Premier Campbell's Statement on the Economy

Highlights of Interest to Local Government

Premier Gordon Campbell provided a televised address on the State of the Provincial Economy on October 22, 2008.

The speech identified 10 key actions that the Province will undertake to keep BC’s economy strong. A few of the key actions of direct interest to local government are as follows:

New Property Tax Credit for Light and Heavy Industry

- Fifty percent of all school property taxes will be rebated to light and heavy industry annually.

- This will return approximately $50 million in new tax savings to those employers next year. This is on top of the $24 million in annual tax relief provided to heavy industries in the 2008 budget.

- The following is a direct quote from the Premier's speech:
  
  “It will help our oldest and largest employers to pay their bills, reinvest and maintain jobs, especially in rural communities - without downloading any costs to municipalities.”

Accelerate Public Investments in Capital Infrastructure

- Announced the intention to accelerate public investments in capital infrastructure.

Reduction in Ferry Fares

- Will fund a 33 percent reduction in ferry fares on all routes for December and January.

- Will restore ferry service levels for all routes, including the Sunshine Coast.

- Cost of $20 million in one-time funding.

- Reduced fares will act as a bridge until lower fuel prices work their way through to lower fares.

Rein in Available Government Spending

“We will re-evaluate spending to protect our priorities and will focus on scaling back unbudgeted increases in spending.”

Legislative Recall

- The legislature will be recalled on November 20, 2008 to enact these measures.