

April 23, 2020

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Hon. Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Office of the Premier
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

RE: Continuing to Support the Ontario Business Community

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Ford:

The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, CommunitECH, Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation, and the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce are the leading business organizations in Waterloo Region, Ontario. Together, we represent 90,000 workers and 3,500 businesses of every type and size. Our members and clients include advanced manufacturers, innovators, technology companies, major financial services firms, insurance providers, agriculture and small businesses of every type.

On March 25, we wrote to you outlining six ways to immediately support business, job creators, not-for-profits and charities, and municipalities.

As you'll recall, we called for fast and bold action on:

- an emergency wage subsidy;
- a backstop for Canadian banks;
- a postponement of HST/GST remittance payments;
- deferral of mortgage and rent payments for citizens;
- support for the charitable and not-for-profit sector; and
- waiving of penalties and interest and a range of municipal flexibility options.

You have worked hard to deliver for Ontario and Canada, and we are grateful that your governments have moved on a range of these or similar initiatives. As we wrote in our letter to you, we will stand with you to defend your decision to 'go big' on an economic protection and recovery plan given its vital significance to Canada's job creators. Additionally, we are proud and grateful to note that Canada's response to the health crisis is already yielding results, and your shared leadership of the economic crisis has been robust. In many ways, Ontario and Canada are helping to lead the way through the COVID19 crisis.

As Canada's and Ontario's COVID19 management plan moves from reaction, to management, and now forward toward recovery, we write today to follow up on our original letter with three key perspectives for your consideration. They all pertain to optimizing the support you have rolled out to help the business community through the crisis.

1. **Speed.** We join you in being acutely aware that the delivery of the committed supports needs to be administered as quickly as humanly possible. Many firms continue to struggle with accessing emergency loans, in particular, as well as other supports. Their runway prior to insolvency can be measured in days and weeks, rather than months.
2. **Inclusion.** A major continuing pain-point for the business community centres on the need for support programs to be as inclusive of all types of businesses and corporate structures as possible. Complex eligibility criteria, combined with bureaucratic delay, are - as you know all too well - suffocating small businesses out of viability as we speak. Moving with speed and being as inclusive of all kinds of business as possible is essential to protecting businesses and jobs. You have recently announced further programs to buttress your governments' efforts in this regard - including for high potential innovation sector companies - and that is deeply appreciated by our business community.
3. **Extension and Recovery.** The programs as developed will be essential to businesses holding on to their employees, paying their ongoing overhead costs, and being prepared to participate in a strong recovery to get Ontario and Canada roaring again. To give businesses confidence in their own viability until that recovery takes off, we respectfully ask that you consider extending the programs not only to the late Spring as planned, but into the early Fall of 2020. Our intelligence indicates that this may be essential for a range of key sectors, especially but not limited to tourism.

As always, we stand ready to work with your governments to ensure all businesses are supported through the crisis. We ask that you and your staff and officials reach out to us at any time for advice, support, and assistance. We look forward to working in continued partnership with you toward an expansive and powerful economic recovery for Ontario and Canada.

Sincerely,



Tony LaMantia
President and CEO
Waterloo Region
Economic Development
Corporation



Greg Durocher
President and CEO
Cambridge Chamber
of Commerce



Iain Klugman
President and CEO
Communitech



Ian McLean
President and CEO
Greater Kitchener
Waterloo Chamber
of Commerce

CC:

Hon. Bill Morneau
Hon. Rod Phillips