



**WORKING  
TOGETHER FOR  
SASKATCHEWAN**

**For immediate release**

**November 2, 2015**

## Liquor changes need independent review

Before government decides to privatize any more of Saskatchewan's public liquor system, the impacts need to be examined by a thorough and independent public review, says SGEU.

A huge amount of annual public revenue is on the line, and the people of this province deserve to see the hard numbers, says Donna Christianson, chair of SGEU's Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority (SLGA) bargaining unit. Especially in these tougher economic times, government has a responsibility to show the public what any potential changes will cost them.

Revenue is lost, Saskatchewan families will be the ones who suffer as services like health care or education are cut back to make up the shortfall, adds Christianson.

To date, only one detailed study of the economic effects of liquor privatization in Saskatchewan has been publicly released. That study, by policy analyst David Campanella, concluded that the available data reveals no financial reason why Saskatchewan should sell its retail liquor assets. The report found that under an Alberta-style privatized liquor system, Saskatchewan would have foregone \$230 million in public revenue from 2009-2013. Even just the four new private stores government has already allowed will mean up to \$7.5 million each year in lost revenue.

If in spite of these findings, government still believes that there is a financial case for privatization, then it needs to prove its claims with hard data, says Christianson.

Government needs to ensure that every option is carefully examined, so that Saskatchewan people don't end up paying for a major mistake of policy, Christianson says. The public deserves to know that the economic effects of potential changes have been properly studied.

For that reason, SGEU is calling for an independent review of Saskatchewan's liquor retailing system, to be conducted by a neutral third party.

SGEU is not the first organization to recognize the need for an independent review.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada also recognized that more and better information is needed before government decides whether to privatize liquor. In its submission to the government's consultation process, MADD wrote that the province should undertake a third-party study of the impacts of privatization before any significant expansion of a private alcohol retail system.

This is not a decision that Saskatchewan can afford to rush into, says Christianson. To forge ahead with privatization, without examining how the change will affect the lives of families and communities, is unacceptably reckless.

For more information, contact:  
Donna Christianson  
Chair, SLGA Bargaining Unit  
306.527.4768

Taylor Bendig  
SGEU Communications  
306.775.7854  
tbendig@sgeu.org

[www.sgeu.org](http://www.sgeu.org)

1011 Devonshire Drive North,  
Regina, SK S4X 2X4  
(p) 522.8571  
1.800.667.5221  
(f) 352.1969

Suite 201,  
1114-22nd Street West,  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0S5  
(p) 652.1811  
1.800.667.9791  
(f) 664.7134

33-11th Street West,  
Prince Albert, SK S6V 3A8  
(p) 764.5201  
1.800.667.9355  
(f) 763.4763

