

October 3, 2011

ORHMA - Key issues for this election:

NDP Responses

Tourism

ORHMA supports:

Reducing the HST charge on hotel rooms to provide a competitive market price advantage and enable the industry to add a hotel room fee/levy model to promote Ontario destinations.

The development of a sustainable Tourism Investment Strategy that works for Ontario.

Implementation of the industry recommendations to stimulate growth contained within the February 2009 Tourism Competitiveness Study.

NDP Answer:

The NDP agrees with many of the recommendations of the Tourism Competitiveness Study and an NDP government looks forward to working with all stakeholders in the industry to work towards the implementation of a truly effective tourism strategy for Ontario.

Beverage Alcohol

ORHMA supports:

The implementation of a true wholesale pricing regime for liquor licensees, and that the amount of the discount should be at least equivalent to the discounts available to the LCBO's agency store system.

NDP Answer:

An NDP government would sit down with all stakeholders and examine the various issues related to LCBO pricing discounts and develop a fair and balanced pricing regime.

Municipal Liquor Tax

ORHMA supports:

The revocation of the City of Toronto's authority to levy a liquor tax in order to prevent a reduction in sales, lower operating margins and the endangerment of thousands of jobs in Toronto's licensee community.



NDP Answer:

We are aware that 2006 changes to the City of Toronto Act have given the City the authority to levy its own liquor tax. As far as we know, the City has no plans to levy such a tax and at the present time we see no need to make changes in this part of the City of Toronto Act. However, over the course of a full mandate of an NDP government, we would look at various aspects of the fiscal arrangements between the province and Ontario municipalities

Employer Health Tax

ORHMA supports:

An increase to the Employer Health Tax threshold from the current level of \$400,000 to \$1,000,000 to assist business operators offset the burden of year over year increases to the minimum wage since 2004.

NDP Answer: At the present time, the NDP sees no need to review the exemption threshold on the Employer Health Tax.

Minimum Wage

ORHMA supports:

The establishment of a system to review future increases, based on economic sense and current industry considerations.

NDP answer:

We will increase the minimum wage to \$11 this year and index it to the cost of living so that people who work full-time aren't trapped in poverty.

Regulatory Burden

ORHMA supports:

A streamlined government-to-business service model – a one stop shop - by simplifying the difficult processes that are currently in place preventing operator success.



NDP Answer:

An NDP government will do a comprehensive review of business regulation and red tape with an eye towards simplification and an end to duplication.

Energy Costs

ORHMA supports:

Special pricing rules for hotels and restaurants in recognition of the fact that these businesses do not have control over demand and cannot alter their peak times and operating.

NDP Answer:

The NDP recognized that the TOU pricing regime currently in place makes no sense for many small business owners. The NDP has opposed the Liberals' misguided smart meter/TOU pricing scheme from the beginning. We would review different alternatives to the present system – with full consultation with stakeholders such as the ORHMA - for best utilizing the more than \$2 billion in smart meter technology that has currently been installed.