

News Release

Regan Vows To Push Govt To Reinstate GST Rebate

Halifax (January 25, 2007) - Halifax West Liberal MP Geoff Regan vowed Thursday to pressure the Harper government to reinstate a GST rebate for visitors.

Mr. Regan made the pledge after hearing the concerns of members of the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS) during a meeting in Halifax. Tourism officials believe the Conservative government's move to eliminate the GST visitors rebate will cause severe damage to the Nova Scotia economy.

"Tourism is a very important to Nova Scotia and there are concerns that eliminating the GST rebate could have a negative impact on that industry," Mr. Regan said.

"The federal government should be looking for ways to bolster the tourism sector, not imposing further obstacles on this industry."

"Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada are going to be affected more than other provinces because of our HST agreement with the federal government," TIANS president Grant Fiander said Thursday. "Our local operators will be increasing their prices by 14 per cent instead of the standard six per cent GST in other provinces."

Mr. Regan said it is hard to understand why the Harper government would impose such a regressive measure last fall when they were sitting on a \$13 billion surplus.

"The choices the Harper government is making are actually hurting hard working Nova Scotians," Mr. Regan said. "Nova Scotians are fed up with the mean-spirited ideologically-driven decisions like this and demand that the Conservatives inject a little common sense into their policies."

Local tourism operators have seen a drastic decline in business due to factors like 9-11, SARS, and current international conflicts. Putting an additional burden on these businesses, when they are already struggling to survive, is simply unacceptable, Mr. Regan said.

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