada and Yukon announce the signing of a Framework Agreement under Building Canada, a new long-term infrastructure plan. The framework, worth \$242.9 million, will structure new investments into the territory to address future public infrastructure needs and priorities.</p>
<p>17 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-B.C. Gas Tax Fund</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia, and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities sign an agreement that will see communities across the province receive more than \$1 billion between 2010 and 2014 from the Gas Tax Fund. The deal makes B.C. the first province to sign an extension of the Gas Tax Agreement.</p>
<p>18 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Alberta Homelessness Partnering Strategy</i></p>	<p>Conservative MP Laurie Hawn announces that the federal government will invest \$25 million in new housing projects in Alberta under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.</p>
<p>18 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-N.S. Police Officers Recruitment Fund</i></p>	<p>Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day announces the federal government will provide Nova Scotia with \$11.2 million as part of its new Police Officers Recruitment Fund.</p>
<p>19 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Quebec Police Officers Recruitment Fund</i></p>	<p>Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day announces that the Government of Canada will provide Quebec with \$92.3 million as part of its Police Officers Recruitment Fund.</p>
<p>25 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Alberta Police Officers Recruitment Fund</i></p>	<p>Conservative MP Diane Ablonczy reveals that the Government of Canada will provide Alberta with \$42.4 million in new funding under the Police Officers Recruitment Fund.</p>
<p>27 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Nunavut Funding</i></p>	<p>Minister of Indian Affairs Chuck Strahl and Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik announce the signing of three new federal-territorial agreements. Under the Community Development Trust, the Public Transit Capital Trust, and the Police Officers Recruitment Fund, the Government of Canada will provide Nunavut with an additional \$5.1 million in funding.</p>
<p>27 March</p>	<p>The Government of Canada announces \$14 million in funding for capital</p>

<p><i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-N.B. public Transit</i></p>	<p>investments to improve public transit in Nova Scotia.</p>
<p>28 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada, Quebec, Manitoba, N.L., N.B., Public transit</i></p>	<p>Minister of Transport Lawrence Cannon announces that Quebec will receive \$116.3 million in funding for capital investments to improve public transit through the Public Transit Capital Trust. Under the same scheme the federal government will also provide Manitoba with \$17.9 million, Newfoundland and Labrador with \$7.6 million, New Brunswick with \$11.3 million, Alberta with \$52.9 million, and Saskatchewan with \$14.9 million for public transit upgrades.</p>
<p>28 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Alberta Community Development Trust</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Premier Ed Stelmach reveal that Alberta will receive \$104 million as part of the new national Community Development Trust. The Government of Canada created the trust to help provinces and territories assist communities and workers suffering economic hardship caused by the current volatility in global financial and commodities markets.</p>
<p>31 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-N.L. Community Development Fund</i></p>	<p>Newfoundland and Labrador Finance Minister Tom Marshall and Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Minister Loyola Hearn announce the province will receive \$23.4 million from the Government of Canada as part of the national Community Development Trust.</p>
<p>31 March <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-P.E.I. Community Development Trust</i></p>	<p>Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Prince Edward Island Premier Robert Ghiz announce that the Government of Canada will give Prince Edward Island \$13.7 million as part of the national Community Development Trust.</p>
<p>05 April <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada, B.C., Alberta Federal funding</i></p>	<p>The federal government commits an additional \$2 million to ongoing efforts to control the spread of the mountain pine beetle, which has had a crippling effect on the forestry industries of British Columbia and Alberta.</p>
<p>11 April <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-Manitoba Skills and job development</i></p>	<p>Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Monte Solberg unveils the signing of an agreement between the Government of Canada and the province of Manitoba that will see an investment of \$110 million in federal funding to support skills and job development in the province.</p>
<p>11 April</p>	<p>Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day announces that the federal</p>

<p><i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-B.C. Homelessness Partnering Strategy</i></p>	<p>government will provide British Columbia with approximately \$20.6 million in new funding to combat homelessness under the government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.</p>
<p>14 April <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-NWT Commissioner of NWT</i></p>	<p>Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Chuck Strahl announces that the federal government will reappoint Anthony Whitford as the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.</p>
<p>24 April <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-N.L. Infrastructure</i></p>	<p>Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Loyola Hearn announces that the federal government will provide the province of Newfoundland and Labrador with \$50 million to be spent towards the province's annual capital plan, which aims at facilitating province-wide infrastructure improvements.</p>
<p>25 April <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada-N.L. Infrastructure</i></p>	<p>Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Rona Ambrose reveals that the Government of Canada and the four western provinces will negotiate new Western Economic Partnership Agreements. The new agreements will represent a joint federal and provincial investment of \$200 million over five years to help stimulate economic growth, modernize infrastructure, and create jobs.</p>
<p>09 May <i>Intergovernmental Relations Ontario, Quebec Joint Cabinet Meeting</i></p>	<p>The governments of Quebec and Ontario reveal that they will hold a first-ever joint cabinet meeting in early June. The meeting in Quebec City will address several proposed agreements between the two provinces, including economic growth and the establishment of a cap-and-trade-system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p>
<p>15 May <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i></p>	<p>Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day announces the signing of 20 RCMP First Nations community policing service agreements for communities in Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The agreements, totaling over \$21.3 million in funding, provide for a contingent of RCMP officers to meet the policing needs of each community.</p>
<p>21 May <i>Intergovernmental Relations Yukon Immigration</i></p>	<p>Diane Finley, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and Patrick Rouble, Minister of Education for the Yukon, sign the Agreement for Canada-Yukon Cooperation on Immigration. The new agreement helps strengthen partnerships between the two governments and aims to encourage immigration to the northern territory.</p>
<p>21 May <i>Intergovernmental</i></p>	<p>The governments of Canada and Prince Edward Island announce the signing of a Framework Agreement worth \$270 million under Building</p>

