

Final Report

Premier's Mission to Washington, D.C.

June 25-30, 2006

Overview:

In the summer of 2006, for the first time in its 40-year history, the prestigious Smithsonian Folklife Festival featured a Canadian jurisdiction – Alberta. The Folklife Festival is an annual event that attracts one million visitors to the National Mall in the heart of Washington. It covers a ten square block area between the Capitol Building and the Washington Monument, just blocks from the White House. From June 30 to July 11, more than 150 participants from across Alberta demonstrated our province's performing arts, cuisine, aboriginal culture, and technology at the festival.

Leading up to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Alberta Premier Ralph Klein led a delegation of Alberta Cabinet Ministers to Washington for *Alberta Week in Washington*. Building upon Alberta's \$71 billion per year trading relationship with the United States and the Alberta focus of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, the goal of *Alberta Week in Washington* was to provide U.S. policy-makers with an understanding of Alberta's perspective on important issues in areas such as energy and agriculture, and to help Albertans expand their network of contacts in the U.S. capital. Highlights included meetings and events with key Congressional and Administration officials and economic forums that provided an opportunity to showcase Alberta's energy, information communications technology, agriculture industries, and Canada-U.S. relations. About 650 guests, including U.S. elected officials and Capitol Hill staffers, also attended an Alberta Gala at the National Building Museum that honoured the Smithsonian Board of Regents.

The mission was successful in meeting its objectives as outlined below.

Mission Objectives:

- 1) Support and enhance the profile of *Alberta Week in Washington* (June 26-July 1) and the Alberta exhibit at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival (June 30-July 11).
- 2) Use the profile Alberta will have in Washington to reinforce our key messages in the U.S.
- 3) Take advantage of Alberta's presence in Washington, D.C. to expand the number and quality of contacts with key U.S. decision-makers.
- 4) Promote a well-rounded view of Alberta, one that accurately portrays the richness and diversity of our geography, culture and economy.

Results:

June 26

After paying respects on behalf of Albertans at historic Washington sites such as the World War II Memorial, Vietnam Memorial, Lincoln Memorial and Arlington Cemetery, Premier Klein visited an Alberta Craft Council exhibition of works by Alberta artists at the Canadian Embassy.

At the Embassy, Premier Klein attended the City of Edmonton reception, the opening event to *Alberta Week in Washington*. With more than 250 guests from both sides of the border in attendance, the event focused on Edmonton's role in Alberta's energy industry and the energy of the city's people.

June 27

Premier Klein, along with an Alberta delegation including International and Intergovernmental Relations Minister Gary Mar, Energy Minister Greg Melchin, and Alberta Representative in Washington Murray Smith, met with Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), Chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Discussions centered on Alberta's oil sands and the province's role as a safe and secure supplier of energy to the United States.

Following the meeting, Premier Klein and an Alberta delegation attended a Congressional reception for Alberta sponsored by 49 members of Congress who served as honorary co-hosts. More than 350 guests, including key business leaders in the energy sector, Alberta partners and sponsors, Congressional staffers, and members of the Canadian-American Business Council attended. The reception was an excellent opportunity to network and introduce *Alberta Week in Washington* to a distinguished group of U.S. Congressional and business leaders.

June 28

Premier Klein delivered the keynote address at a luncheon hosted by the U.S. State Department. The more than 275 guests included participants in the Alberta energy forum, the U.S. Energy Association's *Natural Gas Roundtable*, U.S. elected officials, Capitol Hill staffers, influential U.S. business people, and members of the Canadian-American Business Council. Premier Klein focused on the development of Alberta's oil sands; the province's growing role as a safe and secure supplier of energy to the United States at a time of growing international uncertainty; and areas of present and future cooperation between Alberta and the United States, including energy, technology, investment and labour.

Premier Klein, along with Alberta International and Intergovernmental Relations Minister Gary Mar and Canadian Ambassador Michael Wilson met with Vice President Dick Cheney at the White House. Premier Klein updated the Vice President on developments in Alberta's oil sands and discussed the importance of close U.S.-Alberta co-operation, particularly in energy, and in related areas such as labour mobility. The Premier also invited the Vice President to visit Alberta's oil sands.

That evening, approximately 650 people including U.S. elected officials, Capitol Hill staffers, and Canadian and U.S. business leaders attended the Alberta Gala at the National Building Museum. Premier Klein's address to the gathering focused on Alberta's relationship with the United States. He also presented awards to the Smithsonian Board of Regents and donated, on behalf of Alberta, a painting by an Alberta Aboriginal artist to the National Museum of the American Indian.

June 29

Premier Klein delivered the keynote address to a luncheon attended by Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, and more than 120 people who attended the Canada-U.S. Agricultural Interdependence Forum at the Woodrow Wilson Center. The Premier focused on agricultural issues of importance to Alberta and the close trading relationship between Alberta and the United States. In his remarks, Rep. Goodlatte recalled his visit to Alberta in June 2005, which led to Congressional support for re-opening the U.S. border to Canadian cattle exports.

Later that evening, Premier Klein participated in the *Partnerships Across Borders* event hosted by Alberta post-secondary institutions at the Kennedy Center. Premier Klein announced a \$300,000 internship program for 50 Alberta students at Smithsonian institutions.

Premier Klein later attended the City of Calgary's reception at the Canadian Embassy. The reception built upon relationships with senior officials from U.S. national organizations headquartered in Washington and promoted Calgary's convention facilities to meeting planners.

June 30

Premier Klein, along with Community Development Minister Denis Ducharme, represented Alberta at the official opening ceremonies of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. More than 500 people attended the ceremonies, which also included representatives from the Smithsonian Institution, the U.S. Congress, and the festival's other featured exhibits.

Following the ceremonies, Premier Klein toured the Alberta displays and met with Albertans participating in the festival.

Later, at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival opening luncheon hosted by Lawrence Small, Secretary of the Smithsonian, Premier Klein met with representatives from jurisdictions slated to be featured at the festival over the next several years and committed to provide them with advice and assistance based on Alberta's successful experience at the festival.

Delegation:

Premier Ralph Klein
Peter Kruselnicki, Chief of Staff, Office of the Premier
Marisa Etmanski, Director of Communications, Office of the Premier
Jim Law, Communications, Office of the Premier

Attachment:

Full report on Alberta Week in Washington activities.