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## **First Ministers Set Aside Their Political Differences to Deal with Canada's Economic Issues**

At their November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, Canada's first ministers agreed to adopting a long-term approach to Canada's economic stability which has been identified by the Canadian Chamber as being of the utmost importance to effectively addressing our economic issues. The Chamber is also gratified that the first ministers share the Chamber's view that this is the time for Canada to take concrete steps to accelerate the pace of investing in infrastructure and to take a serious look at reforms of our pension schemes such as increasing the required age to liquidate RSPs to 75.

As Canada's first ministers move forward in addressing the serious economic challenges facing the country, the Canadian Chamber will continue to advocate for additional measures to improve our economic flexibility, innovative capacity and competitiveness, these include: eliminating all internal trade barriers to the free flow of goods, services and people by 2010; harmonizing provincial/territorial sales taxes with the GST; ensuring Canada's tax environment remains competitive; and limiting growth in program spending to no more than nominal growth in the GDP.

## **Parliamentary Secretaries Announced**

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the appointments of 27 Parliamentary Secretaries. Members will want to take note of the following appointments:

- Rick Dykstra, MP St. Catharines (Ontario), appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
- Brian Jean, MP Fort McMurray-Athabasca (Alberta), re-appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities
- Gerald Keddy, MP South Shore-St. Margaret's (Nova Scotia) reappointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade

- Ed Komarnicki, MP Souris-Moose Mountain (Saskatchewan), appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour
- Mike Lake, MP Edmonton-Mill Woods-Beaumont (Alberta), appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry
- Dave MacKenzie, MP Oxford (Ontario), re-appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety
- Ted Menzies, MP Macleod (Alberta), re-appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance
- Deeprak Obhrai, MP Calgary East (Alberta), reappointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Mark Warawa, MP Langley (British Columbia), reappointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment

Perrin Beatty, President and Chief Executive Officer, has written letters of congratulations to each Parliamentary Secretary, outlining the Canadian Chamber's policy positions on issues of relevance to their respective portfolios as appropriate. The Canadian Chamber policy team will be seeking meetings with those Parliamentary Secretaries whose portfolios are of most relevance to our members to discuss our policy files more fully.

## **Parliament Reconvenes November 18/Speech from the Throne on November 19**

The Governor General will outline the government's priorities for this session of Parliament in the Speech from the Throne. The Canadian Chamber's analysis will appear on our web site, [www.chamber.ca](http://www.chamber.ca) later in the day.

### **Items of Interest...**

- Economic Statement – Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has said that will bring down his update before the end of November; the Chamber will provide analysis to its members.
- Transportation strategy – the Chamber will release its document outlining a four pillar approach to a national transportation policy.
- Analysis on the Speech from the Throne – this week.
- Already-released, the Chamber's long-awaited "skills" paper – "Building a Twenty-First Century Workforce"; this paper is available on the Chamber's Web site at: <http://www.chamber.ca/cmslib/general/Skills.pdf>.

## **Calendar of Events**

### **December 9, 10 – Toronto, “Global Cities in Challenging Times”**

Canadian Chamber President & CEO will be one of the speakers at this two day event which features topics such as “Upgrading airports for successful cities”, “Restoring Prosperity in a New Urban Age”, “Globalization and Attracting Innovative Industries” and more.

More information is available at [www.forumforglobalcities.com](http://www.forumforglobalcities.com)