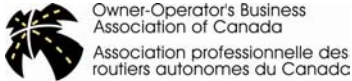


The *End the Lunch Bag Let-Down Campaign for Truck Drivers 2007* is a cooperative effort of:



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NEWS RELEASE

Canadian Trucking Groups Band Together to Restore 80% Meal Deduction for Drivers

CTA, OBAC & Teamsters Want Flaherty to End "Lunch Bag Let-down"

(Embargoed until January 2, 2007) -- Compared to most Canadian workers and small businesses, many truck drivers spend a significant amount of time away from home, eating at irregular times in truck stops and diners. Where and when they stop is often dictated by hours of service regulations. What's more, if they travel to the US they can no longer try and save a few bucks by brown bagging it since US border authorities have clamped down on drivers who attempt to bring personal food items across the border.

At one time, Canadian truck drivers were able to defray most of the impact on their pocketbook by deducting 80% of their meal costs for tax purposes. However, in the 1994 federal budget, the government rolled the deduction limit back to 50%, ostensibly to prevent big businesses from getting a tax break on lavish meals consumed while entertaining clients, truck drivers were caught in the whiplash. At the time, the government justified the move saying that it was merely following what had been done in the US shortly before. However, it did not take the US government too long to realize that reducing trucker meal deductions was unfair and it began a gradual restoration of the 80% deduction limit specifically for truck drivers. The 80% deduction limit will be fully restored in the US in 2008. The Canadian government has not followed suit.

So, the country's major trucking organizations representing carriers, owner-operators and unionized drivers are banding together in a campaign calling upon federal finance minister, Jim Flaherty, to put Canadian truck drivers on the same footing as US drivers in terms of the allowable proportion of meal costs they can expense on their personal or small business tax forms. The Canadian Trucking Alliance, the Owner-Operator's Business Association of Canada and Teamsters Canada say that truck drivers should not be lumped in with businesses where entertaining clients and doing the lunch and dinner circuit is a part of the culture. They say meal costs are a reasonable expense incurred by Canadian truck drivers to earn a living and that Canadian truck drivers deserve to at least be on a level playing field with US truckers.

According to the Census of Canada there are over 200,000 truck drivers in the country. But, because of the amount of time they have to spend away from home it's hard for truck drivers to be politically active. So to try and get the finance minister's attention as he prepares his 2007 budget, the three organizations have launched the *"End Canada's Lunch Bag Let-Down Campaign"* which features a post card that truck drivers can send to the finance minister. The post cards will be delivered to truck drivers in their pay envelopes, at truck stops, trade shows and the like.

Joanne Ritchie, executive director of OBAC urges owner-operators to get behind the program saying, "It's time for the government of Canada to do the right thing and stop eating our drivers' lunch." Phil Benson, a lobbyist for the Teamsters agrees, saying "when a US and Canadian truck driver sit down side-by-side in the same truck stop, eating the same breakfast, it's very hard to stomach the fact that one of them is getting an 80% write-off while the other gets only 50%; its not fair or reasonable." David Bradley, CEO of CTA says "we are not talking about lavish meals with \$100 bottles of wine here; this is about subsistence, pure and simple."

The campaign kicks off today. For more information and to submit an e-postcard, please visit: www.cantruck.com

