

ALBERTA  
SERVICE ALBERTA

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*Office of the Minister  
MLA, Edmonton - Glenora*

September 14, 2009

Mr. John Levi  
President  
Canadian Association of Movers (CAM)  
2200 Sherobee Road, Suite 404  
Mississauga, ON L5A 3Y3

Dear Mr. Levi:

*John*

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the Canadian Association of Movers' (CAM) participation in a review of the Alberta household moving industry.

As you may be aware, Service Alberta is currently participating in an initiative under the *Agreement on Internal Trade* to address marketplace issues within the moving industry. Research conducted under this project will help to provide an overview of the state of the Canadian moving industry, legislation in place, consumer issues and recommendations for the future.

I understand Ms. Erin Murphy of Consumer Programs has periodically been in contact with you to discuss your specific concerns, as well as your association's interest in being actively involved in the household moving industry review. CAM's perspective on this matter is of value to government, and your feedback will be incorporated as we move forward. Should you wish to provide additional information, please feel free to contact Ms. Murphy at 780-422-8168, or via e-mail at [erin.murphy@gov.ab.ca](mailto:erin.murphy@gov.ab.ca).

I appreciate your interest in ensuring consumers have successful moving experiences and in upholding a good reputation for this industry. I would also like to congratulate CAM for being a 2008 Alberta Consumer Champion Award of Merit recipient. Your association's commitment to continuing to serve as a leader for consumer rights through its Certified Canadian Mover Program by helping Albertans choose reputable, professional and ethical household movers is commendable.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write on this important matter.

Best Regards,

Heather Klimchuk  
Minister

cc: Erin Murphy  
Consumer Programs, Service Alberta



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August 19, 2009

Honourable Heather Klimchuk  
Minister for Service Alberta  
#103 Legislature Building  
10800 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister:

We both appeared in Renata D'Aliesio's article – *Alberta studies rules for movers* – in the *Calgary Herald* on Wednesday, August 5.

We both have the same objective – to ensure that consumers receive professional moves at the price quoted for the service requested. The Canadian Association of Movers (CAM) is a 2008 recipient of an Award of Merit from the Alberta Consumer Champion Awards. The Association has a director, Ted LeLacheur, in Alberta and several of Alberta's largest movers among its members. CAM would like to be included in your discussions on the related regulatory matters.

It appears to members of the Canadian Association of Movers that there is enough legislation and regulation in place to regulate movers in Alberta. Alberta's Fair Trading Act provides for regulation of estimates. Alberta Regulation 313/2002 (Traffic Safety Act) lays out the information required on a bill of lading, the primary contract between a mover and a consumer. It includes Schedule 9 – Conditions of Carriage (Household Goods) that details movers' and consumers' rights and obligations.

Consumers will typically contract a move to whomever offers the lowest price. Consumers do not always research the reputation of the mover, whether their goods will be properly handled and insured, and if the mover makes a practice of holding goods for inflated payments. Both the Better Business Bureau and the Canadian Association of Movers can identify the small segment of the moving industry in Alberta that frequently abuses the consumers' trust.

A mover can legally demand payment before off-loading consumers' goods. Without this lever, the mover would frequently not be paid. This is standard in provincial legislation across Canada. This does not entitle the mover to charge more than 10% over the original estimate at the time of off-loading. It is at this point in the move that a less-than-reputable mover may demand double or triple payment. And having received it, often deliver consumers' goods in damaged condition.

It should be noted that these payments are always demanded in cash. Is the Alberta Government getting the taxes due it?

Frequently the consumer is not advised in advance that the risk of transportation damage is shared between the mover and the consumer until the consumer purchases value protection. And even when this protection is purchased, consumers are often stonewalled in collecting a claim for damage.

In the collection of the overcharges, the mover commits what a consumer might consider a form of extortion. The police treat this activity as a civil matter; there are provisions within existing legislation to deal with these matters.

The reputation of our industry is of great concern to us. We can add an expert point of view to your discussions of this very serious issue. We look forward to working with you to find a solution to these concerns so that consumers have successful moving experiences.

Sincerely,

John Levi  
President, Canadian Association of Movers

cc: Ted LeLacheur, CAM Director, Western Moving & Storage, Edmonton, 780-454-6683