

February 7, 2007



THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU CANADA

news@chamber.ca

Prime Minister Outlines His Government's Agenda

In a speech earlier this week in Ottawa, Prime Minister Stephen Harper pointed to five priority areas that the government will focus on in the months ahead:

- Further tax reductions as part of a comprehensive economic agenda;
- Continued steps to tackle crime;
- Further strengthening Canada's global image and rebuilding the Canadian Forces;
- Strengthening the federation by addressing Senate reform and fiscal balance with the provinces; and
- Clear, decisive steps to protect Canada's environment.

During his speech, Prime Minister Harper announced that it is the government's intention to legislate a 'tax back' guarantee. Meaning that, as the federal government pays down national debt, it will be required to use the interest savings to cut personal taxes for Canadians.

The Prime Minister also told the audience that the government will continue its efforts to develop a pragmatic and effective policy to protect and improve the environment.

The Canadian Chamber will be watching in upcoming weeks for signs of a federal budget which would contain specifics on any new programs or tax reductions. As always, once the budget date is announced, the Canadian Chamber will announce the coordinates for its annual budget analysis teleconference call for members.

Crucial Week for Bill C-257

Earlier this week we distributed the copy of an ad that was placed in this week's edition of The Hill Times regarding *Bill C-257- An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (replacement workers)*. This is the second awareness-building ad that the coalition has placed and you will see there are over 60 participants from a variety of sectors and communities – many of them Canadian Chamber of Commerce members.

This week is a critical week for Bill C-257. After much work by various groups to have more extensive hearings on the bill, the Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities Committee is in its final week of hearings from external witnesses.

Many of the witnesses who have appeared recently, and those who will appear this week, have not supported the bill and have provided detailed submissions to reinforce their message that this bill is bad public policy.

The supporters of the bill have also been out in force meeting MPs from across the country, sometimes meeting with the same MPs several times to reinforce their message.

We urged our members to attach the ad and send it in e-mail form to local MP(s), or to make a call to expressing their concerns about this detrimental bill. Many MPs are genuinely undecided about the bill, and continued lobbying efforts to explain our position and ensure that Bill C-257 does not pass into law are crucial.

We thank those members who were able to support this most recent ad and all members who have supported the campaign to defeat Bill C-257 through our recent letter-writing campaign.

Canada-India Business Forum

On February 5, 2007, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce partnered with the Toronto Board of Trade, the Canada-India Business Council and the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce on our India Business Forum. The meeting focused on Canada-India economic relations and ways in which to enhance our growing but still relatively small bilateral relationship. Speakers from various businesses, the Asia Pacific Foundation, Export Development Canada and the Ontario Minister of Economic Development and Trade the Honourable Sandra Pupatello, each offered their perspective on the topic. Our thanks to those who attended and to our sponsors.

Copies of the presentations at the Forum will be posted to the Canadian Chamber Web site as soon as they become available from the various presenters. Also available on our Web site is the background discussion paper prepared for the Forum. The Chamber would welcome any comments on this document or this topic in general. A special e-mail address, indiacomments@chamber.ca, has been set up for the next few weeks to gather members' comments.

As we did with the China project, the Chamber is preparing a major policy paper on India which will be released later this spring. *For further information, contact bkeyes@chamber.ca.*

Privacy Legislation Update

The *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA) is currently undergoing a five-year mandatory review of the legislation by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

Individuals are protected by *PIPEDA* that sets out ground rules for how private sector organizations may collect, use or disclose personal information in the course of commercial activities. The law gives individuals the right to access and request correction of the personal information these organizations may have collected about them.

PIPEDA applies to all organizations engaged in commercial activities unless the federal government exempts an organization or activity in a province that has substantially similar legislation to the Act. British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec are the only provinces with laws recognized as substantially similar to *PIPEDA*.

The Canadian Chamber appeared before the Parliamentary Committee on Feb. 1st to convey member views with regard to *PIPEDA*. The general theme of the presentation was that the legislation as it is currently constituted is working for our members and it is too soon to make any substantive changes to the Act. The Canadian Chamber noted that mandatory notification of breach in privacy was not required at this time, as companies follow proper procedures now if there is a breach.

The Canadian Chamber is also in the process of working with other business organizations and the Privacy Commissioner's Office on privacy breach notification guidelines that an organization could quickly implement if there is a breach to properly handle the situation. In addition, the Canadian Chamber will be making it easier for members to access information regarding privacy issues by updating our Web site and using other communications methods to make necessary information more accessible.

For more information on this issue, contact Chris Gray, Policy Analyst, (613) 238-4000, x251, cgray@chamber.ca or visit: http://www.privcom.gc.ca/index_e.asp.

