



TRANSPORT ACTION ONTARIO

Advocating for Sustainable Public and Freight Transportation
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FOR RELEASE APRIL 30, 2015

Government's defeat of VIA Rail bill "misguided and destructive"

TORONTO – The current government missed an opportunity to prove its support for an efficient and effective nationwide rail passenger service when it unanimously defeated MP Phil Toone's Bill C-640, the *VIA Rail Canada Act*, yesterday.

"This government's veto of this progressive and necessary act to reform and revitalize our rail passenger service will prove to be misguided and destructive," said Peter Miasek, president of the public transportation advocacy organization, Transport Action Ontario. "The most vital element in a rail passenger renaissance is an act that spells out VIA's mandate, rights and obligations. This has been missing since VIA's breech birth in 1977; MP Toone's bill would have provided it."

The *VIA Rail Canada Act* was defeated on a vote of 152 to 122 in the House of Commons yesterday, with division on clear party lines. Every Conservative MP, plus former Conservatives James Lunney and Brent Rathgeber, who now sit as Independents, voted against it. Many of those MPs have in the past issued positive statements about their support for the maintenance, modernization and expansion of VIA.

Support for the *VIA Rail Canada Act* came from all other members of the House of Commons who were present for the vote. That included unanimous consent by the NDP, Liberal and Green parties, Bloc Québécois and Forces et Démocratie, plus two Independents. The record of yesterday's vote, indicating who supports or opposes the re-establishment of VIA as a modern and more effective coast-to-coast passenger service, is attached to this release.

"What is shocking about the defeat of this admirable piece of legislation is that it draws heavily on the Amtrak working example in the U.S. and a previous bill that another Conservative government introduced in Parliament in 1986, but then let die on the order paper," says Miasek. "There is nothing revolutionary in this bill, just common sense and proven examples."

In preparing his *VIA Rail Canada Act*, MP Toone made use of the services of rail industry and government policy adviser Greg Gormick, who has worked for VIA, CP, CN and numerous elected officials of four federal parties, including the current Conservative government. In preparing the aspects of the bill dealing with passenger train priority over freight, the costing formula used to calculate the charges to VIA by the freight railways and a legislated national route network alterable only by Parliament, Gormick made extensive use of the 1986 Conservative bill.

“Bill C-640’s use of these logical legislative tools – endorsed by a previous Conservative government – would have created the foundation for a modern rail passenger service delivering the economic, social and environmental benefits that every other G8 nation already enjoys,” said Miasek. “Numerous Conservative MPs in Southwestern Ontario and Atlantic Canada have said repeatedly they support that, but their defeat of this bill proves otherwise.”

Miasek also pointed out that VIA is now smaller, less effective and more costly to operate than it was when the current government was first elected in 2006. Despite promises to revitalize VIA as a nationwide, publicly-funded system, VIA has experienced a series of government-mandated service and budget cuts. This slashing would not have occurred if Bill C-640 governed the railway and Parliament’s relationship with it.

Said Miasek, “With legislation similar to Bill C-640 and Congressional approval, Amtrak has improved its service frequency, ridership and revenues in the same period. A *VIA Rail Canada Act* is vital to the continuation and improvement of rail passenger service as part of a balanced national transportation system. That the Harper government has denied Canadians this legislation is sad proof of what Cape Breton resident and former Amtrak president David Gunn has been saying for many years: VIA is dying. It just got helped along on that journey by the defeat of Bill C-640.”

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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ABOUT TRANSPORT ACTION ONTARIO

Transport Action Ontario and four other regional associations in Atlantic Canada, Québec (Transport 2000 Québec), the Prairies and British Columbia form Transport Action Canada, a non-profit organization whose primary purpose is research, public education and consumer advocacy. It promotes environmentally-sound transportation solutions and gets actively involved in a wide range of issues, such as public transportation, safety, accessibility, energy efficiency, environmental protection, intermodal co-operation and government regulation.

