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**Attention News Editors:**
**Groups Want Cabinet Minister for Consumer Protection**

The creation of a Cabinet position for consumer protection a priority for Canadians: poll

OTTAWA, Sept. 30 /CNW Telbec/ - The Canadian Consumer Initiative (CCI) called on all federal parties to commit to establishing a Cabinet level position for protecting consumers and to increase funding for consumer organizations. Their demand is backed up by a new poll conducted by Nanos Research for CCI that reveals more than 80% of Canadians believe the appointment of a Minister for consumer protection should be a high or medium priority for the next government.

"Consumers are currently underserved by the federal government," said Charles Tanguay, Director of Communications for Union des Consommateurs. "These concrete measures we are recommending today will help raise the voice of consumers in the corridors of power."

"Canadian consumer groups have long advocated for increased measures to protect consumers and to ensure there are significant opportunities for their voices to be heard within government and in corporate boardrooms across the country," said Bill Huzar, President of the Board of Directors of Consumers Council of Canada.

"To date in this election campaign, only the NDP have made a formal commitment to establishing a federal cabinet position for consumer protection," said John Lawford, Counsel for the Public Interest Advocacy Centre. "And, the Conservative Party has addressed, to a limited degree, the issue of telecom regulation, an acknowledgement that they are aware of the consumer problems in this area."

"The next federal government must give consumers a voice in matters that concern them, for example, food safety, banking, privacy laws, telecommunications and copyright law," said Anu Bose of Option Consommateurs. "It can do so by increasing opportunities for consumers to be heard at tables where only government and industry now sit."

According to the Nanos Research poll, support for a new Cabinet level position for consumer protection is strong across demographic, regional and party preference lines with 45.3% of Canadians overall saying such an appointment should be a high priority, 36.6% saying it should be a medium priority, 11.6% saying it should be a low priority and 6.4% unsure. That support is highest among males (46.3% saying it is a high priority), Atlantic Canadians (58.1% saying it is a high priority) Canadians over 60 years old (51.2% for whom it is a high priority) and Bloc Quebecois supporters (50.8% saying it is a high priority).

The poll results are based on a random telephone survey of 1,200 Canadians from September 20th to September 22nd, 2008. The margin of accuracy for a sample of 1,200 is +/-2.8%, 19 times out of 20. For more details on the poll please see the attachment. For more information on polling technique please visit [www.nanosresearch.com](http://www.nanosresearch.com).

The Canadian Consumer Initiative (CCI) is a coalition of six major consumer organizations: the Alberta Council on Aging Services, the Automobile Protection Association, the Consumers Council of Canada, Option consommateurs, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, and L'Union des consommateurs. CCI provides advice and assistance to enable the federal government to safeguard consumer interests.

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