

NEWS RELEASE

BC Chamber welcomes changes to recycling regulation that protect B.C. businesses

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, February 4, 2014 – The BC Chamber of Commerce applauds the B.C. government for amending a recycling regulation that was causing substantial concern among businesses so that it will impact less than 1% of B.C.’s businesses.

“Thousands of B.C. businesses can now breathe easy, knowing they’ll face no new costs or red tape under this recycling regulation,” said John Winter, president and CEO of the BC Chamber.

The regulation targets packaging and printed paper (PPP) and is slated to go into force in May.

Today, the B.C. government announced that it would enshrine in regulation an exemption for any B.C. business that meets any of the following criteria:

- annual revenues of less than \$1 million;
- less than 1 tonne of packaging and printed paper produced annually and/or
- a single point of retail sale (and not supplied by or operated as part of a franchise, chain or under a banner).

That means that less than 3,000 businesses in the province will be captured by the regulation, out of more than 385,000.

Winter noted that the BC Chamber supports the principle of extended producer responsibility (EPR), which aligns with B.C. business values, but cautioned that EPR programs need to be implemented carefully to avoid unintended consequences.

“This exemption correctly balances environmental goals with business needs,” Winter said. “We applaud the B.C. government for responding to businesses’ concerns and limiting the scope of the program, appropriately, to B.C.’s largest PPP producers.”

Chambers throughout B.C. raised the alarm about the regulation last summer after businesses across the province were contacted about coming new obligations and fees by Multi Material BC (MMBC), the agency charged with producing a stewardship plan under the regulation.

“It became clear that this regulation would have unintended fallout for B.C. businesses, and particularly small businesses, across B.C.” Winter said. “We knew we needed to roll up our sleeves, partner with government and MMBC, and fix this thing.”

Backed by local Chambers, the BC Chamber worked extensively with the B.C. government and MMBC to hammer out a way forward that avoided a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

“Today’s announcement is the fruit of those labours: A re-tooled regulation that achieves B.C.’s environmental goals, while protecting the vast majority of B.C. businesses from new costs and red tape,” Winter said.

Winter commended the B.C. government for actively listening to, and responding to, businesses’ needs.

“This exemption is a testament to a responsive government that’s serious about its commitment to businesses and to cutting red tape,” Winter said.

The BC Chamber and its network of local Chambers will carefully monitor the implementation of this regulation, to ensure that any further issues are quickly identified.

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.”

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