HOW YOUR MP VOTED ON THE VIA RAIL CANADA ACT

NAYS: 152
YEAS: 122
ABSENT: 31

NAYS

Diane Ablonczy	Conservative	Calgary – Nose Hill
Mark Adler	Conservative	York Centre
Hon. Leona Aglukkaq	Conservative	Nunavat
Dan Albas	Conservative	Okanagan – Coquihalla
Harold Albrecht	Conservative	Kitchener – Conestoga
Hon. Chris Alexander	Conservative	Ajax – Pickering
Mike Allen	Conservative	Tobique – Mactaquac
Dean Allison	Conservative	Niagara West – Glanbrook
Stella Ambler	Conservative	Mississauga South
Hon. Rona Ambrose	Conservative	Edmonton – Spruce Grove
Rob Anders	Conservative	Calgary West
David Anderson	Conservative	Cypress Hills – Grasslands
Scott Armstrong	Conservative	Cumberland – Colchester – Musquodoboit Valley
Jay Aspin	Conservative	Nipissing – Timiskaming
John Barlow	Conservative	Macleod
Joyce Bateman	Conservative	Winnipeg South Centre
Leon Benoit	Conservative	Vegreville – Wainwright
Hon. Candice Bergen	Conservative	Portage – Lisgar
James Bezan	Conservative	Selkirk – Interlake
Hon. Steven Blaney	Conservative	Lévis -- Bellechasse
Kelly Block	Conservative	Saskatoon – Rosetown – Biggar
Ray Boughen	Conservative	Palliser
Peter Braid	Conservative	Kitchener – Waterloo
Garry Breitkreuz	Conservative	Yorkton – Melville
Gordon Brown	Conservative	Leeds – Grenville
Lois Brown	Conservative	Newmarket – Aurora
Brad Butt	Conservative	Mississauga – Streetsville
Paul Calandra	Conservative	Oak Ridges – Markham
Blaine Calkins	Conservative	Wetaskiwin
Hon. Ron Cannan	Conservative	Kelowna – Lake Country
John Carmichael	Conservative	Don Valley West
Colin Carrie	Conservative	Oshawa
Corneliu Chisu	Conservative	Pickering – Scarborough East
Hon. Michael Chong	Conservative	Wellington – Halton Hills
Rob Clarke	Conservative	Desnethé – Missinippi – Churchill River
Hon. Tony Clement	Conservative	Parry Sound – Muskoka
Joan Crockatt	Conservative	Calgary Centre
Joe Daniel	Conservative	Don Valley East

NAYS

Patricia Davidson	Conservative	Sarnia – Lambton
Bob Dechert	Conservative	Mississauga – Erindale
Barry Devolin	Conservative	Haliburton – Kawartha Lakes – Brock
Earl Dreesen	Conservative	Red River
Hon. John Duncan	Conservative	Vancouver Island North
Rick Dykstra	Conservative	St. Catharines
Jim Eglinski	Conservative	Yellowhead
Ted Falk	Conservative	Provencher
Hon. Julian Fantino	Conservative	Vaughan
Hon. Ed Fast	Conservative	Abbotsford
Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay	Conservative	Delta – Richmond East
Hon. Diane Finley	Conservative	Haldimand – Norfolk
Hon. Steven Fletcher	Conservative	Charleswood – St. James – Assiniboia
Royal Galipeau	Conservative	Ottawa – Orléans
Cheryl Gallant	Conservative	Renfrew – Nipissing – Pembroke
Parm Gill	Conservative	Brampton – Springdale
Hon. Shelly Glover	Conservative	Saint Boniface
Robert Goguen	Conservative	Moncton – Riverview – Dieppe
Peter Goldring	Conservative	Edmonton East
Hon. Gary Goodyear	Conservative	Cambridge
Hon. Bal Gosal	Conservative	Bramalea – Gore – Malton
Jacques Gourde	Conservative	Lotbinière – Chutes-de-la-Chaudière
Nina Grewal	Conservative	Fleetwood – Port Kells
Richard Harris	Conservative	Cariboo – Prince George
Hon. Lawrie Hawn	Conservative	Edmonton Centre
Bryan Hayes	Conservative	Sault Ste. Marie
Jim Hillyer	Conservative	Lethbridge
Randy Hoback	Conservative	Prince Albert
Hon. Ed Holder	Conservative	London West
Roxanne James	Conservative	Scarborough Centre
Randy Kamp	Conservative	Pitt Meadows – Maple Ridge – Mission
Gerald Keddy	Conservative	South Shore – St. Margaret's
Hon. Jason Kenney	Conservative	Calgary Southeast
Hon. Peter Kent	Conservative	Thornhill
Greg Kerr	Conservative	West Nova
Ed Komarnicki	Conservative	Souris – Moose Mountain
Daryl Kamp	Conservative	Prince Edward – Hastings
Hon. Mike Lake	Conservative	Edmonton – Mill Woods – Beaumont
Guy Lauzon	Conservative	Stormont – Dundas – South Glengarry
Hon. Denis Lebel	Conservative	Roberval – Lac-Saint-Jean
Ryan Leef	Conservative	Yukon
Hon. Kellie Leitch	Conservative	Simcoe – Grey
Pierre Lemieux	Conservative	Glengarry – Prescott – Russell
Chungsen Leung	Conservative	Willowdale
Wladyslaw Lizon	Conservative	Mississauga East – Cooksville

