

An Important Bulletin to All our Members and All Recipients of Gaming Grants

With Gaming Revenues at an All-Time High, BC Government Freezes Direct Access Grants to Charities

We have added this special bulletin to bring to your attention the situation that has evolved this summer with Direct Access grants. As you can see in the excerpts below from a *Vancouver Sun* article, the Province of BC has frozen Arts, Culture and Sports Direct Access grants that were committed to charities for late spring of 2009. Unfortunately, the BC Association of Charitable Gaming was not informed of this freeze nor were the grant recipients – all anyone knew until now was that their own grant was late. Now thanks to this article we know that there is an indefinite freeze on these grants, despite the fact that gambling revenue has risen in BC.

Arts, sports and community groups all over B.C. are anxiously checking their budgets after learning **the province has frozen \$36 million in grants from lottery and gaming revenues.**

Housing Minister Rich Coleman was unavailable for comment, but a spokesman said a decision on the grants would be made soon. He said the freeze is necessary because "like other jurisdictions around the world, our government is facing unprecedented economic times."

—Vancouver Sun July 25, 2009

In B.C., revenues from government-run gambling rose last year to \$1.962 billion, up from \$1.919 billion in 2007. That's also a huge increase from the \$403 million generated in 1992 in B.C.

Alberta, Manitoba and British Columbia also had above-average gambling revenues per capita in 2008 (\$556), while Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Quebec had relatively low numbers.

—above two excerpts from Vancouver Sun Thursday July 23, 2009

The BCACG has repeatedly asked the gaming branch to ensure that we are informed of changes in policy and issues of importance to our members. The request has been made formally to the branch both by the BCACG and by the BC Bingo Council. We need your help in mounting a campaign to ensure our voices are heard and that something like this does not occur again.

What you can do:

- **Contact your MLA and let him or her know that it is not acceptable to treat charities across the province this way and to deprive the citizens of this province of the valuable services provided by these charities.**
- **Support the BCACG as we address the gaming grant issues of all charities. Join the BCACG and send us a letter of support.**
- **Attend the BCACG symposium in September to help ensure your voices are heard in Victoria.**

*Sincerely,
Susan Marsden,
President, BCACG*