



C-store retailers glad to see Ontario tackle tobacco contraband

Ontario's convenience store retailers are pleased with the additional measures aimed at preventing the growth of the tobacco contraband market.

Illegal tobacco sales have been an ongoing problem in Ontario with convenience store owners longing for stricter measures to counter such activity.

"The Ontario Convenience Stores Association (OCSA) is pleased that Finance Minister Charles Sousa is taking steps to address this underground economy, which hurts the bottom lines of our small businesses and government revenues," said OCSA president Dave Bryans. "Illegal tobacco continues to thrive in Ontario and we welcome any measures that may halt this criminal activity."

These measures, unveiled in the province's Fall Economic Outlook, will build on those introduced earlier in 2015 to provide additional support for the OPP and regulate raw leaf tobacco, announced OCSA in a press release.

"Our Association does not condone the sale of illegal, untaxed tobacco products in convenience stores, period" said Bryans. "While we support more enforcement to tackle this illegal trade, Ontarians and government decision-makers must know that our stores are not the source of this problem."

Contraband tobacco is sold without mandated health warnings and without age verification checks to anyone who is willing to buy.