



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

REALTORS® welcome EI benefits for Self-Employed

Ottawa – February 1, 2010 – On behalf of Human Resources and Skills Development Minister Diane Finley, Rob Moore, Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism, joined today with Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) CEO Pierre Beauchamp to announce that self-employed REALTORS® can now participate in the Employment Insurance (EI) program.

“From coast-to-coast-to-coast, a large majority of REALTORS® are self-employed,” says Mr. Beauchamp. “By creating a level playing field within the EI program, many of our members will no longer have to worry about taking time away from their careers to have a baby or care for a family member who is gravely ill.”

Bill C-56, the *Fairness for the Self-Employed Act*, extends EI benefits for self-employed REALTORS® for:

- maternity benefits (15 weeks maximum), which are available to mothers and cover the period surrounding birth (a claim can start up to eight weeks before the expected birth date);
- parental/adoptive benefits (35 weeks maximum), which are available to biological or adoptive parents while they are caring for a newborn or newly adopted child, and may be taken by either parent or shared between them;
- sickness benefits (15 weeks maximum), which may be paid to a person who is unable to work because of sickness, injury or quarantine; and
- compassionate care benefits (six weeks maximum), which may be paid to persons who have to be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill with a significant risk of death.

Self-employed Canadians who voluntarily opt in to the EI program are eligible to collect benefits as early as January 1, 2011.

“CREA is thrilled that the Government of Canada listened to REALTORS® and other self-employed Canadians,” says CREA President Dale Ripplinger. “To have this legislation introduced and passed so promptly demonstrates the government’s willingness to help each and every working Canadian.”

“It’s nice to know that REALTORS® now have the choice to balance career and family along with other working Canadians,” adds Bruce Mullett, Chair of CREA’s Federal Affairs Committee. “Real estate transactions contribute \$132 billion to the economy and add 202,750 jobs annually to Canada’s economy.”

REALTORS® who opt in to the program will pay the same EI premium rate as salaried employees in their province. They will not be required to pay the employer portion of premiums, which takes into account the fact they will not have access to EI regular benefits. Premiums, and resulting benefits, will be based on income.

About The Canadian Real Estate Association

The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) is one of Canada’s largest single-industry trade associations, representing more than 98,000 real estate Brokers/agents and salespeople working through more than 100 real estate Boards and Associations.

Registrants in any province who become members of organized real estate have an obligation to act in accordance with the REALTOR(R) Code. This Code outlines the accepted standard of conduct for all real estate practitioners who are members of a real estate Board or a Provincial Association.

CREA owns the MLS(R) and REALTOR(R) trademarks, which signify a high standard of service and identify members of CREA.

For further information: or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Alyson Fair, Publicist
The Canadian Real Estate Association
(613) 237-7111 ext 2284
afair@crea.ca