



For Immediate Release
March 25, 2014

Parliamentarians hold inaugural All-Party Co-operative Caucus meeting

OTTAWA – Today marked the inaugural meeting of the first All-Party Co-operative Caucus on Parliament Hill. Members of Parliament and Senators from all political parties were invited to attend.

The first order of business was the election of a chairperson. In co-operative fashion, the caucus elected three co-chairs: Joe Preston (CPC, Elgin—Middlesex—London), Hélène LeBlanc (NDP, LaSalle—Émard) and Mauril Bélanger (LIB, Ottawa—Vanier). The three MPs will rotate the chairmanship. Mr. Preston chaired the inaugural meeting.

The purpose of the All-Party Co-operative Caucus is to discuss and support policies directly affecting co-operative enterprises. The objectives of the All-Party Caucus are to promote the co-operative movement, to contribute to its development and to facilitate exchange and dialogue between parliamentarians and the co-operative sector stakeholders.

“There is a clear need for activities related to co-operatives to be more widely scrutinised in Parliament and the expertise of this Caucus will contribute directly into this debate,” said Leo LeBlanc, President of Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC). “The All-Party Co-operative Caucus is the continuation of the work that has already been undertaken by parliamentarians as well as experts throughout the co-operative movement.”

CMC has offered to resource this caucus and it will work closely with the All-Party Caucus to represent the Canadian co-operative and mutual movement.

On April 3, 2013 the Government of Canada completed the transfer of responsibility for co-operatives to Industry Canada from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, which was a key recommendation in the report of the Special Committee on Co-operatives published in the fall of 2012.

The Caucus hopes to hold its second meeting on Wednesday May 7, 2014 chaired by Madame LeBlanc and the third meeting on Wednesday June 4, 2014 chaired by Mr. Bélanger.

About Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada

Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC) is the new national Apex organization representing co-operatives and mutuals across Canada. It will officially launch on April 1, 2014. Canada’s 9,000 co-operatives have more than 18 million members, 155,000 employees, annual revenues of more than \$50 billion and assets of more than \$370 billion.

-30-

Brendan Denovan
Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada
(613) 238-6711 ext 206
bdenovan@canada.coop