

# Is it Time for Sunday Shopping in Nova Scotia?

February 28, 2000

## Background

In January 2000, the Chamber's Retail Committee struck a sub-committee to look at the issue of deregulating store hours in Nova Scotia. Since that time, the group has reviewed past Chamber work on this issue, met with a pro-deregulation business stakeholder group, spoken with a sampling of large retailers, mall managers, and independent retailers to get their views on this subject, and collected information from other Chambers and associations who are interested in or have experience with this topic.

The indications from this work are that deregulation or Sunday openings is a non-issue in the rest of Canada -- some form of Sunday opening is practised in every other province. It also appears that a broad general consensus is developing in support of deregulated store hours here in Nova Scotia.

Recent polls by Corporate Research Associates indicate that a majority of consumers support deregulation. The indications from the sub-committee's recent work is that a majority of the Chamber's retail, hotel and tourism members reflect this attitude and are in favour of deregulation.

Based on these indications, the Chamber's Retail Committee is now recommending that we call on the government to deregulate store hours on the grounds that:

- 1) Government should not be in the business of regulating store hours (recognizing that exceptions exist for statutory holidays and labour standards).
- 2) There is a potential, particularly in Metro Halifax, to grow new business from increased tourism and weekend shoppers from the Nova Scotian and Atlantic markets, and from inter-

national visitors (the recent announcement of a fourth weekly flight from Iceland is an example of our ability to attract new visitors).

3) By allowing stores to open as the market dictates, this will allow communities, particular industries and individual stores to make their own decisions on when, and when not, to be open -- improving their ability to compete and have control on their own bottom line.

We are asking you for your feedback on this recommendation. Please circle the appropriate response below or fill in the blanks and return by fax to the Chamber at 468-7333 by March 3.

1) Do you agree with the Retail Committee's recommendation that the Chamber should actively pursue deregulated store hours (ie Sunday shopping) in Nova Scotia?

Yes                      No

2) What industry are you in (please circle)?

- Retail
- Wholesale
- Manufacturing
- Service
- Tourism
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

3) We would appreciate any other comments you have on this issue.

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Thank you for your feedback. Your response will guide the Chamber's position on this issue.