NAYS

Ben Lobb	Conservative	Huron – Bruce
Tom Lukiwski	Conservative	Regina – Lumsden – Lake Centre
Hon. Peter MacKay	Conservative	Central Nova
Dave MacKenzie	Conservative	Oxford
Larry Maguire	Conservative	Brandon – Souris
Colin Mayes	Conservative	Okanagan – Shuswap
Phil McColeman	Conservative	Brant
Cathy McLeod	Conservative	Kamloops – Thompson – Cariboo
Costas Menegakis	Conservative	Richmond Hill
Larry Miller	Conservative	Bruce – Grey – Owen Sound
Hon. James Moore	Conservative	Port Moody – Westwood – Port Coquitlam
Hon. Rob Moore	Conservative	Fundy Royal
Hon. Rob Nicholson	Conservative	Niagara Falls
Hon. Deepak Obhraj	Conservative	Calgary East
Tilly O’Neill Gordon	Conservative	Miramichi
Ted Opitz	Conservative	Etobicoke Centre
Hon. Erin O’Toole	Conservative	Durham
Hon. Christian Paradis	Conservative	Mégantic – L’Érable
LaVar Payne	Conservative	Medicine Hat
Pat Perkins	Conservative	Whitby – Oshawa
Hon. Pierre Poilivre	Conservative	Nepean – Carleton
Joe Preston	Conservative	Elgin – Middlesex – London
Hon. Lisa Raitt	Conservative	Halton
James Rajotte	Conservative	Edmonton – Leduc
Scott Reid	Conservative	Lanark – Frontenac – Lennox and Addington
Hon. Michelle Rempel	Conservative	Calgary Centre-North
Blake Richards	Conservative	Wild Rose
Hon. Greg Rickford	Conservative	Kenora
Hon. Gerry Ritz	Conservative	Battleford -- Lloydminster
Andrew Saxton	Conservative	North Vancouver
Gary Schellenberger	Conservative	Perth – Wellington
Kyle Seeback	Conservative	Brampton West
Hon. Gail Shea	Conservative	Egmont
Bev Shipley	Conservative	Lambton – Kent – Middlesex
Devinder Shory	Conservative	Calgary Northeast
Joy Smith	Conservative	Kildonan – St. Paul
Robert Sopuck	Conservative	Dauphin – Swan River – Marquette
Hon. Kevin Sorenson	Conservative	Crowfoot
Bruce Stanton	Conservative	Simcoe North
Mark Strahl	Conservative	Chilliwack – Fraser Canyon
David Sweet	Conservative	Ancaster – Dundas – Flamborough – Westdale
David Tilson	Conservative	Dufferin – Caledon
Lawrence Toet	Conservative	Elmwood – Transcona
Brad Trost	Conservative	Saskatoon – Humboldt

NAYS

Bernard Trottier	Conservative	Etobicoke – Lakeshore
Susan Truppe	Conservative	London North Centre
Hon. Tim Uppal	Conservative	Edmonton – Sherwood Park
Hon. Bernard Valcourt	Conservative	Madawaska – Restigouche
Dave Van Kesteren	Conservative	Chatham – Kent – Essex
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Chris Warkentin	Conservative	Peace River
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David Wilks	Conservative	Kootenay – Columbia
John Williamson	Conservative	New Brunswick Southwest
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Stephen Woodworth	Conservative	Kitchener Centre
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Wai Young	Conservative	Vancouver South
David Yurdiga	Conservative	Fort McMurray – Athabasca
Bob Zimmer	Conservative	Prince George – Peace River
James Lunney	Independent	Nanaimo – Alberni
Brent Rathgeber	Independent	Edmonton – St. Albert

