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#### HANSARD

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### Canada's Advantage (S&T Strategy).

The S&T Strategy sets out a comprehensive, multi-year S&T agenda that the Government believes will help foster three distinct Canadian S&T advantages: an Entrepreneurial Advantage, a Knowledge Advantage and a People Advantage.

In furtherance of these advantages, as well as the Government's approach to S&T management overall, the S&T Strategy contains 36 new and previously announced policy commitments and spending initiatives.

The S&T Strategy will be guided by four core principles: "Promoting World-Class Excellence", "Focusing on Priorities", "Fostering Partnerships", and "Enhancing Accountability".

The Government commits to maintaining Canada's current position as the G-7 leader in public research & development (R&D) performance. For the first time, the Government identifies four areas where it will be more focused and strategic in its research support - environmental science and technologies; natural resources and energy; health and related life sciences and technology; and information and communications technology.

As well, another thrust is to increase the involvement of the private sector in research by encouraging collaborative

## Canada's New Science and Technology Strategy

On Thursday, May 17, 2007, Prime Minister Stephen Harper released Canada's new science and technology (S&T) strategy – *Mobilizing Science and Technology to*

approaches between the business, academic, and public sectors.

While the S&T Strategy contains no new spending, it does retain virtually all of the programs introduced by the Chrétien/Martin governments, with the exception of Technology Partnerships Canada which will be replaced by a new program.

In the May 31, 2007 issue of RESEARCH MONEY, the Editor Mark Henderson stated that the S&T Strategy is:

an impressive foundation that could signal the beginning of a well-aligned, systems-approach to building out Canada's knowledge-based economy.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (the AUCC) issued a communiqué shortly after the release of the S&T Strategy, stating:

AUCC says the federal government's focus on sustaining world-class research, setting priorities, building networks and ensuring accountability should help strengthen research efforts across the country, and will provide real benefits to Canada and Canadians. Universities are the foundation for Canada's research excellence and strength, and are key to ensuring highly-qualified and globally-connected graduates.

In an article in the June 11, 2007 issue of The Hill Times, it was noted that the S&T Strategy "does a good job on the supply side" of Canadian S&T. However, it was criticised for not focusing enough on market demand for Canadian S&T especially in the fast-growing emerging economies of India and China.

The full S&T Strategy document is accessible through the Government Relations website at [www.umanitoba.ca/government\\_relations](http://www.umanitoba.ca/government_relations). Please see page 2 of this issue for a list of the 36 policy commitments.

## Highlights of S&T Strategy Policies and Initiatives Promised by the Government

### Under an Entrepreneurial Advantage:

- Task an independent panel to review Canada's competition policies
- Encourage foreign direct investment in Canada
- Establish the lowest tax rate in the G-7 on new business investment
- Identify opportunities to improve the Scientific Research and Experimental Development program to further encourage R&D within the business sector
- Put in place a regulatory environment that promotes a competitive marketplace and protects Canadians and the environment
- Foster a leading-edge financial system
- Consider new approaches to stimulate the supply of venture capital
- Introduce new business-led research networks under the Networks of Excellence Program
- Establish a new Centres of Excellence in Commercialization and Research program
- Develop new approaches to technology and knowledge transfer
- Encourage collaboration between community colleges and local firms to support new technologies
- Create a new tri-council private-sector advisory board for the granting councils to provide advice on these 2 new programs
- Replace Technology Partnerships Canada with a new program, the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative
- Align the programs and activities of existing organizations to increase commercialization outcomes
- Work with the provinces to improve commercialization outcomes

### Under a Knowledge Advantage:

- Direct resources to priority areas where Canada can build global research and commercial leadership: environmental science and technologies, natural resources and energy, health and related life sciences and technology, and information and communications technology
- Make new investments in R&D, including through the granting councils, in areas where Canada can be a world leader
- Ensure that higher-education institutions have leading-edge research equipment and facilities
- Support leading-edge domestic and international research and networks in areas of strategic importance to Canada
- Encourage a supportive higher-education research environment, including via ongoing support to the Indirect Cost of Research program
- Improve governance measures, including by separating the functions of the Chair and President of the granting councils

