



ACTA and the Election: taking issues to the candidates

Federal candidates are on the move throughout Canada speaking to us in many forums from one-on-one conversations to town hall meetings and coffee klatches. They have the opportunity to tell us about their policies – and we have the chance to tell them about our needs and how they can serve us once they are in office.

ACTA is the largest organization in Canada’s travel industry and we believe the most influential when it comes to Advocacy, Promotion of Travel Agencies and Travel Agents across the country. Here are some of the issues ACTA would like our elected officials to know about.

1. AIRPORT FEES

We want the next Minister of Transport to call a halt to charging airports exorbitant ground rents and increasing airport fees. These cash grabs by Ottawa drive up the cost of air travel and drive consumers to U.S. airports for cheaper flights. Ours is the only government in the world that treats airports in this way while others, notably the U.S., provide substantial funding to aviation to encourage travel by citizens and guests.

2. CONSUMER PROTECTION

Only three provinces (Ontario, Quebec & BC) offer protection to consumers when their money is put at risk by the failure of a travel supplier. This is not good enough for one of Canada’s major industries. The federal government needs to bring about consumer protection programs across Canada.

3. TRANSPARENCY IN PRICING

Many travel suppliers do not disclose each component of their pricing to consumers and to travel agencies. Lack of transparency in pricing may mislead consumers and agencies with essentially false, low, base fares, pad prices with costs mislabelled as ‘taxes’ and deny agencies rightful commissions. ACTA is opposed to non-disclosure of pricing components and believes this can be a serious anti-competitive and anti-consumer practice. We don’t want travel companies to continue to hide their fees and charges in the ‘Tax Column.’ Governments should determine what ‘taxes’ really are and forbid companies to mislabel taxes. This is false advertising. We want our political leaders to demand transparency in travel pricing

4. TAX POLICY

We want the Department of Finance and the Canada Revenue Agency to consider the huge travel industry each time they plan to change the tax system with actions such as the imposition of the Harmonized Sales Tax in Ontario and B.C. and changes in the Places of Supply rules for taxation purposes. ACTA believes little if any thought was given to the special needs of the travel industry when these tax changes were made by the federal and provincial governments. Next time think about travel before you make our lives more difficult.

Candidates are asking for our votes in all ridings in Canada. Ask candidates where they stand on the issues that are important to our industry and make your vote count on May 2nd.