<p><i>Relations</i> <i>Canada, PEI</i> <i>Building Canada</i></p>	<p>Canada, the federal government's long-term infrastructure plan. The Plan will help address infrastructure needs and priorities in the province until 2014.</p>
<p>27 May <i>Intergovernmental</i> <i>Relations</i> <i>Security</i></p>	<p>Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's plans for a single national securities regulator experience a setback before the annual meeting of provincial and territorial leaders. Quebec, British Columbia, Manitoba and other provinces announce that they will continue with their plans to entrench a system that commits various jurisdictions to recognize the decisions of each other's securities regulators.</p>
<p>30 May <i>Intergovernmental</i> <i>Relations</i> <i>Canadian Western</i> <i>Premiers Conference</i></p>	<p>The Canadian Western Premiers Conference in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan ends with a pledge to lobby Ottawa for better infrastructure in order to promote economic growth in the north. The western premiers promised to press the federal government for an extension of the Mackenzie Valley Highway that would provide a year-round link to communities in the Northwest Territories whose only surface access by car is on winter ice roads. They also called for improvements to and reconstruction of the entire highway network in the Yukon. In Nunavut, they urged greater investment in seven Arctic ports, which could provide an economic boom as the melting Northwest Passage opens up new shipping routes.</p>
<p>02 June <i>Intergovernmental</i> <i>Relations</i> <i>Ontario, Quebec</i> <i>Joint cabinet meeting</i></p>	<p>In an unprecedented move, Ontario and Quebec hold a joint cabinet meeting to discuss a range of issues including the environment, economic integration, and social policy. The meetings end with the announcement of an agreement that calls on the two provinces to set up a joint system for trading greenhouse gas emissions credits by 2010. The agreement means that both Quebec and Ontario will officially reject the federal Conservative government's less rigorous greenhouse gas reduction plan unveiled last year.</p>
<p>08 June <i>Intergovernmental</i> <i>Relations</i> <i>Canada, B.C.</i> <i>Student loan program</i></p>	<p>The federal government and the government of British Columbia announce a joint partnership to help students acquire loans. The two governments sign a Memorandum of Understanding that will work towards establishing a federal-provincial partnership to make it easier for students to manage their student loans in the province.</p>
<p>13 June <i>Intergovernmental</i> <i>Relations</i> <i>Canada, N.S.</i> <i>Labour Market</i> <i>Agreement</i></p>	<p>Minister of Human Resources Monte Solberg and Nova Scotia Minister of Labour, Mark Parent, sign two new federal-provincial agreements to aid low-skilled and unemployed workers enter into the workforce. The Labour Market Agreements will inject \$85 million over the next six years into the labour market to help Nova Scotian workers upgrade their skills.</p>
<p>13 June</p>	<p>Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Diane Finley announces a new</p>

<p><i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> <i>Canada, PEI</i> <i>Immigration</i></p>	<p>Agreement for Canada-Prince Edward Island Cooperation on Immigration. The new agreement will make it easier for the province to attract skilled international workers, process applications more quickly, and strengthen the province's Francophone community.</p>
<p>19 June <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> <i>Canada, NWT</i> <i>Provincial-Territorial Base Funding Initiative</i></p>	<p>The governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories sign a Provincial-Territorial (PT) Base Funding Agreement under the Building Canada infrastructure plan. The signing of the PT Base Funding Agreement provides federal funding to the Northwest Territories under the Provincial-Territorial Base Funding Initiative. Under this agreement, the Northwest Territories will receive more than \$25 million for a total of \$185.8 million through to 2014.</p>
<p>25 June <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> <i>Canada, N.B.</i> <i>BizPal Initiative</i></p>	<p>Secretary of State Diane Ablonczy and New Brunswick Minister of Business Greg Byrne, sign a multi-jurisdictional Memorandum of Understanding that brings New Brunswick into the federal BizPaL initiative. The initiative is a federal-provincial/territorial-municipal online business permit and licence service that saves time spent on paperwork and helps entrepreneurs start their ventures faster.</p>
<p>27 June <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> <i>Canada, Ontario</i> <i>Windsor Gateway</i></p>	<p>The governments of Canada and Ontario announce joint funding for upgrades to the Windsor Gateway. The funding comes as part of a joint Canada-Ontario Border Infrastructure Fund, committing both governments to invest \$300 million in the region.</p>
<p>10 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> <i>Federal government</i> <i>Saskatchewan</i> <i>Equalization payments</i> <i>Court challenge</i></p>	<p>Saskatchewan decides not to pursue a legal challenge originally sparked by the federal Conservative Party's broken equalization promise, provincial Justice Minister Don Morgan says. The decision to withdraw the reference case to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal on the legality of the Conservative government's changes to equalization ends months of speculation that the action set in motion by the previous NDP government would not continue. The case, filed last September, arose out of a federal Tory election promise to remove renewable resource revenues from the equalization formula that would have meant an estimated \$800 million a year in federal funding for Saskatchewan. But the Conservative government's first budget also put an unexpected cap on payments, meaning Saskatchewan received approximately \$227 million from equalization last year and nothing this year.</p>
<p>11 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> <i>Canada, NL</i> <i>Seal Hunt EU ban</i></p>	<p>The federal government has remained mute in the face of growing opposition to Canada's centuries-old commercial seal hunt, the Newfoundland and Labrador government charges, days before the European Union is to discuss banning seal products. Acting provincial Fisheries Minister Trevor Taylor calls on Ottawa to take on a stronger role in protecting the sealing industry.</p>

