

Business Deserves Evidence-Based Reform

Changes Will Hurt Job Creation, Consumer Costs and Economic Growth

Chatham-Kent, May 30, 2017 – The Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Keep Ontario Working Coalition, today expressed concern that the Government of Ontario's *Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs* Plan commits to unproven sweeping reforms without ensuring protection against unintended consequences.

As noted in the Ontario Chamber of Commerce's 2017 Ontario Economic Report, despite projections that Ontario will lead Canada in economic growth in the coming years, diminished profitability, lower labour market participation, and sluggish market activity; along with other key factors have resulted in a risk-averse atmosphere that businesses are disinclined to grow production and questioning if they should continue to grow in Ontario.

As the Government pointed out in Budget 2017, 98 per cent of all new jobs, since the recession in Ontario, have been full time, and 78 per cent in above-average wage industries. This positive economic activity by Ontario's private sector demonstrates a clear commitment to good jobs throughout our province.

Christopher June, Chair of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce noted, "The reforms outlined in the Changing Workplaces Review cautioned that any regulatory change shouldn't impair the competitiveness of businesses, however, with Chatham-Kent's economic drivers created largely in farming, agriculture and small business, I have concerns this will punitively affect these businesses, their competitiveness and abilities to continue their growth trends locally. We need to ensure the right balance is made to provide a competitive environment for our businesses, affording them manageable costs and to offer sustainable employment."

The Keep Ontario Working Coalition on the Government's proposed workplace reforms stated, "We share in the Government's desire for broadly inclusive growth. However, in order to achieve this, we need to ensure that we are not risking job losses, rising consumer costs, and economic hardship as a result of over-regulation. We are urging the government to take time this summer to have an independent third party conduct a comprehensive economic impact analysis on the proposed reforms to consider the unintended consequences to employers. As the province's biggest employer, the government must fully understand what these changes will cost in relation to the provincial treasury as well as social services and other government agencies.

There must be co-operation with government to identify the scale of the economic impact of these changes and a mechanism to help employers transition into any new policy regime. Our responsibility is to continue to be a cooperative partner with government to create solutions that will, where possible, inhibit negative impacts on the growth of Ontario's economy, our people, and our local communities."

The Keep Ontario Working Coalition (KOW) is a broad-spectrum group of business sector representatives concerned with sound public policy to help produce jobs and grow Ontario.

Keep Ontario Working Coalition Members

Association of Canadian Search, Employment and Staffing Services (ACSESS)
Canadian Franchise Association (CFA)
Food & Consumer Products of Canada
Food and Beverage Ontario (FBO)
National Association of Canada Consulting Businesses (NACCB Canada)
Ontario Restaurant, Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA)
Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC)
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA)
Restaurants Canada
Retail Council of Canada (RCC)
Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO)

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