



## Colin Carrie MP Oshawa

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### Fairness for the Self-Employed Act to Take Effect

For immediate release

**Ottawa, February 2, 2010** – On February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, the Conservative Government delivered on their pledge to reform Employment Insurance (EI) and extended benefits to the self-employed Canadians by implementing the *Fairness for the Self Employed Act*. Self-employed Canadians will now be able to voluntarily opt into the EI program effective February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010. As a transitional measure, those who register on or before April 1, 2010 will be able to collect benefits as early as January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

“This is a very important piece of legislation,” stated Colin Carrie, Member of Parliament for Oshawa and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health. “For years the self-employed entrepreneurs of Oshawa who drive our local economy and create jobs have been asking for legislation like this.”

Currently, there are approximately 2.6 million self-employed individuals in Canada. A majority of them have long asked for EI benefit reform, and the Conservative Government is now responding to this strongly expressed need.

This act, first announced on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, will extend EI special benefits, including maternity, parental, sickness and compassionate care benefits, to the self-employed. With these changes, self-employed Canadians would be able to voluntarily opt into the EI program and receive special benefits. Overall, the special benefits for self-employed individuals would mirror those currently available to salaried employees under the EI program. This benefit will also allow Canadians who have previously had little or no income protection to cope with major life events such as giving birth, caring for a newborn or newly adopted child, being sick or injured, or caring for a gravely ill family member.

“For far too long the self-employed people of Oshawa have had to choose between their family and their business responsibilities,” stated Carrie. “This is one of the most important reforms to EI legislation that we have seen in the last decade, I am proud that the Conservative Government was finally able to deliver this.”

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### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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