<p>16 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada, B.C. Ocean sciences funding</i></p>	<p>The governments of Canada and British Columbia are working in partnership to strengthen the ocean sciences sector through an investment in the planning and development of a national scale ocean technology park on Vancouver Island. Federal funding of \$135,000 is announced by Ed Fast, Member of Parliament for Abbotsford, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification. MLA Ida Chong, Minister of Technology, Trade and Economic Development and Minister Responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative, announces a matching contribution of \$135,000 in provincial funding toward the initiative.</p>
<p>24 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada, Ontario “Building Canada” Funding</i></p>	<p>The federal government signs a deal with Ontario to spend \$7.8 billion in the province on public transit, roads and bridges as part of its plan to maintain and expand the country's infrastructure systems. Ottawa’s infrastructure plan, called Building Canada, will see the Harper government spend \$33 billion over seven years on infrastructure projects across the country. Ontario becomes the latest province to reach a so-called framework agreement with Ottawa, which will set out how it will use its \$7.8 billion share of the funding, federal and provincial sources said. British Columbia was the first province to reach an accord.</p>
<p>24 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada, B.C. “Building Canada” Funding</i></p>	<p>The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia will jointly fund up to \$231 million worth of National Highway System improvements in the province, under the Building Canada Plan.</p>
<p>24 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations Canada, PEI Federation of PEI Municipalities Funding</i></p>	<p>The governments of Canada and Prince Edward Island announce the approval of 13 projects of a total investment of \$411,075, and that \$240,000 will be set aside to allow the Federation of PEI Municipalities to undertake a number of capacity building projects for the benefit of PEI communities. This funding will assist PEI municipalities to further their municipal infrastructure planning. It is being made available through the Capacity Building and Community Fund, a component of the Canada-Prince Edward Island Gas Tax Agreement.</p>
<p>30 July <i>Intergovernmental Relations Federal government, Quebec International Labour Mobility</i></p>	<p>The Harper government announces it is prepared to let Quebec negotiate a unilateral labour-mobility deal with France, and is willing to provide each province with similar autonomy on economic issues. The Prime Minister's Quebec lieutenant, Lawrence Cannon, says the Harper government is prepared to shift the way the national government works with its provincial counterparts. With economic volatility affecting all provinces differently, Mr. Cannon says it is time to deal individually with each province's needs. While he declines to use the word "asymmetrical," Mr.</p>

Cannon conceded the effect of his proposed framework creates precisely such a landscape, and emphasized the intention is to turn it into a pan-Canadian policy.

31 July
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government
Civil lawsuit
Agreement
Tobacco*

The Honourable Gordon O'Connor, Minister of National Revenue, announces that the federal and all provincial governments have entered into civil settlement agreements with Imperial Tobacco Canada Ltd. and Rothmans, Benson & Hedges to resolve all potential civil claims they may have in relation to the two companies' role in the movement of contraband tobacco in the early 1990s. In addition to the civil settlement, the two companies each pleaded guilty in court to a single count of "aiding persons to sell or be in possession of tobacco products manufactured in Canada that were not packaged and were not stamped in conformity with the *Excise Act* and its amendments and the ministerial regulations" between 1989 and 1994. The fines in these prosecutions, combined with the civil settlements, will result in the companies paying \$1.15 billion to governments.

29 August
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal government
Alberta
Building Canada Plan*

The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Industry, on behalf of the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, along with Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach, announce the signing of a Building Canada Framework Agreement between the two governments. The agreement provides approximately \$1.8 billion through Building Canada. In total, the Government of Canada will provide more than \$2.1 billion in guaranteed funding, between 2007 and 2014, for infrastructure initiatives in Alberta. The framework agreement sets the stage for a collaborative investment in the infrastructure of Alberta. Under this agreement, the Government of Canada will provide more than \$840 million through the Building Canada Fund, a centrepiece of the overall plan, toward infrastructure initiatives in Alberta. Of this amount, approximately \$88 million will be allocated to smaller-scale projects in communities of less than 100,000 residents. This amount will be matched by Alberta, for a total of \$176 million.

29 August
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government
Alberta
Building Canada Plan*

The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Industry, on behalf of the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, together with Naresh Bhardwaj, MLA for Edmonton-Ellerslie and provincial government representative on the Northlands Board, and the Chair of Northlands Mr. Jerry Bouma announce that the Government of Canada will contribute to the expansion of the Northlands exhibition facility under the Building Canada plan.

