



Dear Residents of Barrie,

I would like to share with you some of the work I have been doing during my second term in Parliament. The Conservative Government has taken the right steps and has achieved a great amount over the last five years. Allow me to briefly explain a few of the major accomplishments affecting Canada, and more specifically, those relating to you as a resident of Barrie.

### **In Ottawa**

White collar crime has a devastating impact on individuals and our communities. Our government listened to the many concerns of victims of fraud and took action to help them seek restitution. In 2010, we re-introduced legislation to provide tougher sentences for fraud and to help combat white collar crime. The legislation made jail time mandatory – at least two years for fraud over \$1 million. Our Government recognizes the humiliation and loss suffered by victims and we acted to amend the fraud provisions of the Criminal Code to impose tougher sentences on those who commit these dishonest and contemptible acts.

Our Government is also committed to putting criminals behind bars. Canadians who have been victims of crimes should be supported by the criminal justice system, not ignored by it. That's why we recently introduced the Citizen's Arrest and Self Defence Act. These changes to the Criminal Code allow Canadians to know that they have the law on their side and that the justice system targets criminals and not victims. We have also introduced new legislation to get tough on gun and gang crime, street racing, and to crack down on identity theft. In addition we are stopping criminals from exploiting loopholes in the justice system by ending the practice of getting 2-for-1 or 3-for-1 credit for time served either before or during their trial.

With the challenge of the global economic crisis, our Government addressed issues directly, providing Canadians with Canada's Economic Action Plan. First, we paid down debt when times were good and

strengthened our already strong banking system. When the global crisis hit, our Government did not need to bail out banks as did other nations. We were in far better shape. It is clear that the Economic Action Plan is continuing to work. Since July 2009, more than 450,000 jobs have been created across the country. According to the IMF and OECD, Canada is expected to be the fastest growing economy in the G-7 over 2011, and the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness report ranks Canada as having the soundest banking system in the world.

In 2007, our Government announced a series of graduated business tax reductions designed to keep Canada competitive with our trading partners and this strategy has been supported by a majority of parliamentarians in two federal budgets since. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) supports corporate tax cuts for small businesses and our Conservative government has made this type of corporate tax policy a major part of Canada's economic recovery. Small businesses create most of our jobs and are the economic engine for our economy. This is why our Government fought to keep taxes low for small businesses.

In January of this year, the Bank of Canada reported in its Business Outlook Survey that 44% of Canadian firms expected to invest more in productivity-enhancing machinery and equipment in the year ahead.

Sybil Goruk, the Executive Director of the Greater Barrie Chamber of Commerce, put it best when she wrote to me last month to voice her concerns, "Consistency and reliability in government policy are critical factors in business decision-making. Businesses across the country have invested with the understanding that taxes would decline. A sudden change of course would constitute a broken promise to thousands of businesses and the many people they have employed based on that promise".

Over the last five years, our Government has reduced taxes 120 times, and Canada now has an overall tax rate on new business investment that is substantially lower than any other G-7 country.

The subcommittee on Neurological Disease in Ottawa is the committee that holds special importance for me. My Liberal colleague and I encouraged Parliament to develop a national strategy on conditions affecting the brain and form this committee. We are looking at autism, MS, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease and ALS. I strongly believe we need to invest more heavily into research in these areas and was thrilled when my lobbying of our government paid off to the tune of \$100 million for the National Brain Institute. The global community still knows very little about neurological disorders and there are substantial, exciting new research opportunities. I believe Canada can be an international leader in combating this insidious disease. Jeanette Elliot from the Barrie MS Chapter, Derek Walton from ALS Simcoe County and my late grandmother who passed away from dementia in 2010 has made this issue a very personal one. I know we can do more to help Canadians with these horrible diseases.

### **For Barrie**

Protecting local television is important to the residents of Barrie. Our *A Channel* is just one of many local television stations at risk in Canada. I believe that the majority of residents in Barrie appreciate having the ability to learn about local news, cultural activities and charitable events through our local *A Channel*. The

CRTC should be following their mandate and actively trying to protect local television. I have been organizing a group of elected representatives in our Parliament to rally behind protecting local television, as I would like to see stations like *A Channel* continue to service residents. We achieved a major victory for local TV when the CRTC sided in favour of protecting local TV by sharing signal fees and investing \$30 million into LOCAL TV.

Another issue of importance in Barrie is the closure of Barrie Central Collegiate. Founded in 1843, Barrie Central is the only high school in downtown Barrie. Closing Barrie Central could mean another 1,000 students riding buses to attend other area schools that are already stretched far too thin. Adding to the overcrowding is proceeding in the wrong direction and the City of Barrie Council concurs. Barrie Central can be saved and potential partners have shown interest. School Board Trustees will make the final decision on the school's future on May 31, 2011.

Georgian College is continuing to grow and create jobs and opportunities for the residents of Barrie. Georgian College was awarded \$20 million as the federal Government's share towards The Centre for Health and Wellness. The new 15,000 square metre facility will allow Georgian College to accommodate over 1,800 additional students in diploma and degree programs, and will provide locally trained professionals to address the needs of Royal Victoria Hospital. The new facility is expected to be operational for students and staff by September 2011.

