Protecting Canadians' Wealth

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Raising the professional bar for financial advisors

TORONTO, Feb. 20, 2013 /CNW/ - Canadian investors need better assurances that the financial advisor they are working with is properly qualified to manage their money, says Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada.

In the current environment, anybody can set up shop and call themselves a financial advisor, regardless of their training, education or ethics. This puts Canadians at risk every day as they take financial advice from people who may not necessarily be "experts." Advocis is proposing the implementation of a professions model for financial advisors that will tightly regulate the use of the title "financial advisor" and require membership in a recognized professional association.

"Too often the headlines are about Canadians being defrauded of their hard-earned money or losing their retirement savings because of the shady actions of someone who calls him or herself a financial advisor," says Greg Pollock, President and Chief Executive Officer of Advocis. "We want to raise the professional bar and protect the wealth of Canadians by ensuring that when they turn to a financial advisor, they are turning to a person they can trust. If that trust is broken, we want Canadians to have a reliable course of action."

The model proposed by Advocis would require all financial advisors to meet proficiency standards, regularly update their education and training, and adhere to a code of professional and ethical conduct. For Canadian consumers, it would also provide easy access to review an advisor's credentials and complaints history, and offer an accessible complaints mechanism.

"Membership in a professional association for financial advisors will help protect consumers from unscrupulous acts," says Pollock. "It will give Canadians assurances that they are relying on someone with professional credentials and ethics, and if they have doubts about their advisor, they will be able to easily do a background check that will enable them to make informed decisions about the individuals they are entrusting with their money."

For more information about the professions model proposed by Advocis, please visit www.advocis.ca/raisethebar. Follow Advocis on Twitter @Advocis and Like it on Facebook.

About Advocis:

Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada, is the association of choice for financial advisors and planners. With more than 11,000 members in 40 chapters across
Advocis is the definitive voice of the profession, advocating for professionalism and consumer protection. Professional financial advisors and planners are critical to the economy, helping consumers make sound financial decisions that ultimately lead to greater financial stability and independence. Advocis works with decision-makers and the public, stressing the value of financial advice and striving for an environment in which all Canadians have access to the advice they need.

SOURCE: Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada

For further information:

or to arrange an interview, please call Kristin Doucet, Director of Communications and Media Relations, at 416-342-9896 / 1-800-563-5822, ext. 9896 or email: kdoucet@advocis.ca.

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