02 September
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government*

The Nova Scotia government says recent cuts in federal funding for the arts will damage the province's cultural sector. Premier Rodney MacDonald and Tourism and Culture Minister Bill Dooks say the province believes there is potential for significant growth in the cultural

<i>Nova Scotia Funding for the arts</i>	sector. They also say the federal cuts will have a negative impact on such growth, along with cultural exports. The province says the culture sector creates direct and indirect employment for 28,000 people and generates more than \$1.2 billion in gross domestic product.
<i>03 September Intergovernmental Relations Manitoba Canada-Manitoba Agreement on French Language Services</i>	Rod Bruinooge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Member of Parliament (Winnipeg South), on behalf of the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women and Minister for La Francophonie, and the Honourable James Moore, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific Gateway) (2010 Olympics) (Official Languages), announce funding while taking part in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Cercle Molière theatre in Winnipeg. The construction of the theatre, which will serve as a gathering place for Francophones, was provided with \$3.446 million from the Government of Canada. Of this amount, \$1.646 million has been allocated through the Cultural Spaces Canada program and \$1.8 million through the Development of Official-Language Communities Program under the Canada-Manitoba Agreement on French Language Services.
<i>13 September Intergovernmental Relations Federal government Quebec Transportation</i>	The Governments of Canada and Quebec sign a 35-year partnership agreement with the private construction conglomerate Nouvelle Autoroute 30 for the design, construction, financing, operation, maintenance and repair of the province's Highway 30. The \$1.5 billion project is designed to provide Montreal with a southern by-pass route to relieve traffic congestion on the Island of Montreal.
<i>26 September Intergovernmental Relations Provincial Meeting Federal Elections Cuts to the Arts</i>	Provincial and territorial culture ministers criticize the Conservative government's \$45 million cutback to arts programs during a two day meeting in Quebec City. British Columbia and Alberta were the only provinces that did not attend the conference. The provinces and territories produced a resolution asking the government to reverse the cuts at the departments of Canadian Heritage and Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and called for a meeting with the new Canadian Heritage Minister as soon as the election is over.
<i>30 September Intergovernmental Relations Quebec demands Federal Election</i>	Quebec Premier Jean Charest delves into the federal election campaign, announcing a "non-exhaustive" list of 14 key areas of federal-provincial relations, in which he thinks the candidates need to take a stand. The list is attached to a letter he has sent to all the leaders. Charest notes that he wants them all to know exactly where Quebec stands on the questions, so that no matter who becomes prime minister on October 14 they are not surprised. There are 14 issues, some more complex than others, including the Quebec-Windsor high speed train and federal spending power.
<i>21 November</i>	The Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade and

*Intergovernmental
Relations
Education
“Imagine”*

Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, highlights Canada's contribution to a new campaign aimed at promoting the country's post-secondary education systems and institutions overseas as a distinct and recognizable international "brand." The new campaign, called *Imagine*, is part of the federal-provincial Education in Canada program. The campaign conveys the message that a Canadian education opens the door to a world of opportunities and encourages students from around the world to discover the many advantages of going to school in Canada. Provincial and territorial ministers announced their involvement in the development of the international brand in Fredericton last September during the biannual meeting of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

24 November
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Child Poverty*

According to the 2008 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada, the child poverty rate in Saskatchewan is the second highest in the country, following only British Columbia. It would be even higher if the report included children in First Nations communities, where it is estimated one in four lives in poverty. In 1989, when the federal government resolved to end child poverty by 2000, the child poverty rate was 15.1 percent in Canada and 21.7 percent in Saskatchewan. Seventeen years later, in 2006, the national child poverty rate had increased slightly to 15.8 percent, while the provincial rate showed a small decline to 19.9 percent.

05 December
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government
Manitoba
Youth Employment
Program*

Young people from southwestern Manitoba will develop the skills they need to find and keep quality jobs through a project supported by the Government of Canada. Merv Tweed, Member of Parliament for Brandon-Souris, announces the project on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development. The federal government is committing \$84,600 in Youth Skills Link funding for the Southwest Horizon Mentorship project that will provide work placement experience to nine unemployed youth facing barriers to employment to help them develop the skills they need to find and maintain employment or return to school.

17 December
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government,
Alberta, Ontario,
Quebec
Commercial paper*

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty formally asks Alberta, Ontario and Quebec to contribute to a government-backed \$9.5 billion standby facility that would secure a deal in the 16 month restructuring of commercial paper. The \$32 billion restructuring of asset-backed commercial paper now hinges on Ottawa's ability to provide a \$9.5 billion standby facility. Otherwise, the restructuring could unravel. Sources say Flaherty asked Alberta, Ontario and Quebec to contribute to the facility, given those jurisdictions have provincially owned entities -- such as the Caisse de depot et placement du Quebec, Ontario Financing Authority and ATB Financial -- that hold ABCP.

18 December

The federal government is helping unemployed and homeless people in

*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government
British Columbia
Unemployment
Homelessness*

the South Fraser region re-enter the work force and break free from the cycle of homelessness. Ms. Dona Cadman, Member of Parliament for Surrey North, made the announcement on behalf of Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development. The Newton Advocacy Group Society will receive \$1.17 million in funding for its Project Comeback under the Government of Canada's Employment Assistance Services (EAS) program. The project is a continuous intake program that will provide counseling, consulting and job-search services to 210 unemployed and homeless participants from the South Fraser region, enabling them to acquire full-time sustainable employment and helping them to permanently break free from the cycle of homelessness.

19 December
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government
Alberta
Funding*

Jim Prentice, Minister of the Environment and Regional Minister for southern Alberta, on behalf of Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification, announces the federal funding of \$4 million towards a new state-of-the-art applied research centre at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT Polytechnic). The funding will help businesses in Alberta's energy, manufacturing and construction industries test and develop innovative technologies and products.

