



INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

What to do once the Harmonized Sales Tax hits bikes

The Ontario Government introduced a Retail Sales Tax exemption for Bicycles and Related Safety Equipment (“PST exemption on bicycles”) in November of 2007. This relief was to have expired on November 30th 2008 but was extended in the 2008 provincial budget. In announcing its commitment to HST, the Ontario Government indicated that there is no possibility of continued sales tax relief on bicycles – relief that amounted to about \$20 million annually to bicycle consumers.

To offset this, BTAC is calling on the Ontario Government to create Bike Ontario - a provincial cycling agency analogous to that of Quebec’s Vélo Québec. Once established, Bike Ontario would undertake a comprehensive cycling infrastructure investment and promotions program for Ontario using revenues accrued from the provincial portion of the HST levied on the sale of bicycles and related safety equipment.

Those investments will result in more Ontarians riding bicycles – the greenest vehicles on the road – with obvious benefits for the health of Ontario’s citizens and environment.

Usman Valiante, Director of Cycling Advocacy for BTAC, will be available to speak to the key elements of this proposal and its implications for green transportation in Ontario.

To arrange an interview with Mr. Valiante, please contact:

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*The **Bicycle Trade Association of Canada**’s mission is to change Canadian culture by positioning cycling as the pre-eminent form of transportation and recreation in Canada. A not-for-profit trade association whose members come from the retail and supplier sectors of Canada’s bicycle industry BTAC is the national voice for cycling BTAC actively advocates on critical issues with government at all levels and builds partnerships throughout the cycling community in Canada. BTAC programs include Market Research, Cycling Advocacy, ExpoCycle (Canada’s Bike Trade Show) and many cost saving benefits to members (www.btac.org).*