

April 27,2012
Member's Statement
Climate Change in Canada's Arctic

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):

Mr. Speaker, this week I was one of 3,000 at the International Polar Year conference in Montreal. I joined many elected representatives from other northern countries.

Northern Canadians attended the conference in great numbers. Northerners are concerned about how their environment is being impacted by climate change and want to hear the latest scientific findings. Loss of sea ice, melting permafrost and southern species replacing northern ones are just some of the negative impacts climate change has wrought on the north already.

The government chooses to deny the reality of climate change. Canadian environmental policy is being drafted to suit the needs of foreign-backed resource exploitation. Canada's position on climate change places it completely out of step with the rest of the world, for which it is being criticized right now. Recently Norway's former prime minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, said Canada has been moving backward on this issue and that Canada's position on climate change is anti-scientific and naive.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs says the north is fundamental to our identity. It is too bad that the government's denial of climate change is destroying that fundamental identity.