

June 28, 2010

Hon. Gene Zwozdesky
Minister of Health and Wellness
208 Legislature Building
10800 – 98 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Minister Zwozdesky:

The Alberta Chambers of Commerce (ACC) recently held our 2010 Provincial Conference where delegates from our federation of 124 chambers of commerce approved 30 new policies for inclusion in our three-year policy book. Four of these policies relate directly to your department. The following are summaries of them:

Renewal of Alberta's health-care system – This policy makes recommendations that complement the work MLA Fred Horne is completing on the *Health Act*. We plan to provide input into that consultation.

Better health care – Our federation has recommendations for amending the *Canadian Health Act* to allow provinces more flexibility in delivering health services. We are sending these recommendations to you as ACC would like to see Alberta Health and Wellness lobby the Government Canada for specific changes to our national legislation.

Certification of foreign health-care practitioners – ACC offers proactive recommendations to harness the expertise and experience of foreign health-care practitioners not working in their field because they are awaiting certification or the opportunity upgrade their skills and education.

Creating a new pharmaceutical industry in Alberta – The thebaine opportunity – ACC asks your department to lobby Health Canada to give producers the ability to grow a new variety of poppy that does not contain narcotic properties but can be used to produce prescription drugs, such as oxycontin or codeine.

Alberta addiction services and delivery models – Employers dealing with workers with addiction issues want them to have access full, ongoing treatment. This policy asks the Government of Alberta to increase the capacity for residential in-patient addictions treatment beds and provide the funding required for treatment and aftercare support.

ACC also has a number of other previously approved energy policies in our policy book. They are the following:

- *Building healthy workplaces*
- *A provincial approach to Alberta's rural family physician shortage*
- *Critical factors for Alberta Health Services procurement policy*
- *Employers and the impact of the Health Information Act*
- *Reduction of hospital-acquired infections*

All of our health policies are enclosed in this correspondence.

As you can see from the number and breadth of these policies, your ministry is an important one to our federation.

We are seeking written responses from your ministry to these policies by mid-August, as that timeline allows us to report to our members. We will also post the responses on our website.

ACC would appreciate scheduling a meeting with you to discuss our policies, as well as issues of particular interest to you.

We look forward to hearing from you,



Kay Olsen, MA
Chair



Ken Kobly, FCGA
President and CEO

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Enclosures

ACC