

For immediate release

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Credit Counselling not consulted regarding provincial legislation

Saint John, NB -- Credit Counselling Services of Atlantic Canada (CCSAC) wasn't one of the stakeholders consulted regarding the recent changes to the provincial Collections Agencies Act.

Earlier this week Justice and Consumer Affairs Minister Mike Murphy announced several changes to regulations under the Collection Agencies Act including allowing debt collection agencies to contact a debtor's home from 7 am – 9 pm, compared to the previous timeframe of 9 am – 9 pm. Agencies are also now allowed to contact New Brunswickers on Sundays from 1 pm to 5 pm.

The minister stated that these new timeframes are consistent with those used in other provinces and that the changes will somehow better protect New Brunswickers who are in financial difficulty. However, the department failed to contact all stakeholders when making this decision.

CCSAC, a registered non-profit organization, has been offering financial counseling to almost 100,000 Atlantic Canadian families and individuals for 15 years.

“We work with people suffering from financial difficulty every day,” states John Eisner, president of CCSAC. “We know first-hand how some of these collection agencies harass and threaten these people struggling to make ends meet. Now they have a few more extra hours to do it.”

How exactly will this benefit the people of New Brunswick? Who asked for this change? And what was wrong with the way the legislation was before? These are a few questions of the questions Eisner would have been glad to provide to the province if he had been consulted in the first place.

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For more information contact:

John Eisner

President

Credit Counselling Services of Atlantic Canada

Tel: (506) 633-3990

Email: john@solveyourdebts.com