

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS



*Local 230*

*Established in Victoria in 1902*

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January 22, 2010

Office of the Premier  
Box 9041  
Station Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Attention: Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier

Dear Sir:

Re: Harmonized Sales Tax

I am writing on behalf of the collective members of the Building Construction Trades on Vancouver Island in hopes you will consider expanding the tax exemptions currently contemplated by your Government with the implementation of the proposed Harmonized Sales Tax, (HST).

I have read a considerable amount of information concerning this new proposed expenditure tax, and although I understand it comes with considerable benefit to both Provincial and Federal Government, and many businesses in the Province, however it also comes currently with further trouble for many consumers. We may currently enjoy the benefits of the lowest business tax rate in Canada, but we also have growing Soup Kitchen line-ups, a faltering standard of living over-emphasized by an affordable housing problem and a growing unemployment problem (of which statistically only half of the unemployed qualify for Employment Insurance), and the prestigious recognition of having the highest child poverty rate as well. Your proposed HST will create absolutely no harmony with middle to low income families experiencing financial difficulty and barely getting by in BC.

As you well know the HST is simply a further Income to Expenditure tax shift, and it goes a fair distance in paying for income tax reductions your government implemented in the past, however the proposed HST at this time contemplates a broad brush approach inconsiderate (with the exception of fuel, basic groceries, and the reduction of liquor) of British Columbians state of being.

Many young families starting out with children (not unlike your own), will now be paying more for basic necessities for their children like clothing, bicycles and many school supplies these families are primarily young adults trying to make their way in life and the HST impedes that growth. Furthermore, it also has a regressive impact on seniors as well many on reduced pensions having to pay for increased costs for prescription medications, vitamin and dietary supplements. Everyone will be paying more for their residential heating, basic cable television, some food products, and restaurant meals.

Essentially much of the business sector will benefit from streamlined administrative work, and will be passing on this additional (current non PST) cost to consumers.

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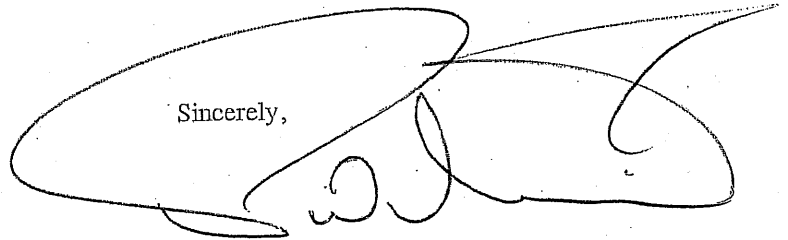
January 7, 2010

Let me make myself perfectly clear, many of our Unions have greatly benefited by helping to implement efficiencies in the workplace through automation and faster communication measures, we get the provincial, national and international benefits which typically stem from increased productivity levels, and therefore we are not opposed to the streamlining of business. What we do oppose is further decreasing our members and BC communities purchasing ability and the even greater harm of threatening their standard of living by implementing this broad expenditure tax.

The Provincial Government benefits from a one time short-term benefit of receiving a \$1.6 Billion dollar payout from the Federal Government for adopting this merged tax structure, this appears to be the sole reason the BC Liberals are hurdling headlong at breakneck speed while generations of British Columbians will become collateral damage.

We are suggesting to bring true harmony with a Harmonization Sales Tax to allow all previous Provincial Sales Tax exemptions to continue to apply after the adoption of the Harmonization Sales Tax, this move and this move only will stop Gordon Campbell from going down in history as the BC Premier who put the "Harm" in Harmony.

Sincerely,



Philip Venoit  
Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary  
President, VI-BCTC

PMV/jc  
cope 378

cc. All Vancouver Island MLA's  
cc All Vancouver island MP's  
Bob Blakely, Executive Director Canadian Office BCTC  
Wayne Peppard, Executive Director BCYT-BCTC