

Dedicated to Responsible Retailing

January 26, 2009

Premier Ed Stelmach
307 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Premier Stelmach:

It has recently come to my attention that in your letter to Prime Minister Harper, outlining Alberta's priorities for the Federal Budget, you included '*limiting credit and debit card processing fees*' in your recommendations for ways to help the economy.

On behalf of the members of the Alberta Liquor Store Association, I applaud your recognition of and willingness to address an alarmingly costly issue for our adult beverage retailers and ultimately, Alberta consumers.

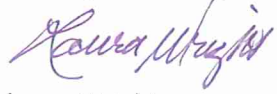
As I am sure you would recognize of particular concern to our retailers is the arbitrary nature of the increase in fees imposed by VISA and MasterCard, as well as the lack of transparency and disclosure of the nature of these increases.

VISA and MasterCard have begun to issue 'premium' and 'super premium' cards to a certain category of consumer, which has expanded from approximately three percent of all credit card holders, to almost twenty-five percent. With more and more of these cards being issued and used, our members are paying almost double their costs in interchange rates and fees.

In the face of a less predictable economic outlook for the near future, your support on this issue gives our members great comfort that the government of Alberta listens to and is concerned about the retail sector that contributes to the vitality of this Province.

ALSA has joined a coalition of associations through the Retail Council of Canada to support raising awareness of this issue nationally and will watch with interest the outcome of the next Federal Budget.

Thank you Premier Stelmach – it all matters.



Laura Wright
Executive Director

cc: Hon. Rona Ambrose
Hon. Jim Prentice
ALSA Board