

MEDIA RELEASE



**ONTARIO
CHAMBER of
COMMERCE**

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TIMMINS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RECEIVES AWARD FROM ONTARIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

TORONTO: The Timmins Chamber of Commerce (TCOC) has received provincial recognition for its work in obtaining clear instructions for retailers for the handling of Retail Sales Tax exemptions.

Concerned with the negative impact on local businesses from the rules provided by the government for RST exemption for Aboriginals, the TCOC advocated successfully that the responsibility of status card verification should be returned to the government. Retailers had been responsible for following the rules of Aboriginal exemptions, but had no way of validating the authenticity or legitimate use of a government-issued status card for every transaction.

“The persistent work on the part of the Timmins Chamber of Commerce will benefit retailers and aboriginal communities throughout Ontario,” says Len Crispino, President & CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

With input from the retail members and First Nations partners the Timmins Chamber of Commerce advocated to the Ontario Minister of Finance, the Ministry of Revenue, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Small Business Tax Administration Advisory Committee and the Retail Council of Canada. As a result of their extensive advocacy efforts, in April 2008 the Ministry of Revenue acknowledged the problem and released a Tax Tips document, depicting the three types of status cards that validate eligibility for RST exemption. The document also contained a statement of Vendor Responsibility which clearly defined the conditions under which a vendor may grant RST exemption, providing clarity of vendor obligation to both vendors and aboriginal customers.

“We are delighted to see our advocacy efforts recognized on the provincial level. This was a sensitive issue for our members and their valued aboriginal customers, so the fact that our efforts resulted in clarifying the issue is a win for all parties involved,” says Rob Galloway, President of the Timmins Chamber of Commerce.

Other Awards presented at the Annual General Meeting and Convention in Orangeville were the Richard A. Dolphin Award for Community Service and the Chair’s Award for Innovation.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is a federation of 160 local chambers of commerce and boards of trade in the Province of Ontario, representing 60,000 businesses of all sizes, in all economic sectors and from every area of the province. In its mandate to advocate strong policies on issues affecting its members, the OCC is currently focused on economic renewal and business competitiveness. Its over-arching goal is to make Ontario the most competitive jurisdiction in North America.

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