The Lake Simcoe Regional Airport also benefited from a major funding investment. The airport expansion had been championed by the late Paul Mulrooney who had passed away last year. He had a dream that the airport could be a hub for commercial activity that would allow our businesses to compete inter-provincially and internationally. His dream has become a reality. This project involves a federal commitment of \$4.596 million.

The building of a new fire station in downtown Barrie was desperately needed. Our firefighters risk their lives to keep our community safe. They require state of the art equipment and provisions in order to do their jobs professionally and efficiently. Len Mitchell, Kevin White and Charlie Gray from Barrie Fire Services lobbied for this improvement during visits to Ottawa and our federal Government responded with support in the amount of \$4.26 million. Barrie firefighters will make the transition into the new station by the end of April this year.

Since 2008, I have been a tireless advocate for the funding of Lake Simcoe Clean-up projects. For the first time in history, a federal Government stepped up to the plate for our Lake and committed \$30 million. Our Government is proud to be working in partnership with members of the Lake Simcoe conservation community to restore the health of this precious lake. Since 2008, the Government has supported approximately one hundred targeted projects with funding through the Lake Simcoe Clean-up Fund and the work continues. The results are clear: lower phosphorus levels, restoring urban and rural stream banks and the planting of over 6,500 new trees and shrubs.

In 2009, I was pleased to announce funding of \$2.5 million for the City of Barrie's new Downtown Community Theatre. I was a City of Barrie council representative on the 2001 Theatre Feasibility

Committee that determined we had the desire but not the financial means to build a theatre in the downtown core. Eight years later, it gave me great pleasure to deliver the federal funds that make this dream a reality. I remember having lunch with Joe Anderson when he explained to me his dream for a vibrant cultural community rooted out of a community theatre. He outlined this vision in the fall of 2000 and I am so proud to see his legacy, the city's cultural community, bloom under this investment. The municipally-owned and operated facility will be the residence of Barrie's two professional theatre companies. The venue will also host independent artists and community groups for music and theatre performances, as well as other special presentations.

In 2008, our Government delivered \$274,892 in funding for United Way of Greater Simcoe County under the Government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). We are committed to help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Government is proud to support community efforts that help find local solutions to local problems. Working together, we can help our most vulnerable citizens find a place to call home, as well as find the support they need to become more self-sufficient. I also anticipate making a major announcement in regards to homelessness funding in 2011. Stay tuned for the exciting details.

As a Barrie resident, you are likely aware that many of our roads are under construction around the City as we continuously improve on the City's infrastructure. As part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, our Government doubled the annual funding to nearly \$7 million that the City of Barrie receives as part of the Gas Tax Fund. This program will continue to create jobs, boost sales for local businesses and improve the quality of life for the families of Barrie as we recover from the economic downturn.

Recreation is vital to all communities and especially to Barrie. The recent expansion of the Eastview Arena means more Barrie residents will be able to enjoy the many activities it offers. Through Canada's Economic Action Plan, we created jobs and provided today's families with recreation facilities to enjoy now and to serve the long-term needs of future generations.

The Barrie community has close ties with nearby Base Borden. We have seen a tremendous amount of support for the base over the last few years from our Government. Through several major investments in defence infrastructure at CFB Borden, we are seeing the Government's commitment to our men and women in uniform. Last month, we announced the creation of five new integrated support centres at military bases across the country, with one of those coming to Base Borden. These support centres improve the quality of care and services received by ill and injured Canadian Forces personnel whether they are regular, retired or reserve members as well as their families. Our government is also committed to rebuilding Base Borden. Last August, I was with Minister of Defence, Peter MacKay when we announced \$210 million to improve training facilities, housing, roads and infrastructure at CFB Borden.

As a former Barrie Councillor, I understand the distinct challenges of budgetary restrictions facing the growing City of Barrie. So many roads and bridges that need fixing, upgrades to water and sewer systems needed and the ongoing need for new parks and green spaces. Our government made a financial commitment to municipalities to help by increasing the Federal Gas Tax Transfer to Cities. When we took

power in 2006, Barrie received just over \$2 million from Ottawa. Last year the transfer was nearly \$7 million and we expect that to continue every year. This type of reliable and consistent transfer is very important for Barrie in planning for the coming year's fiscal commitments and ultimately, it gives City Council more funds to help prevent property tax increases.

### **Moving Forward**

The Conservative Government has made major investments in the City of Barrie and residents have benefited in many different ways.

As your Member of Parliament, I have also worked hard to support charities and local initiatives close to our community. Through my various annual events, I have supported The Bill Wilkins Scholarship Fund, Physician Recruitment, OSPCA, The Royal Canadian Legion, Talk is Free Theatre, Theatre by the Bay, JDRF, the MS Society, and the United Way to name a few. The greatest fundraising success is my annual Hockey Night in Barrie. Over the past three years, Hockey Night Barrie has raised over \$420,000 for the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Care Centre at RVH. The key to this successful event is the participation from the Barrie business community and all the area residents who show their unwavering support with capacity attendance. Your help is greatly appreciated and Hockey Night in Barrie IV will be even bigger and better this year!

All of the steps made over the past few years were made for the greater good of Barrie and Canada as a whole. Our Government will not raise taxes that hurt Canadians' pocketbooks. We continue to open up new markets for Canadian goods and services and we are committed to delivering the results that make a difference for Canadians and their families. I thank you for your continued support as we strive towards our common goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Brown', is written over a light pink rectangular background.

Patrick Brown MP

Barrie ON