



May 13, 2020

Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier,

We are appreciative of this government's leadership in doing what it can to ensure the safety of Ontarians and the complexities of dealing with Covid-19. As we start to turn attention to re-opening Ontario, we would ask that your government does what it can to support businesses who remain struggling. Many are at an economic precipice and are unsure how they will move forward.

On behalf of the Whitby Chamber of Commerce business community representing over 700 members, we are writing to you to highlight a few areas that are members have expressed concerns over. We hope that these will be given consideration at your command table as we move forward to re-opening the economy.

1. The Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA) has yet to benefit any small business and we are only a few short weeks from the first of June. Can the government clarify if you have reviewed support and if you will make revisions to accommodate the business community (i.e. those paying rent versus those collecting)?
2. Reopening guidelines – to reopen and stay in business, the owner and employees are accountable for developing trust with their customer. That requires providing a level of safety and security to enable trust. The guidelines provided by government are very specific and expensive if executed to specifications. We ask that the Provincial government provide business grants to help support the reconfiguration of these businesses and purchase PPE to meet the specific guidance that has been released.

The hiring of additional inspectors signals to the business community that these are not guidelines but regulatory in nature resulting in possible fines. Many businesses who have been closed for 8 weeks have neither the capital to support the infrastructure or PPE measures to reopen or the ability to pay for penalties. Both the possibility of financial penalties and concerns over understanding the guidelines (including revising

employee policies), is a mammoth responsibility and created significant fear and apprehension in the business community.

We respectfully request the Provincial government ensure the needs of our businesses and community are addressed in a timely manner. They have complied with emergency orders and have done everything they can to protect their customers, staff and their families from Covid-19. They desperately need provincial and federal supports to ensure this pandemic does not result in a collateral damage in taking away their economic future.

Regards,

Corette Miller

Corette Miller
President, Board of Directors
Whitby Chamber of Commerce

c.c.

The Rt. Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Mr. Bill Morneau, Canada's Minister of Finance
Mr. Rod Phillips, Ontario's Minister of Finance
Mr. Lorne Coe, MPP Whitby
Mr. Ryan Turnbull, M.P., Whitby
Mr. John Henry, Regional Chair & CEO
Mr. Don Mitchell, Mayor Town of Whitby