19 December
*Intergovernmental
Relations
Federal Government
Saskatchewan
Homelessness
Partnering Strategy*

Mr. Ed Komarnicki, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour and Member of Parliament for Souris–Moose Mountain, announces investments in 12 projects in Saskatchewan under the Government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The Strategy provides funds over two years to help communities across Canada combat homelessness.

International Relations

26 January
*International Relations
Canada-Europe Free
Trade Association*

International Trade Minister David Emerson signs a new free trade agreement between Canada and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in Switzerland. The agreement will be between Canada and the EFTA's four members: Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

31 January
*International Relations
Kenya humanitarian
relief*

The Canadian Development Agency gives \$3.3 million to UN agencies and non-governmental organizations to assist in humanitarian relief efforts underway in Kenya following continued post-election turmoil.

25 February
*International Relations
Afghanistan mission*

The Conservative federal government and the opposition Liberal Party reach a deal to extend Canada's military mission in Afghanistan until 2011 following the findings of the Manley Report released last month.

- 31 March
International Relations
Canadian trade agenda
- Minister of International Trade David Emerson meets with provincial and territorial representatives to discuss the Canadian trade agenda and the status of ongoing WTO negotiations as well as the creation of a stronger bi-lateral trading relationship with the EU.
- 26 June
International Relations
Afghanistan funding
- Minister of Foreign Affairs David Emerson announces that Canada will provide \$4 million in additional funding to help reconstruct the Sarpoza Prison in Kandahar City, Afghanistan. Earlier in the month, the prison was attacked and its prisoners freed by Taliban insurgents fighting against Canadian forces in the area. This \$4 million prison-reconstruction project draws on Canada's existing \$35 million Global Peace and Security Fund allocation for Afghanistan, and builds on Canada's previous commitment of \$1.5 million for the prison.

Labour

- 24 July
Labour
Forum of Labour
Market Ministers
Advisory Panel on
Labour Market
Information
- Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, and Murray Coell, British Columbia's Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, co-chairs of the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM), announce that Don Drummond, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist of the TD Bank Financial Group, and former Associate Deputy Minister of Finance Canada, will chair an Advisory Panel on Labour Market Information. The five-member panel will advise federal, provincial and territorial ministers on how labour market information can contribute to Canada's economic growth and efficiency over the next decade and better respond to the growing information and planning needs of employers, workers and learners. The panel will report back to the FLMM by the spring of 2009.
- 06 October
Labour Relations
Federal Crown
Attorneys
- Frustrated federal prosecutors across Canada are quitting over poor pay as the Harper government increases their workload with its anti-crime initiatives. The Public Prosecution Service of Canada warns of a "personnel shortage" to handle its burgeoning caseload of organized crime, terrorism and other offences, and of trouble recruiting and retaining experienced Crown counsels because the government's wages are not competitive in many regions. The exodus of lawyers is particularly acute in Ontario and Alberta, where federal Crowns can earn tens of thousands of dollars more as provincial prosecutors.
- 06 October
Labour Relations
Federal Government
Association of Justice
Lawyers
- The federal government is locked in a pay dispute with the Association of Justice Counsel, the new union for the nation's 2,500 rank-and-file federal prosecutors and civil lawyers. The two sides are headed for binding arbitration this fall after more than two years of fruitless negotiation.

24 November
Labour Relations
Federal Government
Public Service
Agreement reached

The federal government and its largest union reach an agreement on a new contract, averting a major confrontation and setting the stage for similar deals across the public service. John Gordon, National President of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), said the union accepted the government's wage proposal in exchange for improved "economic security" for its members. He said the tentative deal, worth a 6.8 percent wage increase over four years for more than 100,000 public servants, reflects the reality of the tough times facing the country. More than 50,000 members of PSAC in other bargaining units, including those at the National Capital Commission, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Parks Canada and the Auditor General's department, are currently in negotiations.

15 December
Labour Relations
Federal Government
St. John's
Youth Employment
Program

The St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador area will benefit from the Government of Canada's investment in an employment project aimed at local youth at risk of homelessness. Choices for Youth's Train for Trades project is providing orientation, training and support for 10 at-risk youth. The project will receive \$321,134 in federal funding. It focuses on employment and careers in the skilled trades during the pre-construction and construction periods of the Lilly Building project, which will provide 14 low-income housing units for local at-risk youth when renovations are complete.

Municipalities

1 February
Municipalities
Education

The Toronto District School Board votes 11-9 in favour of establishing a pilot project that would lead to the creation of a black-focused school – the first of its kind in Canada. The plan is heavily criticized by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty who says that the project will not be endorsed nor funded by the province.

14 February
Municipalities
Toronto transit funding

A prolonged dispute between the City of Toronto, the Province of Ontario, and the Government of Canada over \$350 million in new transit funding is resolved. The end to the impasse means that Ottawa will now provide a one-third share of a \$1 billion agreement to upgrade transit services in the city.

18 March
Municipalities
Canada-Toronto
Transit

The Government of Canada and the City of Toronto sign a contribution agreement that will see the federal government invest \$303.5 million to upgrade public transit infrastructure.

