

FDFA reveals upcoming Parliament Hill Days program

The Frontier Duty Free Association (FDFA) has unveiled the program for its upcoming Advocacy Day and Parliamentary Reception, which will take place on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, from May 15 to 16, 2019.

“These days are key to our industry’s advocacy strategy, as we continue to build lasting relationships with decision-makers to raise awareness for our industry, leading to advocacy success, and to position FDFA as a key industry stakeholder,” said FDFA Executive Director Barbara Barrett in an enewsletter to members.

“Your participation in a selection of face-to-face meetings in Ottawa during that time is extremely important in getting the issues that matter most to the duty free industry into the hands of Members of Parliament, Senators, Senior Political Advisors, and other key decision-makers.”

From May 15-16, delegates will take to Parliament Hill in Ottawa to lobby political decision makers about the importance of the duty free industry for Canada’s economy, and growing tourism industry.

“We have a packed schedule of breakfasts, briefings, meetings, and networking events,” said Barrett.

Stores interested in taking part should contact the FDFA’s Manager of Operations, Allison Gardner, AGardner@fdfa.ca.

Meanwhile, the FDFA’s fight for the return of Canada’s Visitor Rebate Program continues.

Since last Fall, the FDFA has cranked up its advocacy efforts to reinstate the visitor rebate program. It has met with parliamentarians from all political stripes and continue to work closely with our partners like RCC and TIAC to ensure the government commit to restore this important program.

Last month, Barrett met with Blake Richards, Conservative Shadow Minister for Tourism, to introduce the association and discuss issues of importance to the industry.

“During this productive meeting we made the case for the return of the visitor rebate program. We also recommended that duty free stores administer the program to maximize benefits, increase traffic at stores and repatriate more revenues to Canada. There was further discussion on the significant contribution of the duty free industry to the Canadian economy and the need for government to protect and enhance the duty free program,” she said.

Going forward, Barrett noted that Budget 2019 included a number of measures to support the tourism industry, including the creation of a Canadian Experience Fund and additional funding to Destination Canada for a tourism marketing campaign to promote Canada as a tourism destination.

“While we are encouraged by the government’s recent announcement to support tourism in Canada, we believe that the government has missed an opportunity to bring forward measures such as the visitor rebate program to boost the visitor economy in Canada,” she said. “Canada is only OECD country with a federal sales tax that does not have a visitor rebate program and this is an anomaly within the country, visitor spending being the only form of export not exempt from sales tax.

“FDFA is engaged with members of parliament and key decision-makers in Ottawa to encourage the

government to take action on this issue. We will also continue to work with our industry partners for the reinstatement of the visitor rebate program.”