

- 7.2 Given the substantial powers now being exercised by the U.S. Congress, particularly in trade matters affecting Canadian interests, it is necessary to find effective ways to bring Canadian concerns directly to the attention of Congressmen and Senators. We believe the Canada-U.S. Inter-Parliamentary Group has this potential. However, Parliament should revise its selection procedures to ensure that future delegations comprise Parliamentarians chosen for their knowledge of specific items on the agenda. The Group should also work closely with the relevant standing committees and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Response

*The Government agrees that it is extremely important for Canada to promote vigorously its interests in the U.S. Congress. Our Embassy in Washington has established a special unit for Congressional relations to ensure that Congressional leaders are aware of Canadian positions on specific U.S. legislative measures. The Ambassador will continue to meet regularly with Congressional leaders and other U.S. decision makers. All Canadian offices will be called upon to play an increasing advocacy role with Congressional Representatives and Senators in their territory as well as with state legislators.*

*The annual meeting of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group is a very useful mechanism for the exchange of views on bilateral issues. More frequent and well-prepared meetings on specific sectors or issues would be welcome. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is prepared to liaise closely with the Parliamentary Group to assist in preparations for the meetings and to provide substantive briefings on the issues.*