



PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

May 1, 2007

World Asthma Day 2007

It is an honour to join with Canadians all across the country and around the globe to mark World Asthma Day.

Today we reflect on the serious impacts this chronic disease has on the lives of millions of Canadians and their families. In particular, the growing rate of asthma in children is a cause for great concern. Air pollution has contributed to a four-fold increase in childhood asthma.

Having lived with asthma my entire life, I am intimately aware of the importance of protecting our respiratory health. The Government of Canada is committed to addressing the concerns of Canadians about the quality of air we breathe by working to create a healthier environment for us all.

I would like to thank the Canadian Lung Association for its tireless efforts to help control asthma in our country. By promoting medical research, education, advocacy and health professional training, the Lung Association is a key player in the fight against this major public health problem. Your efforts are commendable.

On behalf of my colleagues in the Government of Canada, I invite all Canadians to recognize the importance of raising awareness of protecting our respiratory health by marking May 1st as World Asthma Day.

Sincerely,

*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada*



World Asthma Day 2007

On this World Asthma Day 2007, I urge all Canadians to join with me and the Liberal Party of Canada in demanding cleaner air and a higher quality of life.

Almost 3 million Canadians, among 300 million people worldwide, presently suffer from asthma. While the rates of asthma have their highest prevalence among children and teenagers, no Canadian is immune. Indeed, over 8% of adult Canadians suffer from the disease, and 16% of children overall. More sobering still is the fact that rates among First Nations, Inuit and Métis people are higher than the rates among the total population.

While causes of asthma can be linked to many things, there really is no doubt that persistent air pollution is a major contributing factor. The effects of air pollution and climate change are not just felt in Canada's urban centres – they are nationwide, from British Columbia to Newfoundland to the North. Rural and urban, it affects us all.

The Canadian Lung Association has delivered over 100 years of leadership in building respiratory health policies and solutions that have taught Canadians nationwide how best to manage, treat and prevent lung disease.

Let's use the occasion of World Asthma Day 2007 to call on all governments to act quickly to address air pollution. Together we can build a future that leads to a better, more sustainable environment and a healthier Canada.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Stéphane Dion".

The Honourable Stéphane Dion
Leader of the Official Opposition



Peter Stoffer, M.P.



Sackville-Eastern Shore

A Message from Peter Stoffer
N.D.P. M.P. for Sackville – Eastern Shore

I am honored to join with The Lung Association in raising awareness about the need for action on reducing rising instances of asthma in Canada.

Having first-hand experience as an asthma sufferer myself, I know all too well the impact it can make on the lives of Canadians, both young and old.

On this World Asthma Day 2007, it is imperative that we stand together to take action on improving the respiratory health of Canadians by reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions – both of which have been shown to trigger asthma episodes.

It is simply not acceptable that 16% of Canada's children currently suffer from asthma, or that 40% of Canadians may develop this disease at some point in their life time.

I applaud The Lung Association for its strong national leadership in promoting prevention, treatment, management and new research designed to halt the increase of asthma, and other debilitating respiratory diseases.

I ask all Canadians to join with me in marking May 1st, 2007, World Asthma Day, as a time to take action, to demand cleaner air and to work in partnership to lower rates of asthma across Canada.

Our children – like all of us - deserve to breathe easy and to enjoy the highest quality of clean air imaginable.

Peter Stoffer, M.P.
Sackville – Eastern Shore, Nova Scotia

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