

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Ontarians Have Until June 30th to Avoid Paying HST on Prearranged Funeral Contracts

ONTARIO FUNERAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION REASSURES CONSUMERS

April 29, 2010 - BURLINGTON – The Ontario Funeral Service Association (OFSA) is reassuring consumers across the province that prearranged funeral service contracts purchased before midnight on June 30, 2010 will not be subject to the HST, despite the phase-in of the new tax that begins May 1, 2010.

The HST is being phased-in over the next two months and will be applied to items that will be used after July 1, 2010 but this rule does not apply to prearranged funeral contracts. Consumers can still purchase these contracts - for use after July 1, 2010 - until June 30, 2010, without being subject to the HST.

“Family matters to the OFSA and our Members and we want to reassure families across Ontario that they still have two months to arrange their funeral contracts before the 13% HST kicks in,” **Brian Parent, Past President of the Ontario Funeral Services Association.** “There is a lot of confusion surrounding the introduction of the HST, and we want to make sure that Ontario families have all the facts, at least when it comes to their need to preplan their funeral services.”

As of May 1, 2010, the HST will be applied to purchases, such as airline tickets, theatre passes and vacation packages that will be used after July 1, 2010. However, the government has exempted some items from this phase-in, including prearranged funeral services contracts and only prearranged funeral contracts purchased after July 1, 2010 will be subject to the HST.

“It was important for us as the largest association representing independent funeral homes in Ontario to work with government to make sure that the families we serve were exempt from the initial phase-in of the HST,” **Brian Parent.** “Preplanning a funeral always makes good sense but the decision can be a difficult one that families often put off. We are pleased that as an association we were able to help ensure that consumers have the extra few months to make informed decisions about how to address their final arrangements.”

Background

The Ontario Funeral Service Association (OFSA) has supported funeral homes and funeral directors across the Province for over 125 years. Members have always maintained a high standard of efficient service in the interest of consumer protection.