

November 4, 2015

Dave VanKesteren, M.P.
48 Centre St.
Chatham, Ontario N7M 4W2

Dear Dave:

On behalf of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and its diverse network of 60,000 members, I would like to congratulate you on your recent electoral victory.

As you are aware, our Chamber provides a voice for business in Chatham-Kent to enhance the economic climate and prosperity for our local commerce, trade and industry stakeholders. The OCC represents local chambers of commerce and boards of trade in over 135 communities across Ontario. Its mission is to support economic growth in Ontario by defending business priorities on behalf of our members. It is for this reason that the OCC, together with our chamber, took on an active role during the recent federal election, highlighted by the release of our report *In Focus: Federal Priorities for the Ontario Economy*.

I was encouraged to see that many of our policy recommendations made it into the federal parties' platforms. We will be even more encouraged when federal representatives have acted upon these commitments. We believe there are three key provincial priorities that should be addressed in the near term. Those priorities are outlined below:

Reinstate the mandatory, long-form census. I am encouraged to see that, according to media reports, the new government is moving to reinstate the census. A mandatory census will ensure that Ontario employers have access to reliable labour market data. It will also allow businesses to better foresee trends in the labour market and tailor their policies and decisions accordingly.

Get infrastructure dollars out the door. The new federal government has committed to increasing the federal government's infrastructure investment to nearly \$125 billion over the next decade. These funds are badly needed to ease productivity-zapping congestion in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area that will, in the end, save local business time and money in their transporting efforts.

Move forward with tax relief measures for small businesses. The new federal government has committed to reducing the small business tax rate from 11 percent to 9 percent. We urge the federal government to work with the business community as it designs and implements the tax cut.

In addition to these priorities, I urge you, and all Ontario MPs, to recognize that Canada's economic growth is driven largely by growth in Ontario and, further, economic success in this province signals a rise in prosperity across the country. For too long, Ontario's economic challenges have not been adequately addressed by federal governments of all political stripes. As a result, the gap between what Ontarians pay to the federal government and what they receive back now stands at \$11 billion. The gap must be addressed, once and for all.

Finally, I encourage you to stay engaged with our chamber and our members. We are eager to partner with you to improve the local business climate.

Sincerely,

Gail A. Bishop
President & CEO

November 4, 2015

Bev Shipley, M.P.
21 Arnold St.,
Wallaceburg, On N8A 3P3

Dear Bev:

On behalf of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and its diverse network of 60,000 members, I would like to congratulate you on your recent electoral victory.

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