

Minister Jean-Pierre Blackburn tells Canadian taxpayers, “You’ve earned it. Claim it.”

Victoria, British Columbia, February 16, 2009... The Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), was in Victoria today to announce the launch of the Government of Canada advertising campaign and to inform Canadians of the steps the Government is taking to provide them with tax relief.

“Reducing taxes stimulates the economy and helps build a solid foundation for future economic growth. We want to ensure Canadians have the information they need to take advantage of the tax savings that can help put money back in their pockets during these difficult economic times,” said Minister Blackburn. “The ‘You’ve earned it. Claim it.’ advertising campaign is just one way we are able to inform Canadians of the tax credits and benefits available to them.”

Also announced this morning was the new approach the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is taking to communicate with Canadians about their tax relief options.

“This tax filing season, the CRA is making it even easier to access information specific to your needs,” explained Minister Blackburn. “Families, persons with disabilities, seniors, students, and even tradespersons can access information that specifically addresses their tax needs and speaks to the credits and benefits that apply to them.”

A central Web page (www.canada.gc.ca/taxinfo) provides taxpayers with articles, tax tips, audiocasts, videocasts, and links to specific details on applicable credits and benefits to help each person save money and stay informed this tax filing season.

“For example, seniors will want to know more about positive changes to registered retirement income fund withdrawals, or to find out how to take advantage of pension income splitting,” explained Minister Blackburn. “They will want to know they can claim both the age amount and their medical expenses. It is all available for them online and in one place.”

This year’s campaign arrives on the heels of *Canada’s Economic Action Plan* announced in January, which took immediate action to reduce taxes, stimulate housing construction, support businesses and communities, and help Canadians.

In particular, new tax measures commencing in the 2009 tax year will provide a \$750 non-refundable tax credit to first-time home buyers and increase from \$20,000 to \$25,000 the amount that they can withdraw from a registered retirement savings plan to purchase a home. Canadians can also benefit from the new home renovation tax credit, which can provide a non-refundable tax credit of up to \$1,350 in 2009.

“Buying a home for the first time is a milestone event for many Canadians and is often the single largest purchase that one can make,” said Minister Blackburn. “The proposals announced in *Canada’s Economic Action Plan* will not just help first-time home buyers. They will also help stimulate the housing sector through increase in demand for labour, building materials, and other goods and services.”



Minister Blackburn's trip to Victoria includes a visit to a local Community Volunteer Income Tax Program office to speak to seniors about the tax relief measures that can be applied to their 2008 and 2009 income tax and benefit returns.

For more information on the advertising campaign and to access the custom-fit information for taxpayers, go to www.canada.gc.ca/taxinfo.

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