



July 13, 2011

Mr. Rodney Weston
Member of Parliament-Saint John
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Honourable Trevor Holder
Minister of Tourism and Parks
Centennial Building
Room: 613 Floor: 6
P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Dear Mr. Weston and Minister Holder,

On behalf of the Saint John Board of Trade we are writing to voice our continued support for the proposed renovation of the Saint John Trade and Convention Centre (T&CC). As we mentioned in our letter last October, the T&CC is competing regionally and nationally with other convention centres who have modernized their facilities.

This issue is time sensitive; we cannot risk postponing the renovations much longer.

Our City is already beginning to see the impact of not being able to provide modern amenities. The number of city-wide conventions has decreased in the past few years with only three booked for this year and none currently booked for 2013. This is down from nine held just two years ago in 2009. Considering the T&CC has the potential to bring in an average of 18,000 delegates per year spending \$800 per person thus injecting roughly \$14 million of new revenue into our local economy on an annual basis, the economic impact cannot be understated.

The return on investment for this project is great. Having a modern facility will attract higher level conferences with higher level delegates. The potential to generate approximately \$14 million in new revenue on an annual basis creates jobs and tax revenue for the government's investment. While we understand this is a financially difficult time for governments, this is not a handout; this is an investment. The funding given will generate tax revenue and create jobs. In the past ten years the Trade and Convention Centre has contributed \$18.8 million in provincial taxes alone. The City of Saint John has already acknowledged the importance of this investment by identifying this project as the number one priority for economic development and has committed to sharing one-third of the cost.

The Saint John Board of Trade is a nationally accredited business organization dedicated to fostering an economic climate that enhances growth, prosperity, and an improved quality of life in the community. With more than 1,000 members, representing 600 small, medium, and large businesses and organizations and therefore, the interests of more than 30,000 citizens, the Board is a dynamic

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advocate and the principal voice for the business community of Greater Saint John. It offers a variety of programs, activities, services, and networking opportunities designed to enhance the business prospects of members and the overall business climate of the area.

The Saint John Board of Trade recognizes the economic impact the Saint John Trade and Convention Centre has on our community and businesses. We ask that you support and assist the T&CC in its proposed renovations.

Yours truly,



John Warrington
Chairman



Imelda Gilman
President



CC: Ms. Tammy LeBlanc, General Manager, Hilton Saint John/Saint John Trade and Convention Centre
Common Council, City of Saint John
Hon. Blaine Higgs, Minister of Finance and MLA Quispamsis
Hon. Margaret-Ann Blaney, Minister of Environment and MLA Rothesay
Mr. Carl Killen, MLA Saint John Harbour
Dr. Jim Parrott, MLA Fundy River Valley
Ms. Dorothy Shephard, MLA Saint John Lancaster
Mr. Glen Savoie, MLA Saint John Fundy
Mr. Glen Tait, MLA Saint John East