YEAS

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Charlie Angus	NDP	Timmins – James Bay
Niki Ashton	NDP	Churchill
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Robert Aubin	NDP	Trois-Rivières
Paulina Ayala	NDP	Honoré-Mercier
Tyrone Benskin	NDP	Jeanne-Le-Ber
Dennis Bevington	NDP	Northwest Territories
Denis Blanchette	NDP	Louis-Hébert
Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe	NDP	Pierrefonds – Dollard
Françoise Boivin	NDP	Gatineau
Tarik Brahmi	NDP	Saint-Jean
Ruth Ellen Brosseau	NDP	Berthier – Maskinonge
Guy Caron	NDP	Rimousli-Negette – Témiscouta – Les Basques
Andrew Cash	NDP	Davenport

YEAS

Chris Charlton	NDP	Hamilton Mountain
Sylvain Chicoine	NDP	Châteauguay – Saint-Constant
François Choquette	NDP	Drummond
David Christopherson	NDP	Hamilton Centre
Joe Comartin	NDP	Windsor – Tecumseh
Raymond Côté	NDP	Beauport – Limoilou
Jean Crowder	NDP	Nanaimo – Cowichan
Nathan Cullen	NDP	Skeena – Bulkley Valley
Don Davies	NDP	Vancouver Kingsway
Anne-Marie Day	NDP	Charlesbourg – Haute-Sainte-Charles
Paul Dewar	NDP	Ottawa Centre
Pierre Dionne Labelle	NDP	Rivière-du-Nord
Fin Donnelly	NDP	New Westminster – Couquitlam
Rosane Doré Lefebvre	NDP	Alfred-Pellan
Matthew Dubé	NDP	Chambly – Borduas
Linda Duncan	NDP	Edmonton – Strathcona
Pierre-Luc Dusseault	NDP	Sherbrooke
Mylène Freeman	NDP	Argenteuil – Papineau – Mirabel
Randall Garrison	NDP	Esquimalt – Juan de Fuca
Réjean Genest	NDP	Shefford
Jonathan Genest-Jourdain	NDP	Manicouagan
Alain Giguère	NDP	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin
Yvon Godin	NDP	Acadie – Bathurst
Claude Gravelle	NDP	Nickel Belt
Sadia Groguhé	NDP	Saint-Lambert
Dan Harris	NDP	Scarborough Southwest
Jack Harris	NDP	St. John's East
Carol Hughes	NDP	Algoma – Manitoulin – Kapuskasing
Peter Julian	NDP	Burnaby – New Westminster
Matthew Kellway	NDP	Beaches – East York
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Hélène LeBlanc	NDP	LaSalle – Émard
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Christine Moore	NDP	Abitibi – Témiscamingue
Dany Morin	NDP	Chicoutimi – Le Fjord
Isabelle Morin	NDP	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce – Lachine

YEAS

Marc-Andre Morin	NDP	Laurentides – Labelle
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Hon. Thomas Mulcair	NDP	Outremont
Pierre Nantel	NDP	Longueuil – Pierre-Boucher
Peggy Nash	NDP	Parkdale – High Park
Jamie Nicholls	NDP	Vaudreuil-Soulanges
Jose Numez-Melo	NDP	Laval
Annick Papillon	NDP	Quebec
Ève Péclet	NDP	La Pointe-de-l'Île
François Pilon	NDP	Laval – Les Îles
Anne Minh-Thu Quach	NDP	Beauharnois – Salaberry
John Rafferty	NDP	Thunder Bay – Rainy River
Murray Rankin	NDP	Victoria
Mathieu Ravignat	NDP	Pontiac
Francine Raynault	NDP	Joliette
Jean Rousseau	NDP	Compton – Stanstead
Jasbir Sandhu	NDP	Surrey North
Craig Scott	NDP	Toronto – Danforth
Djaouida Sellah	NDP	Saint-Bruno – Saint-Hubert
Jinny Jogindera Sims	NDP	Newton – North Delta
Rathika Sitsabaiesan	NDP	Scarborough – Rouge River
Kennedy Stewart	NDP	Burnaby – Douglas
Peter Stoffer	NDP	Sackville – Eastern Shore
Mike Sullivan	NDP	York South – Weston
Philip Toone	NDP	Gaspésie – Îles-de-la-Madeleine
Jonathan Tremblay	NDP	Montmorency – Charlevoix – Haute-Côte-Nord
Eve Adams	Liberal	Mississauga – Brampton South
Hon. Mauril Bélanger	Liberal	Ottawa – Vanier
Hon. Carolyn Bennett	Liberal	St. Paul's
Hon. Scott Bryson	Liberal	Kings – Hants
Hon. Gerry Byrne	Liberal	Humber – St. Barbe – Baie Verte
Sean Casey	Liberal	Charlottetown
Arnold Chan	Liberal	Scarborough – Agincourt
Hon. Irwin Cotler	Liberal	Mount Royal
Rodger Cuzner	Liberal	Cape Breton – Canso
Hon. Stéphane Dion	Liberal	Saint-Laurent – Cartierville
Emmanuel Dubourg	Liberal	Bourassa
Hon. Wayne Easter	Liberal	Malpeque
Judy Foote	Liberal	Random – Burin – St. George's
Hon. Hedy Fry	Liberal	Vancouver Centre
Marc Garneau	Liberal	Westmount – Ville-Marie
Hon. Ralph Goodale	Liberal	Wascana
Ted Hsu	Liberal	Kingston and the Islands

