



June 13, 2011

Honourable Kevin Falcon
Minister of Finance
PO Box 9048 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W9E2

Dear Minister Falcon,

On behalf of the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) - a not for profit membership organization whose members represent and comprise the parks, recreation, and culture sector – we are writing to you to request government to provide an exemption from the HST to those programs and services that facilitate and encourage access to and participation in physical activity and recreation, and that future key healthy living services also be exempt.

As noted in the recent launch of the Healthy Families BC strategy, physical inactivity is a leading cause of chronic disease – the single largest burden on the health of BC's citizens and health care system. The application of the full HST tax on recreation is reducing access to programs and services that support individuals and families to continue to be active and ensure achievement of their own health targets. Even slight increases in rates and fees are enough to move them out of reach. As the government encourages British Columbians to lead healthier lives they also need to ensure that there is equitable and affordable access to recreation and healthy living services at the community level.

Like the Government of British Columbia, the BCRPA is dedicated to building and sustaining active, healthy families and communities in BC. Much of the focus of the Association is to increase physical activity and reduce the incidence of risk factors to chronic disease. Our members are witnessing first-hand the negative effects the HST is having on participation rates. We want to work with the Province to ensure that everyone continues to receive the health and social benefits of participation. We would be pleased to discuss further with you and your officials the implications of the tax for recreation, and would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Strutt", written in a cursive style.

Suzanne Allard Strutt
Chief Executive Officer,
BC Recreation & Parks Association
Founding Chair,
BC Healthy Living Alliance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie June", written in a cursive style.

Leslie June
President,
BC Recreation & Parks Association