



CALL TO ACTION

To all Members of the Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce

January 29, 1999

THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce is concerned over the haste with which changes to the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) system of Nova Scotia are being considered. This message was delivered yesterday in a presentation to the provincial government's Law Amendments Committee by Chamber President Jim Mills and Government Affairs Committee Chair Peter Doig.

The presentation on behalf of the 1,600 corporate and 2,500 individual Chamber members contained five main points. The Chamber:

- questioned the need for fundamental changes to the WCB system;
- asked about the source of funding for new system costs;
- questioned the impact of the proposed changes on private insurance coverage;
- stated its support for refining the appeals process, and
- raised the issue of the competitive impacts of continued increases in WCB premiums.

The Chamber also recommended that the comprehensive review of the provincial WCB system originally scheduled for early 1999 moves forward, rather than being postponed until 2005 as now proposed. Without a full and complete analysis, it is unclear whether the changes proposed in Bill 90 will help or hinder the efforts to place our WCB system on sound financial footing for the future.

In response to our appearance, Minister Robbie Harrison, Chair of the Law Amendments Committee, asked us to encourage our individual members to provide input on Bill 90 directly to the Committee. While the Chamber's role is to be the "Voice of Business" for Metropolitan Halifax, this is an instance where direct input to the Law Amendments Committee from individual members would strengthen the message the Chamber conveyed yesterday.

Given that the changes amount to a significant new payroll tax, we encourage members to participate in the process either by sending a written submission or by scheduling a short presentation with the Committee, which will be convening for at least another month. If you would like further information on the proposed changes or on the Law Amendments process, please contact Nancy Conrad or Charles Cirtwill at the Chamber office (468-7111).

**To send a written submission to the Committee,
write to:**

**Office of Legislative Counsel
PO Box 1116
9th Floor, 1690 Hollis Street
Halifax NS B3J 2X1
Facsimile (902) 424-0547**

**To schedule an appearance before the Committee,
telephone: (902) 424-8941**

Editor's note: copies of the Chamber's full written submission to the Law Amendments Committee are available by calling the Chamber office at 468-7111 or by downloading it from the Chamber's website at: <www.halifaxchamber.com/policy.cfm?sort=date>



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