



13 June 2007

The Honourable John A. Day, Senator & members of the Senate National Finance Committee  
Senate National Finance Committee  
Committees Branch  
Chambers Building  
40 Elgin Street, 10th Floor  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4

Via fax: 613-947-2104

**RE.: BILL C-52**

Dear Senator Day,

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is a best practice business organization that continuously strives to make Halifax an even more attractive location in which to live, work and play. The 1700 Chamber Members employ approximately 75,000 people in Halifax - over one quarter of Metro-Halifax's labour force. It is the first North American Chamber to be certified to the ISO 9001:2000 International Standard of Quality, and it is the oldest Chamber on the continent, with roots dating to 1750.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce supported the government of Nova Scotia in the negotiation of the offshore accords in 2005 and applauded the accords that resulted in significant payments on Nova Scotia's debt. The Chamber's support has not altered since the negotiation of the Offshore Accord.

The Nova Scotia Offshore Accord is a bilateral agreement that resolved a longstanding constitutional dispute between Nova Scotia and Canada on jurisdiction over offshore petroleum resources. The federal government's intent in the Offshore Accord was explicit in the accord itself: offshore offsets would be based on numbers under "the equalization formula as it exists at the time."

It is impossible to say with certainty what would be the fiscal and economic impact of a decision between the offshore accord and the old equalization formula and opting into the new formula without the benefit of the offshore accord. More important is the principle - the agreement was negotiated with the understanding that calculations would be based on the equalization formula as it exists at the time.

In your deliberations on the budget, we strongly urge you to take into consideration the importance of government honouring its commitments and urge you, when sending the

budget bill back to the House, to recommend changes that would uphold the Offshore Accord and in so doing, send a message that promises made by the federal government are promises that will be kept.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie Payn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "V" and "P".

Valerie A. Payn  
President

Cc: The Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada  
The Honourable Rodney MacDonald, Premier of Nova Scotia  
The Honourable Gerald Comeau, Senator  
The Honourable Donald Oliver, Senator  
The Honourable Wilfred Moore, Senator  
The Honourable Jane Cordy, Senator  
The Honourable Gerard A. Phalen, Senator  
The Honourable Terry Mercer, Senator  
The Honourable James Cowan, Senator