



December 8, 2009

Honourable Colin Hansen  
Minister of Finance  
PO Box 9048 Stn Prov Gov  
Victoria BC V8W9E2

Dear Minister Hansen,

On behalf of the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association - a not for profit membership organization representing the parks, recreation, and culture sector – we are writing to you to request the exclusion of the PST portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax on those programs and services that facilitate and encourage participation in physical activity and recreation.

Dedicated to building and sustaining active, healthy lifestyles and communities in BC, the BCRPA and its members developed a 10-year strategic plan for the sector of parks, recreation and culture that envisions a high quality of life for all British Columbians. Much of the focus of this plan, and of the business of the Association, is to increase physical activity and reduce the incidence of risk factors to chronic disease. We are the founding chair of the BC Healthy Living Alliance and have worked at this table to develop and implement the BCHLA physical activity pillar and its four component initiatives.

The Province itself has implemented various initiatives through ActNow BC to encourage British Columbians to lead active, healthy lives, and we are concerned that the addition of a 7% tax to the cost of participation will deter and decrease involvement.

At present, the 7% provincial sales tax is not charged on admissions, rentals or programs offered by community and recreation centres. The HST would further impact the rental rate for ice and pool time, and when combined with a potential registration fee increase by minor sports in light of their loss of gaming funds, the increased costs to participants could rise well above this 7%.

We ask that in order to support individuals to continue to be active and ensure achievement of its own health targets, the provincial government provide an exemption from the 7% provincial portion of the HST for recreation services, programs, memberships and facility rentals to ensure that everyone continues to receive the health and social benefits of participation. We would be pleased to discuss further with you and your officials the implications of the tax for recreation, and would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Strutt", written in a cursive style.

Suzanne Allard Strutt  
Chief Executive Officer  
BC Recreation & Parks Association  
Founding Chair  
BC Healthy Living Alliance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori MacKay", written in a cursive style.

Lori MacKay  
President  
BC Recreation & Parks Association