

# Connections

... get plugged in to your network

April 2011

## Policy Update

### Election activity

The leaders' debate indicated that business taxes are a big item on the agenda of the federal leaders - whether for maintaining or rolling back.

The Canadian Chamber encourages members to continue to raise this important business issue with their political candidates - either in all-candidates forums or other meetings.

As Chamber President & CEO Perrin Beatty said last week in *The Globe & Mail*: "Roughly three-quarters of the more than 300,000 jobs added to Canada's economy in the last year were created by the private sector. These results come from the decisions of successive Liberal and Conservative governments, both before and during the global economic crisis, to lower business taxes. It is true that a single tax decision is not a magic bullet to stimulate the economy. But low taxes are central to Canada's strategy to encourage investment and growth.

Low taxes don't always produce instant results, that's true. But high taxes do. And those results are always bad for growth, for jobs and for investment."

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce released its policy platform last week along with a [toolkit](#) for chambers to assist in helping chambers to host all-candidates meetings.

The Chamber's election toolkit contains lots of background information on the business tax issue including an excellent video with Jack Mintz - "[Finding the Right Tax Policy](#)" and the Chamber's [At-A-Glance on business tax](#).

Election 2011 located in the members' only section of the section (*login required*) contains template invitations to your members and to your political candidates. There are also useful links to party websites and party platforms.

The [Election 2011](#) toolkit also contains the Chamber's party questionnaire; it may help you frame the federal issues that you pursue on your all-candidate meeting's agenda. Speaking of an agenda - there's a template for that too! In addition, the BC Chamber of Commerce has shared its

[Guide to Hosting an All-Candidates Meeting](#) which has some great tips and advice for organizers.

The Canadian Chamber sent the election questionnaire that you will find in our toolkit to party leaders on April 6 - asking them for their party's positions regarding major business issues. Responses are due back by April 18; we will share with our members prior to the chamber teleconference next week (*see below*).

The Chamber's election platform document *The Canadian Business Game Plan* presents the views of the Canadian Chamber and its members across Canada on issues that affect the long-term prosperity of our nation and the quality of life of every Canadian.

The *Game Plan* covers a broad spectrum of issues, all of which are essential to Canada's productivity and competitiveness, including:

- pursuing fiscal policy that inspires confidence and certainty;
- seeking more opportunities in international markets;
- balancing the need for reliable and secure energy with a healthy environment;
- encouraging and rewarding innovation and fostering the knowledge-based economy; and
- ensuring employers—in particular small- and medium-sized businesses—have the tools they need to power economic growth.

In addition, the Chamber will have a call with the network to touch base as the election goes into its final stretch. Join the call on April 20 at 2 PM eastern. [RSVP to Jennifer Hagen](#).

*Chamber SME committee: to discuss issues that matter to your members*

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has set up an SME Committee that held its first policy call with the chambers and chamber SME reps on March 29. With the Canadian Chamber of Commerce placing an even greater emphasis on SME issues and challenges in our advocacy efforts, this

committee will form a critical link to the SME community across the country.

The committee's mission statement is *"to promote an improved environment in Canada for SME businesses by raising the issues of small and medium-sized business among influential policymakers in the government and with the general public."*

The committee members represent broad SME business sector interests. The procedures, mandate and further details have been fleshed out by the committee at its first meeting. We do have a few holes in the representation on the committee and therefore are reaching out to request an indication of your chamber's interest (either by staff or by an SME) to serve on this committee. Perhaps you have someone on your board that would be great in this role?

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Anne by email or at 1-800-661-2930, x223. Or, send an expression of interest regarding committee participation to Anne Argyris, [aargyris@chamber.ca](mailto:aargyris@chamber.ca).

#### *Chamber partners with Google on SME initiative*

Recently the Canadian Chamber of Commerce was one of several partners with Google on a Canada-wide initiative *"Get Your Business Online."*

Launched to get more Canadian businesses (especially small and medium-sized enterprises) online, over the next year Google intends to give away free domain names through this program to get more businesses on line.

