

Update re Debt Settlement Companies and Request for Action

At the OAIIRP Annual General Meeting held on May 9, 2013 we reported to our members on our actions to date and planned long-term strategy with respect to debt settlement companies. We are writing to provide our members with a further update of the Board's activities in supporting the initiatives of the Government of Ontario to regulate the debt settlement industry.

In response to the business practices of certain debt settlement companies operating in Ontario, the Ministry of Consumer Services tabled Bill 55 which, among other consumer protection concerns addressed in the Bill, is intended to enhance protection for consumers through the regulation of debt settlement companies.

Prior to the passage of the legislation, OAIIRP and CAIRP had made written submissions to the Ministry with our detailed comments and suggestions. In order to ensure that the Bill passes with maximum impact and that the views of OAIIRP are factored into the process, OAIIRP engaged the assistance of Brown & Cohen Communications and Public Affairs Inc. ("B&C"), a firm with specialties in government relations.

To date, with the assistance of B&C, OAIIRP has met or had discussions with the Minister of Consumer Services, the PC Consumer Services Critic, and the NDP Consumer Services Critic. B&C's view is that it is imperative that OAIIRP members be seen at events hosted by the government or the opposition and meet with their government representatives/opposition candidates to reiterate OAIIRP's position on the importance of this legislation passing.

In order to maximize OAIRP's efforts, we are calling for the assistance of our members in all parts of Ontario to assist with the communication and engagement strategy. We do not anticipate this will require a significant time commitment and B&C will be hosting a webinar training session prior to anyone being asked to attend an event or speak to a politician.

If you are willing to volunteer your assistance, please let us know by July 23, 2013
(by e-mail to Daniel Weisz or Jordan Rumanek as noted below).

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the Board members who are leading this initiative:

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We look forward to your support for this important initiative.

Regards,

Allan

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