



Employer groups release statement on HST court ruling

Vancouver (August 20, 2010) – The following statement was issued today by the six associations who asked for a judicial review of the anti-HST petition:

“We launched our court case because we wanted clarity and certainty around the future of the HST. Representing the small, medium, and large companies who employ tens of thousands of the people working across British Columbia, we wanted clarity on whether or not the HST would remain in effect.

“Today’s decision leaves open the question that required certainty -- whether the bill will actually extinguish the HST. The decision merely said the provincial agreement on the HST could be extinguished, which leaves open the question of whether the bill will end the HST. This leaves everyone without the certainty we sought and need to encourage investment and job creation in British Columbia.

“While the court did not provide the clarity we sought, we are hoping for a quick ruling by the court on the petition proponent’s separate case on whether the HST was lawfully enacted by the provincial government. That will provide some clarity.

“It remains important that our associations continue to provide the public with information on the importance of harmonization in strengthening the employment and investment climate in British Columbia. In a fragile global economy, it’s paramount that British Columbia does everything it can to encourage investment, protect jobs, and foster job creation. Harmonization is a key tool in accomplishing this.

“Our court case represented a nine-day delay in what has been an eight-month long petition process. It began Dec. 24, 2009 and concluded with Elections BC releasing the results on Aug. 11, 2010. On an issue that will impact the livelihoods of so many working British Columbians, that delay was a small price to pay to attempt to get clarity.

“As we earlier committed, we will not appeal.”

The six associations launching the judicial review are:

- Western Convenience Stores Association
- BC Chamber of Commerce
- Independent Contractors & Businesses Association
- Council of Forest Industries
- Mining Association of BC
- Coast Forest Products Association