

News Release

Hiebert to Introduce Union Public Disclosure Bill

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(Ottawa) – At a news conference on Parliament Hill today, MP Russ Hiebert said his new private members bill will require public financial disclosure by labour organizations.

“Labour organizations play a valuable role in Canadian society, representing and defending the rights of workers to health and safety on the job, and ensuring good compensation for the work they do,” said Mr. Hiebert. “The Federal Government provides substantial public benefits to unions as they perform this valuable task for Canadians. My bill is designed to provide for the financial disclosure of how those public benefits are used.”

“Our Conservative Government has introduced the Federal Accountability Act and other legislation designed to increase transparency in government agencies, crown corporations and on aboriginal reserves. This bill will extend that accountability to labour organizations, as well,” said the four-term MP.

“With public disclosure, Canadians will be able to gauge the effectiveness, financial integrity and health of their unions,” Mr. Hiebert said. “The principle is, just like charities, labour organization receive a public benefit and the public should be informed how that public benefit is being used.”

The bill will require all labour organizations to file a standardized set of financial statements with the Canada Revenue Agency, annually. The Government will post the submissions on the Internet for the benefit of all Canadians, including union members, prospective union members and public policy researchers.

“Labour organizations are among the most valuable and influential of institutions in Canadian society, and my bill recognizes the important role these institutions play. Public disclosure will affirm and increase Canadians awareness of this important role,” said Mr. Hiebert. “And, this can all be done at very little expense to the unions or the government.”

A recent Nanos poll conducted for Labour Day 2011, found 83% of Canadians support union financial disclosure.

Mr. Hiebert’s bill will be the first piece of private member’s business debated in the 41st Parliament.