

Get your Canadian MP involved

by Sheila Telford, CABP Director

On February 4, 1998, a motion committing the Canadian Government to “vigorously pursue” updated pensions for British pensioners living in Canada was passed in Ottawa. It was a unanimous vote, supported by all parties. Every Government in power since then has supported our campaign to one degree or another, and we are deeply appreciative of that support, however it is time for CABP members to use our power as voters to persuade Canadian parliamentarians to once again transform ‘support’ into the proactive ‘vigorous pursuit’ to which the Parliament of Canada committed fourteen years ago.

Some examples of ‘vigorous pursuit’ previously undertaken:

- The Liberal Government sent legal observers to the UK when our case was proceeding through the British court system. It then made a very significant financial contribution towards reimbursing our legal costs, enabling us to take the case on the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.
- The Conservative Government provided compelling Witness Statements to the court in Strasbourg and also wrote in support of our request for an ‘appeal’ hearing by the court’s Grand Chamber.
- Within days of David Cameron being sworn into office in 2010, Prime Minister Stephen Harper raised the matter directly with Britain’s new PM.

Now it is time for each of us to ask our local MP to become actively involved. By strength of our numbers, it is our intention to make global pension parity a topic of active discussion within each of the parliamentary caucuses. Please, make a phone call, write a letter or send an email to your local MP – suggested wording accompanies this article (see What to say to your Canadian MP) and is also available in electronic format by request to me at CABP@shaw.ca. Riding and contact information for MPs is available at:

www.britishpensions.com/find-my-mp Let me know how it goes so that we can track our support in Ottawa. And don’t stop with just your own letter: suggest to family and friends in Canada that they too contact their MP to protest this injustice that hits all Canadians, not just British pensioners, in the wallet (see suggested letter).