- Adopt a more integrated approach to support academic research and improve client service
- Ensure that grant application procedures are competitive and promote international excellence
- Focus the government's own S&T activities where the federal government is best able to deliver benefits to Canadians, and ensure that federal departments and agencies have access to the S&T capacity required to fulfill their mandates
- Launch a panel to report on options for transferring non-regulatory federal laboratories to universities or the private sector
- Enhance collaboration with the federal S&T community and develop approaches for fostering research, talent, knowledge transfer, and commercialization among federal departments and agencies, universities, colleges, and the private sector

### Under a People Advantage:

- Continue to reduce personal income tax to ensure that Canada attracts and retains highly skilled workers
- Modernize labour market programming, working with provinces to remove barriers to labour mobility, and improve foreign credential recognition and the Temporary Foreign Worker systems
- Provide stable and predictable funding to provinces and territories for PSE; modernize Canada's system of student financial assistance; and market Canada's PSE system internationally
- Increase support for student research internships in the private sector
- Increase support for scholarships to encourage more youth to pursue advanced degrees in Canada and overseas, and to attract outstanding graduate students and post-doctoral fellows to Canada
- Foster a culture that values and rewards ingenuity and entrepreneurship

### Under a Modern Approach to S&T Management:

- Work with provincial and territorial governments to ensure that their respective policies, programs, and activities together provide the right conditions for S&T advances in Canada
- Strengthen Canada's ties to the global supply of ideas, talent, and technology and explore options to further improve Canada's ability to contribute to and benefit from international S&T developments
- Create a new Science, Technology and Innovation Council which will be formed by merging the Advisory Council on S&T, the Council of S&T Advisors and the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee
- Improve the federal government's ability to measure and report on the impact of S&T expenditures

The full S&T Strategy is accessible through the Government Relations website at [www.umanitoba.ca/government\\_relations](http://www.umanitoba.ca/government_relations).

## Lowering Student Debt Loads in Manitoba

On June 6, 2007, the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation released a report by PRA Inc. titled *Lowering Student Debt: Explaining the Decline in the Debt of University Students in Manitoba*.

At the beginning of the Report, PRA noted that student debt in Manitoba has declined since 2000, whereas, in other provinces and regions, student debt has been fairly stable or on the rise. Specifically, in Manitoba the average debt fell approximately 26% among all graduating students (\$2,696 decrease) and among those who reported having student-related debt (\$5,143 decrease).

PRA examined Manitoba's tuition policy and debt remission programs in order to determine how these may have affected university students' education-related debt and ultimately concluded that both these factors, to a different degree, played a role in reducing student debt in the province.

The Report found that, "The greatest proportion of the reduction in debt among students in Manitoba is most likely the result of millennium and Manitoba bursaries", while the 10% tuition reduction and freeze implemented by the NDP Government in 1999 was the lesser important, but still relevant factor.

In relation to the latter, PRA explained that for a full-time student, the tuition policy accounted for a savings of only \$400 annually, with the small, additional savings created when inflation is taken into account - when adjusted for inflation, the tuition amount paid by students today is actually lower than in 2000.

PRA highlighted that the freeze alone could not explain the decline in the average student loan debt, particularly between the years 2003 to 2006 when the average student loan distributed through Manitoba Student Aid actually increased.

The key factor was that the average value of bursaries increased each year during that time frame, although the proportion of students who received a Millennium Bursary remained stable.

PRA concluded that: "The tuition reduction and the ongoing tuition freeze in Manitoba have likely helped reduce the number of students who required a student loan, while the millennium and Manitoba bursaries have reduced the average student debt load for students who still required this assistance."

The Report is accessible in its entirety via the Government Relations Office website at [www.umanitoba.ca/government\\_relations](http://www.umanitoba.ca/government_relations).

## Manitoba Election Results

On May 22, 2007, Premier Gary Doer made history by being the first New Democratic Party (NDP) Premier (and the second Manitoba Premier overall) to score a third straight majority government in the province. He also tied the record for the largest majority government in provincial history, with NDP candidates winning 36 of the Legislature's 57 seats. At the time of dissolution of the House, the party standings were 35 NDP, 18 Progressive Conservatives (PC), two Liberal Members, one Independent Member and one vacant seat.

