

**CHATHAM-KENT CHAMBER CALLS FOR FEDERAL VISION TO GROW
ONTARIO'S ECONOMY**

CHATHAM: A new report from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce makes the case that federal policies are a barrier to Ontario's economic growth. The chambers are calling on the federal government to play a more productive role in improving Ontario's economic competitiveness.

The report, *A Federal Agenda for Ontario*, shows that federal approaches to areas such as training, immigration, infrastructure, and economic development are hurting Ontario and its businesses.

"The federal government has done much to help Ontario during the downturn, including supporting the HST and helping bailout the auto sector" said Allan O'Dette, President & CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. "But Ontario's economy is still recovering, and we need the federal government to continue to seek ways to drive economic growth in the province."

The report notes that Ontarians contribute \$12.3 billion more into the federation than what they get back, and in many key areas, federal government policy is not aligned with provincial priorities.

"It is integral to the business community of Chatham-Kent that measures are taken to provide fair distribution of federal financial resources to assist our economy and enhance the progression our businesses are making in their economic recovery." notes Gail Bishop, President and CEO of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce.

The report makes 14 recommendations on how to reform policies relating to immigration, training, Employment Insurance, manufacturing, infrastructure, Aboriginal education, local economic development, and the way that the federal government distributes wealth across the country.

With the exception of reforms to Aboriginal education, these recommendations do not require the federal government to spend more money.

"Ontario businesses are optimistic that the province will emerge from this period of economic uncertainty stronger and more competitive than ever," said O'Dette. "This is best achieved when we work collectively to create the right conditions."

-30-

To read the full report view the attached file (Chatham-Kent A Federal Agenda for Ontario)

For further information or to schedule an interview, contact:

Gail Bishop, President and CEO
Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce
519-352-7540, ext. 22

gail@chamber-kentchamber.ca

Neville McGuire, Communications Manager
Ontario Chamber of Commerce
416-482-5222, ext 2410
nevillemcguire@occ.on.ca

About the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce: The Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce locally represents approximately 500 businesses and is a long standing member of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Ontario's business advocate since 1911.

About the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC): The OCC is a network of 160 local chambers of commerce and boards of trade in the Province of Ontario, representing 60,000 businesses of all sizes, in all economic sectors and from every area of the province.