Fewer than half – one million out of 2.2 million – small businesses in Canada have a website, according to Chris O'Neill, country director for Google Canada.

Chambers can put the word out to SME members and can also become *supporters* for the program - to find out more about this initiative visit [www.gybo.ca](http://www.gybo.ca)

#### *Congratulations to chambers & members involved the Johnson Insurance quotation campaign*

Johnson Inc. and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce are pleased to announce the following winners for our *Quotation Campaign* with your members.

The winning individuals each receive 500 Air Miles and the chambers, where each of these individuals belong each win 1,000 Air Miles (except in BC where the winner gets an iPod Shuffle and the chamber gets an 8G iPod Touch).

The winners be notified directly by Johnson Inc. and awarded their prizes. The 10 winning chambers and winning individuals are as follows:

**Kelowna Chamber of Commerce** (BC) - C. Fisk  
**St. Albert Chamber of Commerce** (AB) - P. Frenette  
**Spruce Grove Chamber of Commerce** (AB) - B. Worsley  
**Hamilton Chamber of Commerce** (ON) - L. Warner  
**Oakville Chamber of Commerce** (ON) - R. Stainton

**Brockville & District Chamber of Commerce** (ON)

- D. Brooks

**Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce** (ON) - Z. Lemez

**Halifax Chamber of Commerce** (NS) - L. Sanford

**Antigonish Chamber of Commerce** (NS) - K. MacLaughlin

**Greater Moncton Chamber of Commerce** (NB) - S. Auclair

If you have not already considered this affinity program for your chamber - where it's a win-win for your members and your organization - you may want to. Not only do chambers add a product to their offerings but can gain a revenue stream through policies booked.

The program provides home, auto and travel insurance (*where applicable by law*).

For more information on this program, contact [Colin Kuefler](mailto:Colin.Kuefler@johnsoninc.com) at Johnson Inc. or [Jennifer Hagen](mailto:Jennifer.Hagen@chamber.ca).

#### *New chamber members*

We welcome a new chambers of commerce to the cross-Canada network of business voices this month:

**Inuvik Chamber of Commerce (NT)**, Lee Smallwood, interim president, [lee.smallwood@inuvikchamber.com](mailto:lee.smallwood@inuvikchamber.com)

#### *New chamber staff*

**Michel Cyrenne**, community development manager, Estevan & District Board of Tourism, Trade & Commerce, [michel@estevanchamber.ca](mailto:michel@estevanchamber.ca).

**Don Crossley**, interim CEO, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, [d.crossley@hamiltonchamber.on.ca](mailto:d.crossley@hamiltonchamber.on.ca).

**Elliot Moses**, general manager, The Squamish Chamber of Commerce (BC), [elliott@squamishchamber.com](mailto:elliott@squamishchamber.com).

**Grayden Hayward**, FCA, interim managing director, The Vancouver Board of Trade, [ghayward@boardoftrade.com](mailto:ghayward@boardoftrade.com).

**D. Tim Doyle**, CFP, executive director, Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce (NT), [generalmanager@ykchamber.com](mailto:generalmanager@ykchamber.com).

If you are a new manager or have changes that you would like the network to know about send an email to [jhagen@chamber.ca](mailto:jhagen@chamber.ca).

#### *Upcoming CCC events*

##### **June 2, Ottawa - International Trade Day (ITD)**

This year's ITD will focus on Canada's trade relationships with its two leading trade partners—the U.S. and the European Union. Panelists will discuss what must be done to make trade with the U.S. smoother for Canadian companies and why a Canada-EU trade agreement matters to Canadian business.

##### **June 28, Golf Tournament - The Club at Bond Head (Toronto Area)**

Our inaugural golf tournament will give members an opportunity to discuss the issues of importance to their business and to share best practices—for the office or the fairway. The tournament will also feature a special presentation by Canadian golf pro Jim Nelford.

For more info on these events, visit [www.chamber.ca](http://www.chamber.ca).