



**POLICY
REPORT
CARD**

2017/2018

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LETTER TO THE CHAMBER NETWORK

As Ontario's business advocate, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) has long been recognized as a leading voice in supporting and advancing economic development in the province of Ontario. The last twelve months have galvanized our membership unlike any time in recent memory, and our team has worked hard to advance messages around smart policies that aspire to grow business in this province.

On behalf of our 60,000 members in 135 communities across Ontario, this year the OCC took a leadership position on advocacy specific to Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*. Armed with evidence-based policy recommendations, we toured over 50 communities to share our message and motivate our membership to take action. While we did not achieve all the concessions we sought from government, we did achieve some. We also laid the groundwork for positions adopted by other political parties. Most importantly, we demonstrated to all that we have the ability to mobilize Ontario business to engage in measured advocacy that is principled and fair.

Building upon the credibility we have established for our leading policy and analysis, our work has become more concentrated on government relations—and that is why we have seen such success in translating advocacy into action. In 2018, we will expand our focus in this area through the creation of a department of Government Relations with a stand-alone mandate of engagement with political and bureaucratic stakeholders, which will focus on effective government advocacy.

Across all platforms, our collective voice has never been stronger, leading to real and meaningful victories on behalf of Ontario's employer community. This has led to us having some incredible advocacy wins over the last twelve months:

- ✓ As a direct result of our advocacy, the Ontario government announced a “one-window service” to help small businesses. The Small Business Access program will help small businesses access support, information, and resources when navigating Ontario's regulatory environment.
- ✓ As part of its Fall Economic Statement, the government announced a 1 percent cut in the small business Corporate Income Tax (CIT) rate, from 4.5 percent to 3.5 percent.
- ✓ In the wake of our skills report, *Talent in Transition: Addressing the Skills Mismatch in Ontario*, the government released, *A Stronger Apprenticeship System for Ontario*. It contains explicit support for employer consortia, a customer service strategy, and the development of outcomes measurement—all of which were recommended in our report.
- ✓ The government will implement a new framework for defined benefit pension plans by adopting a going concern approach, a change we recommended in a submission. This shift will yield huge cost savings for businesses that sponsor defined benefit plans.

The relevancy of our work to local chambers of commerce and boards of trade is paramount to our success. In the next year, we hope to expand our engagement, seeking insight and inspiration from our network and working collaboratively to expand our voice and our reach.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

The OCC Policy & Government Relations Team



ADVOCACY WINS

The OCC's powerful advocacy, backed by the strength of its Chamber Network and corporate partners, achieves impactful policy wins for Ontario businesses.



○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Energy and Electricity*

Asks: The OCC called on the Ontario government, in its July 2015 report *Empowering Ontario: Constraining Costs and Staying Competitive in the Electricity Market*, to provide greater transparency in energy pricing. This call was echoed in *Leading the Charge*, our submission to the 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan, wherein the OCC further advocated that future energy policies reflect the principles of affordability, transparency, and flexibility. For more than two years, the OCC has made clear to government that electricity price relief was of top importance to our members and that action needed to be taken.

✓ **Wins:** In the September 2016 Throne Speech, the government announced the expansion of the Industrial Conservation Initiative (ICI) so that any company consuming more than 1 megawatt (MW) will be eligible for the program. Accordingly, an additional 1000 companies in Ontario are now eligible to save between 14 percent to 30 percent on their bill—a noticeable increase from the 300 companies currently enrolled in the program.

The updated Ontario Energy Report, released in March 2016, included an industrial price chart that provides a clearer cost picture for Class A businesses.

In March 2017, the government announced its *Fair Hydro Plan*, which provides an approximate savings of 25 percent (including the previously announced 8 percent HST rebate) for Regulated Price Plan customers. Under this plan, 500,000 small businesses and farms will qualify for the 25 percent rate reduction to their energy bills. The Plan will further expand the ICI, extending eligibility to small manufactures and industrial users (North American Industry Classification System [NAICS] codes 31-33), with an average peak demand of over 500 kilowatts.

The Debt Retirement Charge on commercial, industrial, and other non-residential electricity users was removed on April 1, 2018, nine months earlier than expected.

○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Health*

Asks: As part of the the 2016 Health Transformation Initiative, the OCC asked for improved pathways for Ontario health and life science technologies into our public health care system, as well as more supports for start-ups in this sector to bridge the commercialization “valley of death”. We also asked that the government move to a value-based procurement model, so that innovative technologies can be more easily adopted by health institutions, solutions can be created in collaboration with industry, and that the needs of patients and providers are better reflected in the purchasing process.

✓ **Wins:** In 2017, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced the first recipients of the Health Technologies Fund, which supports the development of technologies that can bring value to the health care system. Additionally, he named the first three Innovation Brokers, who connect hospitals with innovative health technology companies. Finally, the Minister announced the Value-Based Innovation Program, which is intended to fundamentally reform procurement.



○ ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT: *Immigration*

Ask: Increasing Ontario's allocation of economic class immigrants has been a key component of the advocacy work of the OCC. In *Passport to Prosperity: Ontario's Priorities for Immigration Reform*, the OCC called on the federal government to increase the allocation of economic class immigrants for the province through its Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP). In an open letter to the federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, the OCC echoed our call for an expansion of the OINP allocation.

- ✓ **Win:** In January 2018, the federal government increased the OINP allocation for 2018 to 6,600 nominations, up 600 places over 2017.

○ ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT: *Skills and Workforce Development*

Ask: In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition: Addressing the Skills Mismatch in Ontario*, the OCC addressed challenges caused by the existing provincial apprenticeship system. We recommended that the government promote career pathways in the skilled trades among young people and their parents, digitize the application and training process, enhance support for employer consortia, and make the system more client-centric and outcomes-based. We also recommended that the government collaborate with business and education stakeholders to increase employers' awareness of the consortium model for apprentices.

