

MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2023

Cambridge Chamber policies assist women in skilled trades and open job market

CAMBRIDGE, Ont. - The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce created the opportunity to boost the Ontario job market thanks to the creation of two policies which received support at the recent Ontario Chamber of Commerce's recent Annual General Meeting and Convention in Niagara Falls.

The first, initially approved in 2020 by the Ontario Chamber network and reintroduced as a 'sunsetting' resolution this past weekend, calls for the Province to continue to market a career in skilled trades aimed at girls and women. It also recommends that students graduating from high school with an interest in skilled trades can apply to the college of their choice, regardless of if they have found employment in this sector.

"The skilled trades shortage in Ontario is quickly become an emergency and it's only going to get worse," says Cambridge Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Greg Durocher. "This policy is an important one because it targets an untapped resource, and it is vital we change the narrative and get the message out there that a career in skilled trades is not only lucrative but rewarding."

The second policy asks the Province to develop partnerships within local municipalities and community organizations to ensure language training is available for new immigrants. It also recommends that those collecting ODSP who wish to work full time can do so without risk of losing their provincially funded benefits (i.e., prescribed medications) if their employer does not provide those services. As well, it recommends the Province investigate a form of remuneration (i.e., tax credit) for employers regarding provincially regulated training, such as WHMIS.

"We need to find ways to open our job market and implementing these changes can help us do that," says Greg, referring to these policy recommendations.

The policies are now part of the Ontario Chamber policy playbook in its advocacy efforts with the Provincial Government.

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The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce is committed to the enhancement of economic prosperity and the quality of life in Cambridge. A non-partisan organization funded solely by memberships, the Chamber works hard to address concerns of business, provide access to information resources and represent members at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. With more than 1,700 member firms, the Chamber's strength is clearly in its hardworking volunteers and committees addressing issues affecting local business and providing practical solutions.