



For Immediate Release
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Liberal MPs stand up to protect Canadian Nortel Employees

OTTAWA – Today, in the House of Commons, Liberal MPs presented over 1400 pages of petitions signed by Canadians concerned with the Government’s response to the announced sale of Nortel to a foreign buyer. Liberal Members of Parliament Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West), Judy Sgro (York West), Ruby Dhalla (Brampton-Springdale) and David McGuinty (Ottawa South), tabled these petitions for the Government’s review in front of a packed gallery of supporters who were in Ottawa for a rally on Parliament Hill earlier that day.

“This petition is a clear indicator of the public’s concern over this issue,” Mr. Oliphant said. “Canadians are not satisfied with the Harper Government’s response to the Nortel sale and too many Canadians are being left to struggle on their own.” Judy Sgro, the Official Opposition Critic for Pension and Seniors added, “The Liberal Party disagrees with the Minister of Industry and his Parliamentary Secretary who have stated that pension reform is an issue that should be dealt with at the provincial level. We feel that the federal government has a mandate to show leadership on this matter. The Minister may not want to admit it but leadership and helping people should always be seen as a matter of federal jurisdiction.”

The petitioners argue that changes are necessary to the Companies Creditors Arrangement Act, Bankruptcy Insolvency Act, and Investment Canada Act. These changes would help to protect the rights of all Canadian employees laid off by a company. This would ensure that during a bankruptcy, employees who are receiving pension or long-term disability benefits obtain preferred creditor status over other unsecured creditors. Furthermore, the petitioners ask that any employee related claims be paid from the proceeds of Canadian asset sales before those funds are permitted to leave the country.

“As Job losses across the country increase and companies close their doors many families are left to worry about their future. To ensure the hardship endured by Nortel employees is prevented for other hardworking Canadians, tougher legislation to protect the rights of employees whose companies go bankrupt is needed” says Dhalla.

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