<p>02 May <i>Municipalities</i> <i>Trois Rivières</i> <i>Federal-provincial</i> <i>funding</i></p>	<p>Federal Minister of Transport Lawrence Cannon and Quebec Deputy Premier Nathalie Normandeau announce that the City of Trois-Rivières will receive \$13.5 million in joint federal-provincial funding to support cultural, economic and tourism development in the city.</p>
<p>05 May <i>Municipalities</i> <i>Federal Gas Tax</i></p>	<p>Finance Minister Jim Flaherty reveals that the federal government will permanently extend federal gas tax funding to municipalities throughout Canada. Revenues from the Gas Tax Fund will reach \$2 billion a year nationally by 2009-2010.</p>
<p>02 June <i>Municipalities</i> <i>FMC annual meeting</i></p>	<p>At the 71st Annual Conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Minister of Transport Lawrence Cannon announces that municipalities in Quebec will receive federal funding to support environmentally sustainable infrastructure. The new funding will be drawn primarily from the Gas Tax Fund. It will mean an additional \$62 million for the Outaouais Region and an additional \$291 million for the Montreal Region.</p>
<p>07 July <i>Municipalities</i> <i>Federal and Provincial</i> <i>Funding for</i> <i>Communities</i></p>	<p>During the next six years, the federal and provincial governments will invest \$189 million and \$94.5 million respectively, helping communities under 100,000 people address priorities such as cleaner water and better waste management. With matching contributions from communities, the amount may rise to more than \$283 million during the course of the program.</p>
<p>01 August <i>Municipal Affairs</i> <i>City of Ottawa</i></p>	<p>The City of Ottawa faces two Water Resources Act charges for a 15 day sewage spill into the Ottawa River. After a two-month investigation into the August 2006 spill, the Ontario Environment Ministry accused the City of Ottawa of causing or permitting the discharge of material into the Ottawa River that could affect water quality and failing to report the spill to the ministry. Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien said the charges were the result of just one of four investigations being conducted into the spill, and called on the provincial and federal governments to commit funds to help the city improve water quality in the river by keeping sewage out of it. The federal government has already committed \$20 million to help clean up the river, but provincial officials have said the city will have to apply for funding.</p>
<p>17 September <i>Municipalities</i> <i>Subsidized food</i> <i>Shipments</i></p>	<p>Churchill, Manitoba asks the federal government to subsidize shipping food by air after a month-long rail disruption forced restaurants to shorten menus and left grocery stores with empty produce shelves. Slowdowns and derailments along northern Manitoba's Hudson Bay line from early August until last week disrupted both freight and passenger traffic to Churchill and dozens of smaller railway communities. The Churchill Chamber of Commerce, wanting to prevent food shortages when</p>

thousands of ecotourists arrive in late October and early November to view polar bears, has requested Ottawa give it temporary food mail status.

27 November
Municipalities
City of Saskatoon

The City of Saskatoon's record \$241.7 million capital budget for 2009 will start paying for future mega-projects such as the south bridge and new police station while trying to keep pace with regular maintenance of streets and bridges. Without new, non-designated federal and provincial funding for no-frills work such as fixing water lines and repaving streets, the city forecasts a backlog of \$195 million worth of projects in the next five years. Senior government funding typically goes toward new projects.

Provincial Politics

14 January
Provincial Politics
B.C.
Public transit system

The Government of British Columbia announces that it will invest \$14 billion in new public transit systems for the province. The new funding will aid in the construction of a new automated SkyTrain transit into the University of British Columbia, plant a new light-rail system in the northeastern suburbs of the Lower Mainland and lead to dedicated bus lines in Vancouver, Victoria and Kelowna.

23 January
Provincial Politics
B.C. Auditor General

Provincial Auditor General of British Columbia John Doyle issues a report stating that the province's effort to reduce deaths and injuries amongst forestry works has failed. Doyle says workers continue to die in this dangerous sector - 13 in 2006 alone. Another 73 forestry workers were seriously injured on the job that year.

04 February
Provincial Politics
Alberta election

Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach dissolves the provincial legislature and calls an election within the province, set for March 3, 2008.

04 February
Provincial Politics
Alberta election
Health

Shortly after calling an election, Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach unveils plans to eliminate Alberta's controversial health-care premiums that cost an average family \$1,056 a year and bring over \$1 billion annually for the province.

03 March
Provincial Politics
Alberta election

Albertans go to the polls, re-electing Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach's Progressive Conservative party with one of its largest majorities ever. The election results also give the Progressives a historic and unprecedented 11th consecutive majority government in the province.

30 May
Provincial Politics
Ontario
Private school

The Government of Ontario announces that it will no longer fund private schools for French-language instruction. The funding change, effective September, restricts funding for private high schools that spend one-quarter of their class time teaching in French. Elementary schools will no

