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THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU CANADA

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Canadian Chamber Welcomes Canada's First Enhanced Drivers' Licence in British Columbia

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce welcomed a recent announcement that Canada's first enhanced drivers' licence (EDL) will be available through a pilot project in British Columbia. The EDL denotes the carriers' citizenship and is a Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) compliant document, facilitating cross-border travel between Canada and the United States.

Washington State recently launched an EDL program as well. Participating in this voluntary program costs an additional \$15 USD to the regular driver's licence fee. In addition to Washington State and B.C., a number of other Canadian provinces and U.S. states have expressed interest in EDLs and have begun developing their own enhanced drivers' licences.

The enhanced drivers' licence holds significant potential as a less expensive and more attractive form of documentation than a passport for the many Canadians whose international travel interests include the United States only, and yet provide an advanced level of security. We look forward to the expansion of the B.C. program and would encourage all provincial and territorial governments to develop enhanced drivers' licences in preparation for the full implementation of the WHTI in June 2009.

For more information on this item, contact Ryan Stein, Policy Analyst, (61) 238-4000, x250, rstein@chamber.ca.

Upcoming Report – Reducing Canada-U.S. Border Costs

In speaking with our members and other organizations, businesses have been growing more and more concerned with the 'thickening' of the Canada-U.S. border and there has been a sense of frustration that many practical measures that can reduce border related costs are not being taken. While there have been a number of excellent papers on the border, a sustained, broad-based and targeted Canada-U.S. action plan has been missing. A report to be issued later this month by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce will fill this gap and will offer practical recommendations to reduce border related costs while strengthening security.

The Canadian Chamber, in consultation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, our members and Canadian and U.S. associations who have a focus on the Canada-U.S. border, has authored this collaborative endeavour that, if acted upon, will reduce the costs and increase the predictability of the Canada-U.S. border.

These solutions would represent a big win for Canadian and American jobs, companies and a secure North America.

Members will receive a copy of the report in the coming weeks.

For more information on this item, contact Ryan Stein, Policy Analyst, (61) 238-4000, x250, rstein@chamber.ca.

Canada's Proposed Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan

In early January, the federal government released a discussion paper entitled *Strengthening and Modernizing Canada's Safety System for Food, Health and Consumer Products*. This expands on the *Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan* that the government announced in the Speech from the Throne last fall.

The government's discussion paper can be found at http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/pr-rp/dpaper-papier_e.html

The purpose of the action plan is to update the legislation and regulations regarding the safety of consumer products, food, drugs and health products. Legislation to be updated includes the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Hazardous Products Act (Part 1)*. New legislation will be in the form of a *Canadian Consumer Product Safety Act*. The Canadian Chamber expects to see these amendments and new legislation introduced in Parliament later this spring.

The action plan will move the focus of the regulatory system for food and consumer products from reacting to problems once they are detected to a system that emphasizes safety at all phases of the production process. As well, it will increase the penalties for non-compliance substantially to provide deterrence -- for example, the current maximum penalty under the *Food and Drugs Act* is only \$5,000. Under the new legislation, the accountability of manufacturers and suppliers to make reasonable efforts to ensure product safety would be strengthened, while the government of Canada would gain stronger tools to protect Canadians.

The Canadian Chamber will be providing comments to the government on this discussion paper shortly and this response will be available on our Web site.

If you wish to discuss this initiative and the Canadian Chamber's positioning on it, contact Scott Campbell, Policy Analyst (416) 868-6415 x228, scampbell@chamber.ca.

Partners in Protection (PIP) Program Transition Strategy - Your Input is Needed!

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is seeking input regarding the time lines and proposed transition strategy for its PIP program. Major changes to the PIP program will be instituted as of June 30, 2008, resulting in a modernized program that includes new mandatory security criteria, policies and procedures that will bring PIP into line with the United States' *Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism* program.

As a result of these changes, all current PIP members will have to reapply to the modernized PIP program after the changes take effect on June 30, 2008. The CBSA has provided the Canadian Chamber with its draft transition strategy document, which provides a time line and an outline of procedures and policies for all stakeholders. The Chamber would like to receive input from our members on this transition strategy to provide to the CBSA. Feedback is sought both from those currently part of the PIP program and those who are not currently part of it, but intend to do so in the future. When providing comments, please indicate whether your company is currently a PIP participant.

To obtain a copy of the draft transition strategy and/or for more information, contact Ryan Stein, Policy Analyst, (613) 238-4000, x250, rstein@chamber.ca. Deadline for providing comments is Tuesday, February 19.

BIAC Releases Anti-Bribery Resource Guide for Business

The Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) to the OECD, of which the Canadian Chamber is the Canadian representative, recently released an *Anti-Bribery Resource Guide*. The 12-page guide sets out relevant instruments and initiatives in the field of anti-corruption to assist interested business users. The various resources listed include those setting out legally binding obligations on states and companies, those reflecting a relevant commitment against bribery and/or those that offer guidance and assistance to companies in their fight against corruption and bribery. The guide includes hyperlinks to the resources cited. The resource guide is viewed as a work in progress that will be updated regularly.

To obtain a copy of the guide or for more information, contact Brian Zeiler-Kligman, Policy Analyst, International, 613-238-4000, x225, bzeiler-kligman@chamber.ca.

Canada Concludes FTA with Peru, Signs FTA with EFTA

Minister of International Trade David Emerson recently announced the successful conclusion of free trade negotiations with Peru towards a free trade agreement (FTA). The negotiations for this agreement were launched in July 2007. The Canada-Peru FTA is expected to provide benefits to Canadian exporters, services providers and investors in several sectors, including mining, manufacturing, agriculture, financial services and environmental and engineering services.

The next step is for the document to undergo a legal review, with both countries endeavouring to ensure the agreement can enter into force in January 2009 (and possibly earlier). In 2006, bilateral merchandise trade between Canada and Peru totalled \$2.4 billion. Canada is also one of the largest foreign investors in Peru, with an estimated investment stock of \$2.9 billion as of 2006.

Canada signed the FTA it concluded with the EFTA countries (Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein) in June 2007. The FTA with the EFTA countries is a "first generation" trade agreement - it focuses on tariff elimination and does not contain substantive new obligations in areas such as services, investment and intellectual property.

For more information, contact Brian Zeiler-Kligman, Policy Analyst, International, 613-238-4000, x225, bzeiler-kligman@chamber.ca.

Government of Canada Announces New Policy to Table International Treaties in House of Commons

Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Bernier has announced a new policy regarding the way Canada signs onto international treaties. As a result of this new policy, all treaties between Canada and other states or entities, and which are considered to be governed by public international law, will be tabled in the House of Commons. Under this new process, Members of Parliament will be given an opportunity to review and discuss the treaty before Canada formally agrees to ratify it. This new policy delivers on a promise in the 2006 Speech from the Throne - to give Parliament a role in reviewing international agreements.

For more information, contact Brian Zeiler-Kligman, Policy Analyst, International, 613-238-4000, x225, bzeiler-kligman@chamber.ca.