



# SUPPORTING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

In an uncertain world, Canada's Economic Action Plan (EAP) is working—creating jobs, keeping the economy growing and returning to balanced budgets. Since the beginning of the recovery, Canada has achieved the best job creation record of any Group of Seven (G-7) country, and one of the best economic performances in the G-7.

With Economic Action Plan 2014, the Government continues to support families and communities by keeping taxes low, putting consumers first, protecting Canadians' health and safety, and making communities more resilient in the face of natural disasters.



## CONSUMERS FIRST

Since 2006, the Government has taken significant action to support and protect all Canadian consumers by reducing taxes and tariffs, ensuring marketplace fairness, promoting competition in a number of industries (including financial services, telecommunications and air services), and improving product and food safety. EAP 2014 expands on the Government's consumer-focused measures to improve the bottom line for Canadian families and ensure that they are getting value for their hard-earned dollars.

## IMPROVING COMPETITION IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKET

The Government has a strong record of responding to the needs and concerns of Canadian consumers.

EAP 2014 proposes new measures to improve competition in the telecommunications market by:

- Capping wholesale domestic wireless roaming rates.
- Providing telecommunications regulators with the power to impose administrative monetary penalties on companies that violate rules such as the Wireless Code.

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO BROADBAND IN RURAL AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

EAP 2014 invests \$305 million over five years to extend and enhance broadband Internet service for Canadians in rural and Northern communities.

## LEGISLATING AGAINST UNJUSTIFIED CROSS-BORDER PRICE DISCRIMINATION

It is well documented that Canadians pay more than Americans for many identical goods. EAP 2014 announces the Government's intention to introduce legislation to prohibit unjustified cross-border price discrimination to reduce the gap between consumer prices in Canada and the United States.

## **STRENGTHENING FOOD SAFETY**

Since 2006, the Government has invested over \$500 million in Canada's food safety system. EAP 2014 invests \$390 million over five years to further ensure Canadian families have confidence in the food they eat, including:

- More than \$153 million to strengthen food safety programs and support the hiring of more than 200 additional inspectors and other staff.
- Almost \$31 million to establish a national Food Safety Information Network to link federal and provincial food safety authorities and private food testing laboratories across the country, allowing for more rapid detection of and response to food safety hazards.

## **PUTTING CONSUMERS FIRST IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR**

EAP 2014 advances the Government's commitment to protect consumers of financial products and services by:

- Engaging Canadians on developing a comprehensive financial consumer code that will better protect consumers of financial products and services and ensure they have the tools they need to make responsible financial decisions.
- Ensuring banks offer low-cost basic banking services that meet consumers' banking needs, expand no-cost basic banking services for youths, students and vulnerable groups, and continue to provide free monthly printed statements for credit cards.
- Raising awareness among Canadians of their right to cash Government of Canada cheques free of charge at any bank in Canada.
- Helping lower the costs that merchants pay to accept credit cards, while encouraging merchants to lower prices for consumers.

## **HELPING CANADIANS PREPARE FOR AND RECOVER FROM NATURAL DISASTERS**

The Government remains committed to helping Canadians build safer and more resilient communities. EAP 2014 announces new measures to better prepare Canadians and protect them from natural disasters:

- \$200 million over five years to establish a National Disaster Mitigation Program.
- \$40 million over five years for disaster mitigation in First Nations communities.
- \$11.4 million over five years on a cash basis to Natural Resources Canada to upgrade its earthquake monitoring system.

## **THE SEARCH AND RESCUE VOLUNTEERS TAX CREDIT**

To recognize the important role played by search and rescue volunteers who put themselves at risk in the service of their communities, EAP 2014 announces a new 15-per-cent non-refundable Search and Rescue Volunteers Tax Credit on an amount of \$3,000 for ground, air and marine search and rescue volunteers. This credit will be available to search and rescue volunteers who perform at least 200 hours of service during a year.

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*With these and other measures, Economic Action Plan 2014 is supporting families and communities.*

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