YEAS

Yvonne Jones	Liberal	Labrador
Kevin Lamoureux	Liberal	Winnipeg North
Hon. Dominic LeBlanc	Liberal	Beauséjour
Hon. Lawrence MacAulay	Liberal	Cardigan
Hon. John McCallum	Liberal	Markham – Unionville
David McGuinty	Liberal	Ottawa South
Hon. John McKay	Liberal	Scarborough – Guildwood
Joyce Murray	Liberal	Vancouver Quadra
Hon. Geoff Regan	Liberal	Halifax West
Francis Scarpaleggia	Liberal	Lac-Saint-Louis
Hon. Judy Sgro	Liberal	York West
Scott Simms	Liberal	Bonavista – Gander – Grand Falls – Windsor
Lise St-Denis	Liberal	Saint Maurice – Champlain
Justin Trudeau	Liberal	Papineau
Louis Plamondon	BQ	Bas-Richelieu – Nicolet – Bécancour
Jean-François Fortin	FD	Haute-Gaspésie – La Mitis – Matane – Matapédia
Elizabeth May	Green	Saanich – Gulf Islands
André Bellavance	Independent	Richmond – Arthabaska
Maria Mourani	Independent	Ahuntsic

ABSENT

Hon. Keith Ashfield	Conservative	Fredericton
Hon. Maxime Bernier	Conservative	Beauce
Patrick Brown	Conservative	Barrie
Rod Bruinooge	Conservative	Winnipeg South
Right Hon. Stephen Harper	Conservative	Calgary Southwest
Russ Hiebert	Conservative	South Surrey – White Rock – Cloverdale
Hon. Gordon O'Connor	Conservative	Carleton – Mississippi Mills
Hon. Joe Oliver	Conservative	Eglinton – Lawrence
Hon. Andrew Scheer	Conservative	Regina – Qu'Appelle
Brian Storseth	Conservative	Westlock – St. Paul
Charmaine Borg	NDP	Terrebonne – Blainville
Alexandre Boulerice	NDP	Rosemount – La Petite-Patrie
Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet	NDP	Hochelaga
Robert Chisholm	NDP	Dartmouth – Cole Harbour
Libby Davies	NDP	Vancouver East
Pierre Jacob	NDP	Brome – Missisquoi

ABSENT

Megan Leslie	NDP	Halifax
Romeo Saganash	NDP	Abitibi – Baie-James – Nunavik – Eeyou
Nycole Turmel	NDP	Hull – Aylmer
Kirsty Duncan	Liberal	Etobicoke North
Hon. Mark Eyking	Liberal	Sydney – Victoria
Chrystia Freeland	Liberal	Toronto Centre
Frank Valeriote	Liberal	Guelph
Adam Vaughan	Liberal	Trinity – Spadina
Claude Patry	BQ	Jonquière – Alma
Jean-François Larose	FD	Repentigny
Bruce Hyer	Green	Thunder Bay – Superior North
Scott Andrews	Independent	Avalon
Sana Hassainia	Independent	Verchères – Les Patriotes
Massimo Pacetti	Independent	Saint-Léonard – Saint-Michel
Manon Perreault	Independent	Montcalm