

PRESS RELEASE: New poll reaffirms support for beverage alcohol in convenience stores ahead of Ontario budget

TORONTO, ONTARIO – (April 10th 2019) – Ahead of the Ontario PC government’s first budget, a new poll commissioned by the Convenience Industry Council of Canada (CICC) highlights significant support for expanded beverage alcohol sales in Ontario. Canada’s convenience stores are encouraged by the widespread support for this policy across the province and the opportunity it represents for their businesses and the customers they serve.

“Expanded alcohol sales not only helps small business, it also provides more options for consumers in Ontario,” said Anne Kothawala, President and CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada. “It’s clear that choice, and convenience, are high on the priority list when it comes to Ontarians’ attitudes on alcohol sales. As the organization that represents both retailers and distributors, with extensive knowledge of the convenience supply chain, we are ready to work with government and other stakeholders to bring integrated solutions to the table.”

The survey was conducted by Abacus Data with 831 Ontario residents aged 18 and over, from April 4th – 5th 2019. Key highlights included:

- Over 7 in 10 Ontarians (74 percent) who regularly consume beverage alcohol support the expansion of beverage alcohol in convenience stores.
- 64 percent of regular consumers say the convenience of buying alcohol close to home is important.
- 80 percent of regular consumers say accessing alcohol from a convenience store that practices responsible age testing is important.

Ontario’s convenience store industry has a strong track record in the sale of age restricted products, from lottery to tobacco. Responsible retailing and age-testing remain at the core of CICC’s advocacy; an enhanced age-testing program is in development in anticipation of the modernization of alcohol policies across the country.

“We’ve been very pleased to see the province’s commitment and openness to bringing beverage alcohol sales into the 21st century, working hand in hand with businesses in our sector,” said Kothawala. “Our 7,500 retailer and distributor members are ready to hit the ground running following this week’s budget to make good on this promise to Ontario businesses and consumers.”

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ABOUT THE CICC

The Convenience Industry Council of Canada is a new association that brings together retailers, distributors and manufacturers that sell a variety of products in convenience stores across the country. Our 7,500 retailer and distributor members include established banners like Circle K, 7 Eleven, Parkland,



Suncor, Canadian Tire, MacEwen and Husky as well as independents and franchisees. Our mission is to advance the interests of the convenience industry through effective advocacy and education. We are proud to represent an industry that contributes over \$22 billion in taxes nationally (\$540,000 per store in Ontario), employs over 250,000 Canadians and brings convenience to communities from coast to coast. We reflect the communities we serve and offer opportunity to new Canadians.

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