



For Immediate Release
August 9, 2007

Liberal Transport Critic Calls on Minister Cannon to Take Action on CN's Compliance on Railway Safety Measures

OTTAWA – The Conservative government must come forward with an immediate action plan to ensure stronger safety measures by CN, Liberal Transport Critic Joe Volpe said today.

“Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon must investigate concerns expressed regarding CN running longer trains, a reduction in maintenance and safety standards, and reports of reduced training for its employees,” said Mr. Volpe.

A collision this past weekend between two CN Rail trains in Prince George that resulted in a fire along the Fraser River highlights the urgent need for controls on how the rail company moves its freight. Several cars carrying gas and lumber burst into flames raising fears of environmental damage.

This latest CN derailment came one day after it was announced that the company would face charges under the Fisheries Act and the B.C. Environmental Management Act. After a joint investigation with the province of British Columbia, Environment Canada laid charges on five counts against the Canadian National Railway. The charges stem from the 2005 derailment near Squamish which resulted in sodium hydroxide being spilled into the Cheakamus River, killing more than 500,000 fish. Safety deficiencies and poor training contributed to the derailment, according to the final report by the Transportation Safety Board.

“The Minister of Transport continues to be silent on the issue of CN and railway safety,” said Mr. Volpe. “The time for studies and partisan review panels is over. The Minister must immediately strengthen regulations compelling CN to comply with railway safety standards and implement a comprehensive plan to improve railway safety in Canada.

“Canada needs strong leadership on the issue of railway safety. For the past eighteen months, this Conservative government and Minister Cannon get a failing grade on protecting Canadians and the environment.”

-30-

Contact:

Office of the Hon. Joe Volpe, P.C., M.P.
Eglinton-Lawrence
(613) 992-6361