<i>End of funding</i>	longer be eligible for funding.
04 June <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Air quality</i>	The government of British Columbia unveils a \$28.5 million plan to improve air quality in the province. The new funding, spread out over three years, will create incentives for consumers to buy new fuel-efficient vehicles, offer tax incentives to public transit users, and force all diesel-run government vehicles to switch to bio-fuels.
11 June <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Nova Scotia</i> <i>Auditor General Report</i>	Nova Scotia's Auditor-General Jacques Lapointe criticizes a controversial immigration program in the province that admits immigrants willing to pay for job placements. Under the scheme, newcomers paid \$130,500 each to be fast-tracked through the immigration process.
13 June <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Ontario NDP leader Resigns</i>	Ontario New Democratic Party Leader Howard Hampton announces that he will not be seeking re-election as leader at the party's next convention in March, 2009. Hampton will, however, stay on as the MLA for Kenora-Rainy River until at least the next Ontario election in 2011.
16 June <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Ontario</i> <i>Smoking ban</i>	Ontario becomes the latest province to ban smoking in a vehicle with a child present. The private member's bill passed with the support of all three provincial parties. Nova Scotia and British Columbia already have similar legislation in place, while Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick are currently considering a ban.
27 June <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Alberta</i>	Alberta Liberal leader Kevin Taft announces that he will step down in the next seven months after his party's poor showing in the last provincial election.
09 July <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Saskatchewan</i> <i>Foreign worker</i> <i>Credential recognition</i>	Saskatchewan's Advanced Education, Employment and Labour Minister Rob Norris launches the first phase of the Internationally Educated Health Professional (IEHP) Web portal. The website allows immigrants to log on to www.immigration.gov.sk.ca/iehp for information about Saskatchewan job opportunities and licensing requirements. He notes that stakeholders have identified many challenges for foreign trained health professionals to get accessible, clear and accurate information, especially with regard to credential recognition.
17 July <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Council of the Federation</i> <i>Trade and labour</i>	Premiers and territorial leaders reach a deal on removing trade and labour mobility across Canada. The agreement, signed at a meeting of the Council of the Federation, means workers trained in one province will be able to work in their field in any other province. Premiers expected full labour mobility to be effective on April 1, 2009, but will work out how to harmonize professional credentials between provinces at a future meeting. Certain professions will be exempted. Provincial labour ministers are to meet at a later date to develop a list of the exempted professions.

<p>08 August <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Saskatchewan</i> <i>Immigration</i></p>	<p>Parliamentary Secretary Ed Kormarnicki announces that the Regina Open Door Society will receive \$1.4 million in funding from the federal government during the next year. Three other immigrant-serving organizations will also be receiving funds as part of a nearly \$2 million package. Rob Norris, provincial minister responsible for Immigration and Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, said there are approximately 10,000 jobs currently available in Saskatchewan and welcoming more skilled immigrants will go a long way to help fill the shortage of skilled workers.</p>
<p>21 August <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Newfoundland and Labrador</i> <i>Offshore oil</i></p>	<p>Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams hails a landmark \$5.8 billion agreement with a consortium of oil companies to develop the Hebron offshore oilfield as the start of a new era of cooperation with the industry. Officials from Chevron Canada and its partners joined Williams at the official signing ceremony in St. John's, N.L. In addition to Chevron Canada, project participants include ExxonMobil Canada, Petro-Canada, and StatoilHydro Canada. The deal, coming after more than two years of negotiations, gives the province a 4.9 percent stake in the oilfield for an upfront cost of \$110 million and a percentage of future development costs.</p>
<p>02 September <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Quebec</i> <i>Gun control</i></p>	<p>Quebec's new gun-control legislation, Bill 9, comes into force. The legislation is known as Anastasia's law in memory of Anastasia De Sousa, 18, who was killed during the September, 2006, Dawson College shooting.</p>
<p>18 September <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Ontario</i> <i>Cabinet shuffle</i></p>	<p>Dalton McGuinty shuffles his cabinet in a move the Ontario premier said was designed to help attract investment and jobs during a slowing economy. McGuinty named Sandra Pupatello to the newly created Ministry of International Trade and Investment. The new ministry will focus globally to attract investments to Ontario.</p>
<p>01 October <i>Provincial Politics</i></p>	<p>British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell announces that two by-elections would be held on October 29. The by-election in Vancouver-Burrard saw the NDP's Spencer Herbert win the riding following the resignation of the Liberal incumbent, while the NDP also held onto the Vancouver-Fairview riding.</p>
<p>04 November <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Ontario</i> <i>Have-not-province</i></p>	<p>Ontario officially becomes a "have-not" province, qualifying for \$347 million in federal equalization handouts for the first time.</p>
<p>14 November <i>Provincial Politics</i> <i>Saskatchewan</i></p>	<p>The Saskatchewan provincial government reintroduces the Saskatchewan Mineral Exploration Tax Credit program, which was discontinued by the previous NDP government two years ago. The provincial program offers a</p>

Tax Policy non-refundable, 10 percent tax credit to Saskatchewan taxpayers who invest in eligible flow-through shares issued by mining or exploration companies after April 1, 2008. The provincial credit follows the eligibility rules of the federal Investment Tax Credit for Exploration.

29 November
Provincial Politics
New Brunswick
Third-party spending
In Elections The New Brunswick Liberal government is pledging to restrict and regulate third-party advertising during provincial election campaigns. Liberal House Leader Mike Murphy announces amendments to be introduced to the Political Process Financing Act during the current sitting of the legislature. The changes, if passed, would require third-party advertisers spending more than \$500 during an election to register with the supervisor of political financing. The amendments would also limit how much third-parties spend during campaigns.

08 December
Provincial Politics
Quebec
Provincial Election Quebec Premier Jean Charest completes a stunning political turnaround by winning a historic third consecutive term – a majority government – but he will face a resurgent sovereigntist Parti Québécois. The Liberals were elected in 66 ridings followed by 51 for the Parti Québécois, seven for the Action démocratique du Québec and one for the Québec Solidaire, which also supports sovereignty. Union Nationale premier Maurice Duplessis was the last Quebec leader to win three straight terms, starting in 1944.

