



November 21, 2008

The Honourable John Baird  
Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities  
Tower C, Place de Ville  
29<sup>th</sup> Floor, 330 Sparks Street  
Ottawa K1A 0N5

Dear Minister Baird:

On behalf of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, I congratulate you on your recent appointment as the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is over 250 years old, with 1800 member companies representing over 90,000 employees in this area. One of its longest-serving committees is Transportation. With this in mind, I wanted to draw your attention to the Halifax Chamber's substantial body of work in the area. We have been active on air access, 24-hour customs and pre-clearance at our local airport. Earlier this year, we created a set of transportation policy guidelines for a new National Transportation Strategy. Our hope is that these principles, which include Transport Canada's five lenses of policy creation, will be used to guide future national transportation policy. On October 3, 2008, these guidelines became official policy of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Please find a copy of these principles attached which were sent to former transportation minister Lawrence Cannon in June 2008.

As our Transportation Committee deals with all modes of transportation, we have responded to your department's request for feedback on the rail service review underway and its terms of reference. You can find our formal response attached to this letter. We have also informed officials in your department that we want to stay involved in the review as it proceeds and have offered our assistance in information-gathering with local stakeholders, if helpful.

With transportation one of our three top corporate priorities, our members are always very interested in developments in this all-important sector. For this reason, I would like to invite you to address our members. If you are interested, please have your office contact myself or Nancy Conrad, Senior Vice President, Policy (e-mail: [nancyc@halifaxchamber.com](mailto:nancyc@halifaxchamber.com) or phone: Melissa Hawkes at 902-481-1350).

I wish you all the best in your new portfolio and I hope we see you in Halifax soon.

Yours sincerely,

Valerie Payn  
President and CEO