

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NDP SHOWS LEADERSHIP TO CURB GAS GOUGING

OTTAWA – Hardworking Canadians aren't buying Stephen Harper's claim that there isn't anything the government can do to help workers and their families cope with rising gas prices. NDP Energy Critic Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic) is setting the record straight in the face of Stephen Harper's assertion that there is so little the Conservatives could do about skyrocketing costs that it's not even worth trying.

"The statement made by the prime minister yesterday made it clear that the Conservatives are showing no leadership on gas price gouging," said Bevington. "The NDP has already pointed out many ways that the federal government could do more for ordinary Canadians who are getting gouged at the pumps."

Most recently, the NDP has called for an Ombudsman to be created to protect consumers from unfair pricing. This ombudsman would be a watchdog who could also be given the power to regulate if necessary. The NDP has been on the record for years with multiple solutions to help mitigate the impact of rising energy costs on family budgets.

In 2006, the NDP put forward a Green Agenda with concrete proposals for action which included:

- Investing in Canadian production of green cars
- Offering a significant GST rebate on the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles
- Providing incentives to businesses and corporations to green their transportation fleets by increasing fuel efficiency
- Provide federal government support for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in communities as part of a commitment to sustainable transport
- Increase support for rail transport as a more energy-efficient means of moving freight and people

The Conservative budget, supported by the Liberals, includes no measures to help ordinary Canadians with energy expenses but gives huge subsidies to the same companies who are seeing record profits from the high price of fuel.

"Through a balanced approach of ensuring fair pricing and promoting greener means of transportation, we could go a long way in helping today's families," said Bevington. "Canadians know that it's possible to change direction on soaring energy costs and consumption, and the NDP is showing them the leadership they expect from their government."

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