Senate

21 May
Senate
Reform
Manitoba The federal Conservative government's plans to push for an elected Canadian Senate receive a boost after the Government of Manitoba announces that it will launch province-wide hearings to ask its citizens how such votes should be held. Manitoba is the third province, after Alberta and Saskatchewan, to support Senate reform.

04 June
Senate
Reform
Quebec court challenge Quebec threatens to challenge the federal government before the Supreme Court over its current plans for Senate reform, calling the measures proposed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper unconstitutional. The province becomes the latest to express its position to the proposed scheme, after the Maritime province's cited similar concerns. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have previously announced they support the measures.

23 June
Senate The Canadian Senate issues a report recommending that all ships entering Arctic waters claimed by Canada be obliged to tell NORDREG, a registry

<i>Arctic waters</i>	maintained by the coast guard to monitor Arctic traffic. The report also recommends the purchase of new icebreakers and echoes a \$720 million promise made in the Conservative government's last budget.
26 June <i>Senate</i> <i>Biofuels bill passed</i>	The Senate passes the Government of Canada's Biofuels bill, the last roadblock to the amendment of the <i>Canadian Environmental Protection Act</i> to give the federal government the authority to develop regulations for renewable fuels. Under the new legislation, the government will mandate a 5 percent renewable content in gasoline by 2010 and 2 percent renewable content in diesel fuel and heating oil by 2012.
02 September <i>Senate</i> <i>Security and</i> <i>National Defence</i> <i>Report</i>	Canada's efforts to respond to large-scale disasters are being hobbled by "bureaucratise" and a lack of communication, according to a report released by the Senate Committee on Security and National Defence. Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day dismissed the findings in a written statement as "irresponsible" and then accused the committee chair, Liberal Senator Colin Kenny, of "playing fast and loose with his alleged research." The report, "Emergency Preparedness in Canada: How the Fine Arts of Procrastination and Bafflegab Hobble the People Who Will be Trying to Save You When Things Get Really Bad," amounts to a progress report on federal emergency-planning measures. The report suggests that past floods, ice storms, the SARs epidemic and blackouts in Canada, and the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, should have served as a wake up call for various levels of government to prepare concrete plans to work together to ward off disaster. However, the Senate found there has been little discernible progress.
17 November <i>Senate</i> <i>Saskatchewan</i> <i>Senate election bill</i>	The Saskatchewan government introduces legislation (Bill 60, <i>The Senate Nominee Election Act</i>) to allow for Senate elections -- positioning it to become the second province to hold such votes, following Alberta's lead. However, it will likely be some time before a vote is actually held. Justice Minister Don Morgan said the Senate election bill would allow for the cabinet to set a stand-alone election date. But unless the federal government carried the cost for such a vote, he said, it is more likely the Senate election would be held in conjunction with the next provincial election in 2011 or the next federal vote.
22 December <i>Senate</i> <i>Eighteen new</i> <i>appointments</i>	Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces 18 new Conservative Senate appointments. The Prime Minister argues he was left with no choice after his three-year campaign for Senate elections fell on deaf ears. Critics accused Mr. Harper of hypocrisy in appointing a list of individuals known primarily for their service to the Conservative Party, including a former Quebec separatist. They also questioned the legitimacy of the appointments, given that Mr. Harper had suspended Parliament until late January in order to avoid defeat in the House of Commons.

Supreme Court

- 11 April
Supreme Court
N.B. linguistic duality
- The Supreme Court of Canada rules that the RCMP must serve all of New Brunswick in both English and French in order to meet the province's bilingual requirements.
- 21 May
Supreme Court
Quebec demands
Bilingual appointments
- The Quebec National Assembly votes unanimously to demand that the federal government only appoint bilingual judges to the Supreme Court of Canada. Premier Jean Charest insisted that the motion calling on Supreme Court judges to master the French language as an essential condition of their appointment was not just a simple request but a firm demand expressed by all members of the National Assembly.
- 23 May
Supreme Court
Khadr ruling
- In a landmark ruling, the Canadian Supreme Court orders the Canadian government to hand over confidential interrogation documents to Omar Khadr's defense team. Khadr is on trial in the United States for his alleged involvement in the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. In giving its ruling, the Supreme Court stated that the rights granted to Canadian citizens under the Charter apply even when they are not in the country.
- 27 May
Supreme Court (B.C.)
Ruling
Safe Injection Site
- The British Columbia Supreme Court rules that North America's only sanctioned safe-injection site for drug addicts should remain open. Justice Ian Pitfield of the B.C. Supreme Court granted users and staff at the popular but controversial facility, known as Insite, a permanent constitutional exemption from prosecution under federal drug laws. In doing so, Justice Pitfield also declared that sections of Canada's drug laws against possession and trafficking in illegal narcotics were unconstitutional. The government has until the end of June next year to redraft them in accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Federal Health Minister Tony Clement indicates that the government will appeal the decision.
- 23 June
Supreme Court (Quebec)
Assisted Human
Reproduction Act
- The Quebec Court of Appeal issues a decision that leaves important aspects of human reproductive technology unregulated. In its ruling the court struck down important sections of the federal government's *Assisted Human Reproduction Act* because they related to health issues. Health falls under the constitutional jurisdiction of the provinces. The federal government's Act, therefore, was found to be unconstitutional as the federal government acted outside its jurisdiction.