



A message from Honourable Rick Thorpe, Minister of Small Business and Revenue and Minister responsible for regulatory reform:

Unfortunately, due to other commitments in my constituency, I am unable to attend your event on March 7, 2008 in celebration of International Women's Day. As British Columbia continues with unprecedented growth and opportunity, the importance of women in our communities and business has never been stronger.

Women entrepreneurs are a driving force in British Columbia's thriving economy. Small businesses account for 98 per cent of all businesses in British Columbia and women make up 36 per cent of all self-employed workers within British Columbia.

As an additional mark of our success, British Columbia continues to experience record job creation. Of the 411,000 jobs created since 2001, - 173,000 - jobs were filled by women. The total number of women working in British Columbia today is at historical levels, totalling nearly 1.1 million.

Our government, under the leadership of Premier Gordon Campbell, is committed to working in partnership with small business and women's business organizations to further support the unique needs and opportunities of women in business throughout British Columbia.

Congratulations to all those in attendance today for your contributions to British Columbia's economic success together we will continue to make British Columbia the Best Place on Earth to live, work and invest.

Best Regards

Rick Thorpe
Minister

cc: Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier

Honourable Ida Chong
Minister of Community Services