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NEWS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Premiers Must Leverage Cross Border ID

Toronto – Catherine Johnston, President & CEO of the Advanced Card Technology Association of Canada, (ACT CANADA) today called upon all provincial governments to plan beyond the short term opportunity to use driver's licences for cross border ID. While recognizing the benefits of providing ease of passage at the US border, she also stresses that ID management and policy be considered in a broader sense, so that any plans and expenditures would support additional benefits for Canadians.

Johnston claims that, "by making key choices on standards and technology, provincial governments could also improve health care, help citizens reduce the risks of identity fraud, cut operating costs and effectively reduce fraud in our social programs." She pointed out that, "for secure ID you must know the person to whom you issue the card and the card itself must be highly tamper and counterfeit resistant. This rules out simply issuing new cards to existing licence holders or adding more security to a magnetic stripe card; but that could be good news for both the government and citizens."

Province wide registrations to ensure that these licences are issued to only qualified drivers/travelers would not only give us an accurate base from which to issue ID, but would also support solutions to other problems. This includes dealing with risks when personal data is vulnerable because it is stored on the card face or magnetic stripe of a government issued card, and the growing cost of fraud from the use of counterfeit cards or legitimate cards presented by fraudsters. It also allows provinces to issue cross border ID to citizens who do not have a driver's licence.

Registration would also provide a foundation from which provinces could implement a new health benefit. This is a system where health providers can share data with the patient's permission, increasing the quality and timeliness of care and cutting costs. Registered citizens with secure ID can access their own records, helping ensure that data created through the use of a fraudulent card or transaction doesn't result in harm. This is of increasing concern to the health community.

"Choosing the right standards and technology will save money and support interoperability with other governments and the private sector", say Johnston. Chip technology, being rolled out by financial institutions in Canada and other countries, provides the necessary security. "Their EMV (Europay, MasterCard, Visa) specifications which provide for secure payment could be used with ICAO travel document standards."

There are additional benefits. Moving vulnerable personal information to the chip where it can be secured can fight identity fraud. Privacy can be protected using design tools available from ACT Canada. Reducing the need for governments to issue separate cards for each program saves money and increases people's perceived satisfaction. A recent Ipsos-Reid - ACT Canada subscription study shows that consumers strongly identify the benefits of carrying fewer cards.

Fraud savings can initially be used to pay for these systems and then can be re-invested directly into health care and other social benefits.

"This represents a long-term strategy and significant investments, but each phase, starting with new driver's licenses, must be a part of an ID management plan that wrings every dollar of value out of each step" concluded Johnston.

About ACT Canada

ACT Canada provides a neutral forum for stakeholders to learn, share information and pursue their goals. Founded in 1989, we are internationally recognized as a reliable source of information on advanced cards and the Canadian marketplace.

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