

---

## NEWS RELEASE

### BC Chamber to urge air access, reversal of TFW program changes at national Chamber AGM

---

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Vancouver, September 24, 2013** – At this weekend’s Canadian Chamber of Commerce AGM in Kelowna (September 28-30), the BC Chamber of Commerce will be calling for a national Open Skies policy and for the federal government to reverse recent changes to its Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program.

“Canada has a real opportunity to grow export and tourism opportunities through better air access, and to reverse recent counter-productive changes to Canada’s Temporary Foreign Worker program before it’s too late,” said John Winter, president and CEO of the BC Chamber of Commerce. “These are critical issues for both B.C. and Canada and areas where, quite simply, we need to get it right.”

Winter said that Canada’s Blue Skies policy doesn’t go far enough to enable B.C. – and Canada more broadly – to tap into the global marketplace. See the BC Chamber’s policy [here](#) (PDF).

“In B.C., this is a no-brainer,” Winter said. “With an export-oriented economy and a big tourism industry, we need a more competitive air policy to allow both goods and people to travel at competitive prices.”

On the TFW issue, Winter said that key B.C. industries from construction to tourism to the digital industries rely heavily on the TFW program to hire skillsets that aren’t available locally.

“Program changes announced in April are already hitting B.C. companies, causing hiring delays, and making the program unusable for many small businesses,” Winter said.

He added that B.C. isn’t the only jurisdiction in Canada to suffer from the program changes.

“That’s why we’re urging Canada’s business community to join us and urge the federal government to reverse these damaging changes, re-start the Accelerated Labour Market Opinion process, and ensure that Canadian employers can keep critical jobs filled,” Winter said.

See the BC Chamber’s TFW policy [here](#) (PDF).

Once again, policy powerhouse B.C. will play a significant role in the Canadian Chamber AGM, with 18 B.C. policies up for national endorsement, out of a total of 57 at the convention. B.C.'s policy count leads the country; the next highest provincial count, at 14, comes out of Ontario. Of the 18 policies coming out of B.C., 10 carry the backing of the BC Chamber's 36,000 represented businesses; the balance have been put forward by individual Chambers in B.C.

*The BC Chamber is the largest and most broadly-based business organization in the province. Representing more than 125 Chambers of Commerce and 36,000 businesses of every size, sector and region of the province, the BC Chamber of Commerce is "The Voice of Business in BC."*

- 30 -

For further details, please contact:

John Winter  
President & CEO  
BC Chamber of Commerce  
T 604.638.8110  
C 604.376.3577  
E [jwinter@bcchamber.org](mailto:jwinter@bcchamber.org)

Jenny MacPhee  
Communications Officer  
BC Chamber of Commerce  
T 604.638.8114  
C 604.366.4990  
E [jmacphee@bcchamber.org](mailto:jmacphee@bcchamber.org)