

## **Canadian Chamber outlines six-point challenge for next government Includes five-year fiscal plan**

**Toronto – June 2, 2004.** The Canadian Chamber today challenged each of the national political parties to commit to cutting taxes, paying down the debt while still reforming the health care system and to adopting other economic measures as part of its six-point platform for the next federal government. The challenge was made in a speech by Canadian Chamber president, Nancy Hughes Anthony, to the Economic Club of Toronto. (Speech and Canadian Chamber Platform available at [www.chamber.ca](http://www.chamber.ca))

Central to its platform, the Canadian Chamber called for a 3 per cent annual cap on the growth in federal spending, personal income tax cuts for low and middle-income families, further reduction on the effective rate of tax on capital and ongoing debt reduction. Other fiscal policies include EI reform; airport rent reductions and the elimination of the Air Travellers' Security Charge.

“With our fiscal plan there will be \$36.4 billion available for tax cuts over the next five years,” stated Nancy Hughes Anthony, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. “This will still give the government over \$23 billion for new spending and enable the debt to be paid down by about \$20 billion during the same period.”

“It is a false argument to pit our soft hearts – Canada’s social programs – against our hard heads, which are the things necessary to ensure businesses prosper and the economy grows,” continued Ms. Hughes Anthony. “What we are proposing is a balance between the two.”

In addition, the Canadian Chamber laid out the following business priorities for the next government:

**Health Care Reform:** Improve patient access by improving efficiencies; greater accountability through performance benchmarks; increased role for private sector delivery within the publicly funded system.

**International Relations:** Continue trade and investment liberalization; resolution of Canada-US trade disputes; fully implement Canada-US border agenda; deepen Canada-US economic relations; and address North American security needs.

**Revenue for Municipalities:** Recognize that municipalities need to secure new arrangements to diversify their revenue base and finance their ongoing needs; ensure that the overall tax burden for Canadians does not increase if a portion of the federal gas tax revenues are transferred to municipalities.

**Energy / Environment:** With climate change, understand the link to energy issues and the need for technology solutions over a longer period of time; strategic approach to energy development in Canada.

**Innovation and Productivity:** Boost investment in education and skills development; implement smart regulations including national securities regulator; use immigration to bring needed skills to Canada and recognize foreign professional qualifications.

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