

OFFICIAL REPORT (HANSARD)

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Canada-U.S. Border

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, there is a growing concern regarding the western hemisphere travel initiative that will make the use of passports mandatory when travelling across the Canada-U.S. border.

This will significantly impact Canadian businesses and the Canadian tourism industry. Border towns and duty free shops are already experiencing a significant drop in revenues as travellers are very hesitant to cross the border.

In fact, the Canadian Tourism Commission states that between 2005 and 2008 with this initiative a possible loss of \$1.7 billion could result to the tourism sector.

The Prime Minister has failed to make any progress on this important issue during the Cancun summit or in his subsequent meetings with American counterparts. He seems to be busy listening to American pollsters and strategists and succumbing to every made in the U.S.A. solution.

He needs to wake up and he needs to start representing Canadians because he is the Canadian Prime Minister and not the American ambassador to Canada.

So I ask, will he stand up for Canadians? Because Canadians want action now and they want results on this important issue.

* * *