



HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION DES HÔTELS DU CANADA

## NEWS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release:**

### Hotels Join the Election Campaign

*Ottawa, September 15, 2008* – In the midst of the national election campaign, Canada’s hotels are staging a campaign of their own – to tell the politicians that Canada needs new policies to support the travel sector at a time of declining demand.

“All across the country our members are meeting candidates to demand change,” says Tony Pollard, President of the Hotel Association of Canada. “Our national policies were built in good times – when gas and airline tickets were cheap, and borders crossings were fast. Now we face a very different economy and Canada needs to fight much, much harder for the next tourism dollar.”

In support of its campaign the Association has released **Facing a New Reality – An action plan for Canadian Travel and Tourism** which details key policy changes needed to make our travel sector competitive. Chief among these are a significant increase in Canada’s declining tourism promotion budget, and measures to reduce the crippling cost of air travel by reducing punitive federal rents on airports and opening Canada’s skies to greater international competition.

The Association has targeted MPs and candidates for personal contact in every region. They will be asked to review the document and to put their support behind new policies to stimulate the travel sector.

“We can all see where the economy is going,” says Mr. Pollard. “Canada earns a huge percentage of its national wealth in the travel and tourism industries. A competitive sector can continue to employ hundreds of thousands of people, and pay billions in tax revenues. But we can’t take it for granted.”

Key points in the Hotel Association’s brief include:

- A stronger investment in tourism promotion, with spending of approximately \$100 million – still a mere 1.5% of federal revenues from the tourism sector.
- A series of actions to bring Canada’s air transportation costs down, including removal of federal rents on national airports, elimination of aviation security taxes (currently the highest in the world), and reduction of high aviation fuel excise taxes.
- More aggressive development of measures to battle congestion and delay on our land borders, including expansion of the NEXUS program to enroll one million persons by 2010.

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- Renewed commitment to more liberalized aviation agreements with other countries, especially China and the European Union, to ensure increased competition and improved pricing for travelers.
- Measures to ensure Canada's hotels have access to workers including streamlining the federal Temporary Foreign Workers Program and making it easier for employers to use

“These actions by government will help the industry fight to be more competitive at a time when cost competitiveness will be crucial to maintaining our place in the world travel market,” Mr. Pollard said.

The Hotel Association of Canada (HAC) is a professional industry association representing the lodging industry in Canada. Its membership encompasses the provincial and territorial hotel associations, the corporate hotel chains, independent hotels, motels and resorts and the many suppliers to the hotel industry. HAC's objective is to assist both its national and international members as they endeavour to enhance their competitiveness and achieve their bottom line. The HAC accomplishes this through the collection and dissemination of information, research, advocacy, education, and operational support services designed to assist its members. The Hotel Association of Canada represents all the 8,287 hotels, motels and resorts across Canada.

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