



HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION DES HÔTELS DU CANADA

August 22, 2011

The Honourable Maxime Bernier, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Small Business and Tourism  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Minister,

Thank you for the opportunity of meeting with you in Toronto on August 19.

At the outset we are delighted that you are “The Advocate for the Tourism Industry” as you so eloquently described your appointment at our meeting.

The tourism industry is a key component of Canada’s Economic Action Plan which calls for and highlights the expansions of jobs that produce goods and services globally, the need for Canadian companies to enhance their competitive edge and a commitment to avoid erecting new trade barriers.

Tourism, as an export industry present in every part of our country, is sustainable and renewable and is a major job creator. The hotel sector alone employs more than 320,000 people all based in Canada! The hotel industry continues to invest in Canada averaging more than \$2.3 billion in “bricks and mortar” annually with a total of \$25.7 billion since 2000. We continue to create new jobs and drive significant revenues to the federal government including \$2.9 billion in 2009.

In our meeting we discussed the need for strong, sustained funding for the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC). Industry is fully committed to the CTC which is demonstrated by the matching funding of the private sector.

Hotel Association of Canada

130 Albert St., Suite 1206, Ottawa, ON K1P 5G4 Tel: (613) 237-7149 Fax: (613) 237-8928 E-mail: [info@hotelassociation.ca](mailto:info@hotelassociation.ca)

Tourism visas remain a challenge to attracting new visitors to Canada. The process to obtain a visa must be streamlined. As we know Brazil is the seventh most powerful economy in the world and outbound tourism from this country is growing exponentially. To obtain a visa to Canada, visitors must surrender their credentials and wait for the process to be completed. Compare this process to the United States where the applicant receives their visa on the same day. In fact as was recommended during the meeting, Canada should seriously consider the Australian model with its Electronic Travel Authority or ETA which processes visas instantly.

Air access to Canada will grow our economy, make us more competitive and create jobs. Around the world the CTC conducts marketing campaigns in 11 countries and Canada has Open Skies with two namely the United States and South Korea and liberalized air agreements with four others – the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Japan. Compare this to the United States which to date has 96 Open Skies Agreements in place. Immediate action must be taken to expand our air lift to Canada.

Tourism is a key component of Canada's Economic Action Plan.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'APollard', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Anthony P. Pollard  
President

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