

Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce Calls for Increased Immigration at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce AGM

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, October 4, 2009 -- The Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce called for policies to support increased immigration for small and medium sized urban centres during the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Victoria, British Columbia. Policy resolutions approved during the annual policy debate form the official policy position of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and guide their advocacy efforts with the federal government.

The policy resolution submitted by the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce calls on the federal government to address the unique needs of small and medium sized urban communities by streamlining the immigration process; providing more local autonomy on immigrant selection criteria based on local needs; and reducing the minimum investment required under provincial immigration programs to enable small and emerging businesses to access capital.

"Increased immigration is critical to the future growth of our Island economy," commented Sean Casey, President of the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce. "Aggressive immigration policies are required to offset the impacts of shifting demographics in smaller communities. Current federal policies favour larger urban centres which currently attract almost 75% of all immigrants to Canada."

Increased attraction and retention of immigrants to PEI is a priority issue for the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce. On October 29, the Chamber is hosting **Immigration Forum 09** at the Delta Prince Edward Hotel from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. The Forum will explore ways to increase the economic and business integration of newcomers to Prince Edward Island.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce is the country's largest business advocacy group representing over 175,000 businesses. The Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce serves as the voice of business for over 850 member businesses in the greater Charlottetown area. For further information on **Immigration Forum 09** or the Chamber's policy resolution on increased immigration, visit the Chamber's website at www.charlottetownchamber.com or call (902) 628-2000.