As well, Manitoba's Legislature now has the largest proportion of women of any Legislature in Canada. Two of the newly-elected female MLAs are graduates of the University of Manitoba. Sharon Blady (NDP, Kirkfield Park) received her B.A. from the University in 1991 and was also an instructor in the University's Faculty of Social Work at the William Norrie Centre. Erna Braun (NDP, Rossmere) received her B.H.Ec. (1972), Cert. Ed. (1973) and her B.Ed. (1980) from the University. An additional 23 MLAs are University of Manitoba alumni. A full list is below.

### NDP

Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley)  
Steven Ashton (Thompson)  
Peter Bjornson (Gimli)  
Sharon Blady (Kirkfield Park)  
Erna Braun (Rossmere)  
Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert)  
David Chomiak (Kildonan)

Kerri Irvin-Ross (Fort Garry)  
Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James)  
Ron Lemieux (LaVerendrye)  
Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns)  
Jim Maloway (Elmwood)  
Diane McGifford (Lord Roberts)  
Christine Melnick (Riel)

Theresa Oswald (Seine River)  
Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia)  
Greg Selinger (St. Boniface)  
Stan Struthers (Dauphin-Roblin)  
Andrew Swan (Minto)

### PC

David Fauschou (Portage La Prairie)  
Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach)

Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet)  
Larry Magurie (Arthur-Virden)

Hugh McFadyen (Fort Whyte)  
Ron Schuler (Springfield)





## Manitoba Speech from the Throne

On June 6, 2007, Lieutenant Governor John Harvard opened the first session of the 39th Manitoba Legislature by delivering a Throne Speech reiterated the 7 priorities the Government campaigned on during the recent election and in Budget 2007.

These priorities include: health care; the environment and the emerging green economy; increased education and training opportunities; increasing community safety; preserving affordability for Manitobans; keeping Manitoba Hydro owned by the Province; and a building agenda to establish a foundation for future growth in the Province. A new, more comprehensive Speech from the Throne is expected in the fall.

## 10th Annual University of Manitoba Campus Beautification Day

On May 30, 2007, the University of Manitoba held its 10th annual Campus Beautification Day. Volunteers came out in a united effort to clean up from our long winter and make way for the spring transformation.

Minister Kerri Irvin-Ross, Manitoba's Minister of Healthy Living, assisted with the planting of flowers. Minister Irvin-Ross is the MLA for the northern half of the University's Fort Garry Campus.



## 18th Annual Sneakers in Motion Day

On June 13, 2007, the University of Manitoba held its 18th annual Sneakers in Motion Day at the Fort Garry Campus to encourage physical activity.

Ms. Marilyn Brick, brought greetings on behalf of the Province at the event and helped judge the costumes. Ms. Brick is the MLA for the southern half of the University's Fort Garry Campus.



## Heard on Parliament Hill and in the Manitoba Legislature...

On May 16th, Senator Rod Zimmer congratulated Senator Sharon Carstairs in the Canadian Senate for receiving an Honourary Degree from the University of Manitoba (UM).

In the Manitoba Legislature, on June 7th, Sharon Blady (NDP, Kirkfield Park) noted that she was thankful to her educators in the Departments of Anthropology and Native Studies at the UM. Ms. Blady also indicated that she was looking forward to the expansion of the emergency room training program at the UM into the Grace Hospital. As well, she noted that she will be leaving the Inner City Social Work Program at the William Norrie Centre. She made a Private Members' Statement about the Inner City Social Work Program on June 11th.

Also on that date, Ms. Marilyn Brick (NDP, St. Norbert) said that she was proud to have the UM in her constituency. On June 13th, Ms. Brick noted that she had the pleasure of attending the UM's Sneakers in Motion Day. On June 14th, Ms. Brick spoke about Ted Paranjothy, the first Canadian to be recognized as the top high school bioscientist in North America. She highlighted that his research, done with the help of UM Professor Dr. Marek Loswas, has resulted in a patent and co-authorship of 2 publications.

On June 8th, Leanne Rowat (PC, Minnedosa) referenced a Winnipeg Free Press article written by Elijah Harper and UM Professor Bryan Schwartz about the economic development on the East side of Lake Winnipeg.

On June 12th, Minister Oswald discussed the committee conducting a review of the regional health authorities and noted that Dr. Jerry Gray, Dean Emeritus and senior scholar at the I. H. Asper School of Business sits on the committee. The Minister also referenced discussions with the UM Faculty of Medicine regarding the expansion of the ER training program into community hospitals, and mentioned Dean Sandham by name.