

For Immediate Release

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### **Liberals call on government to come clean on user fee "tax" hikes**

OTTAWA - Liberal Critic for Industry and Consumer Affairs, Geoff Regan today called for more transparency from the Conservative government on its plan to hike user fees on Canadians and Canadian businesses.

"While on one hand this government refuses to deal with billions of dollars in waste like untended jets, management consultants and a constantly expanding Cabinet,, it's hiking user fees on everything from the price of admission to our national parks to medical device license applications," said Mr. Regan. "Currently, there are 39 hikes in user fees coming to Canadians and Tony Clement has asked departments to come up with even more."

In the last election, Conservatives campaigned on not raising taxes, but as our most profitable corporations continue to enjoy extremely competitive rates, Canadian families will be stuck paying more for government services like camping and fishing permits in federal parks. In addition, there are planned fee increases on several industries that are sure to trickle-down to Canadian families. These fees will affect farmers, for example, who will be paying more to the Grain Commission to move their produce across the country, as well as cell phone providers who will find their annual fees for certain wireless bands triple and medical companies who will be charged more to license drugs and medical devices.

"It would be naïve and misguided to think Canadian families can avoid feeling the effects of what amount to massive tax hikes," said Mr. Regan. "And this is only the beginning. We have already been told to expect more, but how much more can the Conservative government expect to wring from the pocketbooks of Canadians?"

Mr. Regan also pointed out that these fee increases are over and above the Conservative plan to hike Employment Insurance premiums by \$1.2B each and every year for the foreseeable future. Each January 1<sup>st</sup> working Canadians and businesses will welcome the New Year by celebrating another one of Stephen Harper's broken promises.

"It is time for this government to end the secrecy and come clean on how much more Canadians can expect to pay for their poor fiscal management," concluded Regan. "As the Conservatives battle a massive deficit of their own making, we need to be vigilant and make sure they don't balance the budget on the backs of Canadian families."

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