

*The View of the Business Community* was developed to provide a snapshot of the Chamber's provincial affairs policy positions. These positions have been developed by our organization, on behalf of our almost 2000 business members to help you to evaluate - from the business perspective - issues that are raised and debated on matters of provincial affairs in the coming weeks.

The Chamber of Commerce supports effective, efficient and accountable government. Through this, a healthy fiscal climate is achieved in which business can grow and prosper.

The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce is a best-practice business organization that continuously strives to make Halifax an even more attractive city in which to live, work and play. The almost 2,000 members of the Chamber employ over 90,000 people, representing half of Metro Halifax's labour force. As the voice of business, the Chamber works on behalf of small businesses and large corporations alike. Seventy-three per cent of Chamber members are organizations with 25 or fewer employees. The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce has the largest membership of any Chamber in the Atlantic provinces and among mid-sized Canadian cities and also enjoys the distinction of being the only ISO certified Chamber in North America.



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## ***The View of the Business Community***

### ***Provincial Affairs***



# THE CHAMBER'S PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY POSITIONS:

## Tax competitiveness

## Decreased debt charges

## Grow own source revenue

## Manage within budget

## Control and reduce spending in Health, Education and Debt Servicing

## Reduce debt to GDP ratio

## Reduce debt per capita

## A comprehensive debt repayment plan and implementation

## Year round Sunday shopping

## 100% smoking ban

## Cooperation with other governments and the community on areas of shared interest

## Reduce jurisdictional overlap and streamline the regulatory process for the energy sector

## Better air access to our region

**Tax competitiveness** is key to our ability to attract and retain investment, business and people. Nova Scotia must be seen as a positive place to live and invest.

**Decreasing debt charges** as a percent of revenue is necessary so the province is better able to respond to unexpected financial commitments

Government must **grow own source revenues**. The Province needs to be in a financial position in which it is able to withstand any negative changes in the external environment; an expanded provincial economy is necessary to increase own source revenues.

Government must **manage within budget** or long-term economic sustainability is at risk. Forward planning and priority setting for spending is required.

Government needs to do more to **control and reduce spending** in its three largest spending areas: health, education and debt servicing. Accountability in education spending, a plan for health spending and strict adherence to an aggressive debt management plan is necessary.

A **reduced debt to GDP ratio** and **reduced debt per capita** are required to foster economic stability.

Nova Scotia's competitive position to attract and retain new business and skilled labour is compromised until we begin to aggressively reduce our debt. Nova Scotia needs a comprehensive **debt repayment plan** to be implemented.

Government should not be in the business of regulating store hours. Nova Scotia must have **year round deregulation of store hours**. A market driven approach to business is required.

Shopping hours must be deregulated if we are to become a truly competitive province.

A commitment to promoting and encouraging a healthy workforce is imperative. Government should take a proactive stance on health. A **total smoking ban** will foster a healthy business environment and protect the health of our workforce.

**Cooperation with other governments and the community on areas of shared interest** will build a stronger province. It is important that together, business organizations, community organizations and all levels of government recognize the significant role that we share in creating our future community. As a community we must ensure that our region will retain its attractive qualities by effectively planning for a city by design, not by default.

It is imperative to move forward with an integration of policy initiatives to ensure the long-term economic stability of the energy industry. In order to maximize the benefits from the offshore, government must develop an action plan to address the current **jurisdictional overlap** and streamline the regulatory and reporting process for oil and gas developments. Expedient decision-making is critical.

There is a need for ongoing viable competition in the Canadian airline industry to improve **air access to our region**. Competition best improves service, reduces prices and creates lasting economic value. The key principle of sound public policy should be to develop and encourage a freely competitive market and focus much more on consumers of air services.

*For more information check out our website at  
[www.halifaxchamber.com](http://www.halifaxchamber.com)*