

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **CHAMBER DISAPPOINTED DOER GOVERNMENT FAILS TO GRANT SUNDAY SHOPPING EXEMPTION**

**December 7, 2006** – The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce is disappointed that the Doer government has refused to allow for an exemption to The Retail Business Holiday Closing Act for Christmas Eve this year.

“It’s disappointing that the Manitoba government continues to refuse to allow retailers in Manitoba the ability to determine their own hours of operation based on consumer demands,” said Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Dave Angus. “All we had been hoping for was that retailers would have had the ability to open earlier on December 24<sup>th</sup> to better meet the needs of both consumers and employees that work in retail.”

The Chamber had asked Labour Minister Nancy Allan to grant an exemption that would have allowed retailers to determine their own hours of operation based on the increased consumer demand. Under current Manitoba law, retail businesses that employ more than four staff are only able to operate between 12 noon and 6 p.m. Manitoba is currently one of only three provinces in Canada that continues to have restrictions on retail stores operating hours on Sunday.

“Young Manitobans have told us that they are in favor of having retail hours expanded on Sundays,” said Angus. “The Chamber believes with the opportunities that exist for young Manitobans that it’s important now more than ever that we create a province that meets the needs of our young people if we intend to keep them here.”

Angus added that there was precedent for granting the exemption. In 2005 the Labour Minister granted an exemption for Juno Sunday and in 1999 the provincial government granted an exemption for four consecutive Sundays to accommodate the increased consumer demand that was anticipated with the Pan Am Games.

“It’s longstanding Chamber policy that Manitoba retailers should have the ability to determine when they open based on consumer demand just as retailers in other province do,” added Angus. “We will continue to urge the Doer government to revisit the issue of Sunday shopping to put retailers in Manitoba on a level playing field with those in other provinces.”

-30-

Contact: Chuck Davidson – Vice-President Policy and Communications  
Tel. 204.942.3011 ext. 210 Cell. 204.782.1679  
Email [cdavidson@winnipeg-chamber.com](mailto:cdavidson@winnipeg-chamber.com)