

## **Allow the Provinces to Decide on Single Sports Betting**

Bill C-290 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Sports Betting) received all-party support in the House of Commons in March 2012 and has been stalled in the Senate since. Bill C-290 would delete the specific provisions of the Criminal Code that make it illegal to bet on "any race or fight, or on a single sports event or athletic contest." The provinces, under whose jurisdiction gaming has exclusively resided since 1985, would then have the policy lever to decide whether or not, and under what conditions, wagering on single sporting events will be permitted to occur.

If passed, the economic and social benefits of C-290 include:

- Offering people a legal alternative (by using a credit card and an internet connection) to the illegal single event betting and/or offshore single sports gambling market – some of which is linked to organized crime
- An additional source of provincial revenue to support social programs, including healthcare and education
- The creation of additional jobs and a competitive advantage at provincially-operated/regulated casinos
- An additional value proposition for U.S. citizens deciding where to spend their tourism dollars. (This is of particular importance to border communities whose economies have been hit particularly hard by recent increases in duty-free limits for Canadians travelling to the U.S. overnight and lagging U.S. tourism traffic due to our high dollar)
- Allowing provincial legislatures to determine whether or not they wish single sports betting in their jurisdictions

It is estimated that \$14 billion dollars of Canadian offshore and illegal betting occurs under the taxation radar every year. In an era where governments are clamping down on tax evaders and cheats, legalizing this type of betting would be a win for the Canadian economy.

### **Recommendation**

That the Senate of Canada pass Bill C-290 and that it come into force before the end of 2013.

**SUBMITTED BY THE WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL CHAMBER. CO-SPONSORED BY THE ATLANTIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE NIAGARA FALLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE B.C. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE ONTARIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**The Taxation Committee defers to the Economic Policy Committee**

**The Economic Policy Committee supports the premise of the resolution – provincial legislatures should decide on single sports betting – after weighing the economic and social costs and benefits.**

**The Special Issues Committee supports this resolution.**