



CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT GROCERS • FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE DES ÉPICIERS INDÉPENDANTS
2235 SHEPPARD AVE. EAST, SUITE 902, WILLOWDALE, ON M2J 5B5

October 15th, 2012

Mr. Merle MacDonald
Committee Administrator, Economic Development Committee
City of Toronto

Re: P:/2012/Cluster A/EDC/ECON DEV/October/1210-034

Dear Mr. MacDonald:

The Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers (CFIG) represents independent and franchised grocery retailers across Canada, and has been doing so since 1962. On behalf of our members in the City of Toronto, we have reviewed the report recommending changes to the Holiday Shopping Regulation (City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 510).

We certainly concur that the existing regime of regulations, exemptions and exceptions has created an uneven and confusing playing field. The proposals in the review certainly go some distance in attempting to provide a more fair and equitable balance.

The report and its recommendations have been shared with our membership in the Toronto area, and we have requested their feedback. Again, while we support the move to correct the current system as being a step in the right direction, our members would suggest that closing on Thanksgiving Day and moving Good Friday into the category of optional opening from 10:00 am to 6 pm, may be more reflective of current realities in a more religiously diverse city than existed many years ago.

In making this recommendation, we have carefully taken into consideration the various viewpoints and understand the need for balance. So while we must pay heed to religious considerations on other holidays, for fear of this becoming a polarizing issue, as retailers, our members are extremely sensitive to what Toronto residents want---simply because they serve them throughout the year in a myriad of Toronto neighbourhoods.

Our recommendation for switching Thanksgiving Day for Good Friday, we believe offers more of a compromise and reflects the actual consumer demand in the City. In our sector, the independent grocer must, to stay on the playing field, differentiate themselves from the large corporate retailer, by offering better service, a more visible presence in the community and providing greater choice of local food.

Being keenly aware of and sensitive to the needs of the communities they serve, is a key component of the independents ability to stay in business. It is within that context in which our recommendation is made.

Thank you for providing us with the report and an opportunity to comment on it as part of your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Gary Sands
Vice President