



An Open Letter to the Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association

November 18, 2009

Dear friends,

Thank you again for allowing me the privilege of attending your Awards Banquet at Bingemans on November 13, 2009. The great pride your members take in their work and service was evident. The level of organization at the event, the photographs of finalists' work, and attendees' attitudes all demonstrated your membership's commitment to excellence.

I remain grateful for the opportunity to bring greetings and thank those present for their contribution to our region's economy and quality of life. I didn't think it would be appropriate, though to use my time at the microphone to address the questions I'd heard regarding Federal initiatives in support of the home building industry.

In Budget 2008 we introduced the First Time Home Buyers Credit, which provides a credit of up to \$8,000 to those purchasing their first home. Encouraging more Canadians to enjoy the benefits of property ownership is one of our Party's basic tenets.

The next year Budget 2009 – Canada's Economic Action Plan – provided incentives for property owners to renovate their homes. The Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC) was a huge success in helping home owners move ahead with renovation projects. I have heard from many homeowners and contractors who confirmed this program's effectiveness in boosting this sector and keeping Canadians employed.

Finally, many building and construction companies have expressed frustration with the shortage shortage of skilled workers. We heard you. For the very first time in Canadian history, Minister Flaherty referenced the needs of Canada's college system and the vital role it plays in our economy. Through the Knowledge Infrastructure Program, we are expanding and renewing the college facilities to provide your industry with the skilled talent it needs in the 21st century.

I remain committed to advancing measures which will ensure a vibrant and competitive home building industry. I continue to welcome common-sense ideas on this topic I can share with my colleagues in Ottawa.

Thank you for the invitation and the warm welcome. I look forward to continuing our dialogue as Canada emerges stronger from the current global challenges.

Sincerely,

Harold Albrecht, MP
Kitchener-Conestoga