Industry Committee releases Report on Manufacturing Sector

On February 6th, the House of Commons Industry Committee released its final report on the Canadian manufacturing sector entitled *Manufacturing: Moving Forward – Rising to the Challenge*. The Committee began its hearings on this issue in May 2006 and the Canadian Chamber appeared before the Committee in June 2006. This report calls on the government to implement the 22 recommendations in the areas of taxation, energy, labour, trade, intellectual property rights protection, infrastructure, regulatory, and research, development and commercialization that would assist the manufacturing sector.

Some of the main recommendations in the report include:

- That the government modify its capital cost allowance for machinery and equipment used in manufacturing and processing and equipment associated with information, energy and environmental technologies to a two-year write-off; and that the government raise the capital cost allowance rate for rolling stock, locomotives and inter-modal equipment to 30%;
- Improve the Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) Tax Incentive Program to make it more accessible and relevant to Canadian businesses. The government should also make the investment tax credits fully refundable and exclude investment tax credits from the calculation of the tax base;
- Place a higher priority for the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials;
- That the government bring forth legislation to amend the *Copyright Act*, ratify WIPO treaties and ensure that there are appropriate enforcement resources to combat counterfeiting and piracy and protect intellectual property;
- Make the implementation of “smart regulation” a priority;
- Ensure sufficient dedicated Free and Secure Trade (FAST) lanes be available for commercial traffic demands at the borders;
- That the government announce its new national gateway strategy and trade corridor policy;
- Consider the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Commercialization and report to Parliament on their implementation; and

- That the government continues to fund research infrastructure through the Canada Foundation for Innovation on a cost-sharing basis.

The Canadian Chamber will also be encouraging the government to begin implementation of the report.

To view the Industry Committee's report, please see:

http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/committee/391/indu/reports/rp2663393/391_INDU_Rpt05_PDF/391_INDU_Rpt05-e.pdf

or contact Chris Gray, Policy Analyst, (613) 238-4000, x251, cgray@chamber.ca

Canadian International Development Agency is Conducting a Private Sector Development Review

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is undertaking a review of the work they do on private sector development. In doing so, CIDA is seeking input from private sector firms and not-for-profit private sector associations that are presently operating in developing countries, but are not partnering with CIDA. CIDA is aware that many Canadian companies and organizations operating in developing countries contribute to the economic and social development of these communities and countries. CIDA is interested in entering into a dialogue with such firms and into partnerships with them that may involve the exchange of information, experience and know-how, and may or may not involve funding from CIDA.

If you are interested in providing input or would like further information, contact Brian Zeiler-Kligman, Policy Analyst, International, bzeiler-kligman@chamber.ca or 613-238-4000 x225.

Business Views Sought on the Desirability of an International Choice of Law Instrument

The Hague Conference on Private International Law is currently conducting a study on the feasibility and desirability of an instrument concerning choice of law in international contracts (examples of a possible instrument include a convention, a model law, a set of principles or a guide to good practice). The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is seeking the viewpoint of the international business community on this issue. Your views and opinions can help determine whether or not this project is undertaken.

If you are interested in providing your input or would like further information on this issue, contact Brian Zeiler-Kligman, Policy Analyst, International, bzeiler-kligman@chamber.ca, (613) 238-4000 x225.

***Special Offer for Canadian Chamber of Commerce Members
The Economist's Business Roundtable with the Government of Canada
Reshaping the business landscape***

Chamber members are invited to attend the Economist Conferences' first ***Business Roundtable with the Government of Canada***. This unique, high-level business conference provides local and global executives access to top government officials as they address key business and economic issues that are shaping current and future Canadian policy. This event takes place March 22nd at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier in Ottawa.

Moderated by experts from The Economist Group, this interactive meeting will bring together key economic ministers, the central-bank governor and senior corporate speakers. Featured speakers from the Canadian government include Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, Industry Minister Maxime Bernier, Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn, and Paul Jenkins, Senior Deputy Governor, Bank of Canada. The full conference line-up and registration forms are available on the conference Web site at http://www.economistconferences.com/roundtable/public/con_common.asp?rtid=967&rtRegion=1&area=1.

The fee is US\$1,895 per delegate, but **members of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce who register and pay by February 23rd 2007** will pay only US\$1,295. That's a savings of US\$600.

To register, please contact Elizabeth Bowen, (212) 554-0605, or e-mail americas_customerservice@economist.com and reference special invitation code "Chamber".

You can also register by clicking [here](#).



THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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Business Forum 2007:
Boosting Economic Ties and Cutting Barriers
Strategies for Closer Economic Relations
Monday, February 5, 2007 – Toronto Board of Trade

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