



# PARLIAMENT HILL DAYS

April 19 – 23, 2021







Meeting with MP Ted Falk

## OVERVIEW

The Recreation Vehicle Dealers' Association of Canada (RVDA) and the Canadian Campground and RV Council (CCRVVC) hosted a joint RV and Campgrounds industry virtual advocacy push with Parliamentarians from April 19 – 23, 2021. These days are a foundation of our industry's advocacy strategy and it is critical that we continue building lasting relationships with decision makers and raise awareness around issues of importance to our industry, particularly during this unprecedented crisis.

COVID-19 hit the RV and camping industry hard. Therefore, the focus of our advocacy days was on raising parliamentarians' awareness around the impact of the pandemic on our industry, the ongoing support required by businesses and the stimulus measures needed to facilitate recovery in the RV sector post-crisis.

On April 14<sup>th</sup> delegates from both associations participated in a government relations training to set stage for the advocacy week and discuss key industry issues to be highlighted with Parliamentarians.

RVDA and CCRVVC also participated in a two press conferences held virtually in conjunction with the Press Gallery, highlighting messaging on the need for ongoing support for our industry, tax fairness as well recovery measures needed for the industry

In total, 48 meetings were held with MPs, Senators and key government officials in Ottawa.

# RVDA KEY MESSAGES PRESENTED

## RV INDUSTRY FACTS & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA) of Canada is a national, volunteer federation of provincial and regional RVDA associations and their members who have united to form a professional trade association for all businesses involved in the recreation vehicle industry. The core objective of the RVDA of Canada is to bring together and represent the retail businesses involved in the recreation vehicle industry across Canada, thus providing the support and strength to protect and promote the interests and welfare of Canadian RV Dealers, and to maximize the potential of the industry for all involved.

RVing in Canada also has a considerable impact on the Canadian economy. The manufacturing, purchasing, servicing, and use of recreation vehicles contributes billions – both directly and indirectly – to the Canadian economy each year. In 2019, the RV industry supported 67,200 jobs and there was \$6.2 billion in total spending, which generated over \$4.8 billion in added value to the Canadian economy. There are over 4,231 campgrounds operated across Canada, each offering a unique experience for Canadians and international visitors.

## ISSUES DISCUSSED WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS:

### 1. COVID-19 Support

- The Canadian economy is reeling from the devastating economic impact of COVID-19. Virtually, all sectors of the economy have been hit hard and no business has been spared.
- The impact of the global pandemic has been particularly severe for the RV sector in Canada. RV sales were down by close to 9 percent last year and inventory shortage remains a serious concern for the outlook of RV sales this year.



Meeting with MP Ken Hardie

### Recommendation:

- As the vaccination campaign ramps up across the country, the federal government needs to provide continuous support to struggling businesses and workers until the end of 2021 to ensure long-term business continuity.
- Economists agree that recovery post-crisis will slow and choppy, therefore the government should make investments now to facilitate economic recovery in the next couple of years. The recovery measures need to include incentive for RV purchase and RVing post-crisis as well as investment in RV and camping infrastructure across Canada.

### Increased Support for Skilled Workers in the RV Industry

- The shortage of skilled workers remains a key concern for the RV industry and COVID-19 has exacerbated the availability of training programs for apprentices.
- Currently, out of 1020 full-time RV service technicians throughout Canada only 424 with Red Seal Designation.

- There are currently only two programs in Canada that offer RV service technician apprenticeship training – in British Columbia and Alberta. Each of these programs provide Red Seal Designation that is accepted nation-wide.
- The existing programs reach full enrollment each year and often hold waiting lists for additional several dozen prospective students.
- Training programs are offered in other provinces but they are not accepted as full apprenticeship programs. As a result, few RV service technicians who actually work in the industry are classified as apprentices.
- We applaud the government for the focus on skills and training in the previous budgets. Measure such as Canada Training Benefit, more funding for Skills Canada and the new apprenticeship strategy will help Canadians get the skills they need.
- We look forward to continuing working in close partnership with government to increase support for skilled workers in the RV industry

#### Recommendation:

- Due to the geographic constraints of the existing programs, **the Government of Canada should create an Apprenticeship Travel Grant** that could be used by those who are required to travel in order to undertake an apprenticeship training program. This Grant should be targeted towards those enrolled in programs that are not offered in their city, town or province.
- This Grant should be a taxable cash grant of **\$2,000-\$4,000** per person per year in order to provide support for such items as travel costs, lodging, and care arrangements for families.

### 3. Critical infrastructure in our national parks and tourism investment to support the RV industry is needed

- The Government of Canada should provide targeted and dedicated investment in camping/RV infrastructure in Canada's National Parks. The 119 Federal campgrounds are comprised of over 10,800 campsites. Of these sites, 7911 or 80% remain unserviced.
- As campground services continue to rise in demand, critical infrastructure needs -such as sizing requirements to accommodate larger RVs and access to appropriate electrical outlets and waste disposal facilities -remain unfunded.

#### Recommendation:

- As RVing is a large component of tourism, both internationally and domestically, investment in camping and RVing infrastructure will play a crucial role in the overall contributions of the tourism industry to future economic development and prosperity post-COVID-19. Upgrades in infrastructure are essential if we want to be able to ensure the future of this industry and make it more accessible to all Canadians.





Meeting with Colin Carrie



Meeting with Blake Richards



Meeting with Scott Aitcheson







Meeting with Mike Lake



Meetign with John Nater



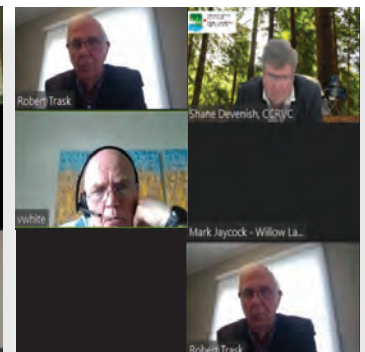
Meeting with Minister Hajdu



Meeting with Senator Boehm



Meeting with Sean Fraser



Meeting with Senator  
Vern White





Shane Devenish, CCRVC



Eleonore Hamm



Terry Sheehan



RVDA & CCRVC

Meeting with MP Terry Sheehan

## CONCLUSION

RVDA would like to thank all the members who joined us in Ottawa on these important days of advocacy and celebration of the RV and Camping industry. Your participation and support have made this 2021 Industry Awareness Week a success. We are getting great feedback from the Hill, as we continue our follow up from the meetings. Members of Parliament appreciated discussing key issues with industry leaders and meeting small business owners who make a difference in their communities and were keen to help move the needle on our core advocacy issues.

RVDA will continue to look for opportunities to engage with MPs, Senators and key decision-makers beyond the advocacy days to highlight the importance of the RV and camping industries to the recovery of Canada's tourism sector and economy.

In particular, with a potential election this year, we will be looking to engage with all political parties and candidates. We need to continue the momentum with grassroots efforts in each of your communities. STAY TUNED!