

April 13, 2010



The Honourable James M. Flaherty
House of Commons
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

2089 Maitland Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 2Z8

Tel. 902.423.4480
800.948.4267

Fax. 902.422.0184

Dear Minister Flaherty:

On behalf of the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, we are writing to lend our strong support for proposed modifications to the Foreign Convention and Tour Incentive Program.

www.tians.org

Currently the tourism industry in Canada is facing a number of structural challenges to its competitiveness. We believe modifications to this program would improve our ability to attract new business into Canada and ensure existing customers return.



We support the proposed changes as outlined in the submission made by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada and supporting tourism associations across Canada.



Specifically, we support:

1. Expansion of the eligibility criteria.

Criteria to include a rebate of 100% of the GST/HST, paid on eligible tour packages, should be offered to non-residents; and Cultural and Recreational experiences, such as outdoor adventures and admissions to national historic sites and museums should be made 100% eligible for rebate.



2. Removal of excessive administrative burden on foreign tour operators.

A safe and cost-effective means of eliminating excessive administrative burden on foreign tour operators would be to allow Canadian service providers to submit HST payments on their behalf.

3. Reinstatement of the individual rebate.

The reinstatement of an individual rebate program would provide a financial incentive to international travelers and put Canada in line with our competitors who refund value added taxes, paid by international visitors.

Changes to the FCTIP will ensure a greater level of success with the program objectives and will enhance our opportunities to encourage foreign tour operators to sell Canada as a destination.

We urge action on this file, as we strive to create a competitive and successful tourism industry in Canada.

Sincerely,


Darlene Grant Fiander
President, TIANS

cc Honourable Nancy Greene Raine, The Senate of Canada
Honourable Rob Moore, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)