- ✓ **Win:** In early 2018, the Ontario government released a strategy document, *A Stronger Apprenticeship System for Ontario*. It contains five goals, including promoting apprenticeship, supporting employers and sponsors, and updating the apprenticeship system through digital enhancement. The strategy contains explicit support for employer consortia, a customer service strategy, and the development of outcomes measurement. Support for the consortium model was also present in the Fall Economic Statement.

○ ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT: *Reducing Red Tape*

Asks: Cutting red tape for business has been a key component of the advocacy work of the OCC. During our *Small Business Too Big to Ignore* campaign, culminating in the *Obstacles and Opportunities* report, the OCC urged government to establish a "one-window regulatory concierge service" to assist small businesses in understanding, navigating, and achieving compliance with relevant regulatory requirements. Furthermore, recognizing the barriers faced by Ontario small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to winning public procurement contracts, the OCC urged government to adopt new methods to encourage small business participation in the procurement process. In two reports, *Adopting our Advantage: Supporting a Thriving Health Science Sector in Ontario* and *Breaking Barriers: Ontario's Scale Up Challenge*, the OCC recommended that the government consider leveraging public procurement to strategically support small business as well as modernize its approach to procurement generally.

- ✓ **Wins:** As a direct result of the advocacy of the OCC, the Ontario government announced in May 2017 that it will introduce new legislation to cut unnecessary red tape for business by introducing a "one-window service" to help small businesses. The program promises to help small businesses access support, information, and resources when navigating Ontario's regulatory environment. As part of the May 2017 announcement of legislation intended to reduce red tape for small business, the government also proposed the introduction of a preferred procurement policy to provide improved access for SMEs to government contracts.



○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Infrastructure*

Asks: In *Building Better: Setting the 2017 Ontario Infrastructure Plan up for Success*, the OCC called on the government to support accountable planning and the construction of resilient, adaptable infrastructure in its Long-Term Infrastructure Plan (LTIP). The OCC has also been consistently vocal on the importance of digital infrastructure, led by Ontario Chamber Network resolutions calling for further investment in broadband internet. We urged government in both our 2016 and 2017 provincial and federal Pre-Budget submissions to invest in high-speed internet, as it is a basic infrastructure need for both residents and business.

- ✓ **Wins:** In late 2017, the government released *Building Better Lives: Ontario's Long-Term Infrastructure Plan 2017*. It contained a series of wins for the OCC:
 - Implement a broadband strategy outlining a vision for broadband connectivity across the province;
 - Integrate climate change considerations into infrastructure planning to ensure environmental sustainability;
 - Evaluate Alternative Financing and Procurement projects against an evaluation framework to track the success of the delivery model; and
 - Commit to evidence-based decision making as it works on best practices in infrastructure planning and prioritization.

Additionally, in a joint federal-provincial announcement on October 6, 2017, each government committed the necessary funding to bring high-speed internet to the Ring of Fire region. This funding will help residents and businesses in the North bridge the digital divide.

In Budget 2018, the government announced its intention to provide \$500 million over three years to expand broadband connectivity in rural and northern communities. This will include an investment of up to \$71 million towards improving cellular coverage in eastern Ontario, and up to \$20 million to Telesat to support a low Earth orbit satellite constellation project.

○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Transportation*

Asks: At the 2016 Annual General Meeting, the Ontario Chamber Network passed a resolution advocating for fare integration in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) in order to create a more customer-friendly, seamless, and affordable transit network while helping to alleviate wider-region traffic congestion and gridlock. In March 2018, the OCC sent an open letter to the Ontario Minister of Transportation and federal Minister of Transport expressing our support for VIA Rail Canada's dedicated tracks for its High-Frequency Rail plan, as well as the renewal of VIA Rail's corridor fleet of 160 cars and 40 locomotives.

- ✓ **Wins:** In Budget 2018, the government announced that it will focus on providing fare integration across a number of transit systems including the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), York Region Transit, Mississauga MiWay, Brampton Transit, and Durham Region Transit so as to introduce discounts to users who transfer between these municipal transit networks and the TTC. PRESTO card users at stations such as Port Credit, Malton, Pickering, Ajax, and Markham will also see fare reductions when taking GO Transit back and forth to Union Station. All GO Transit trips under 10 kilometres will cost PRESTO card users just \$3 per trip anywhere on the GO Network.



Within a few weeks of our letter, the federal Minister of Transport announced that the Government of Canada will provide funding for VIA Rail to replace its fleet in the Quebec City-Windsor Corridor.

○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Bill 148, the Fair Workplaces Better Jobs Act*

Asks: As part of our comprehensive Bill 148 advocacy work, the OCC highlighted the potential confusion and negative consequences new regulations would have on particular sectors, urging the government to provide a comprehensive package of offsets, including a call for a reduction in the small business tax rate and clear guidelines to employers to help determine personal emergency leave compliance.

✓ **Wins:** As part of its Fall Economic Statement, the government announced a 1 percent cut in the small business Corporate Income Tax (CIT) rate, from 4.5 percent to 3.5 percent. This change will help provide small businesses compensation for their limited access to capital financing, and the pressures placed on their revenue streams from Bill 148's increased labour costs. Additionally, the Minister of Economic Growth and Development sent a letter to the OCC recognizing concerns about specific sector needs with a commitment to working with employers and employees within the manufacturing sector to determine the extent to which scheduling rule changes will impact industry. The letter also noted that the government will create an interactive and interpretive online bulletin to assist both employers and employees in understanding how an organization's policy complies with the government's personal emergency leave regulations.

○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Trade*

Ask: For many years the OCC has advocated for greater policy harmonization and cooperation in all areas of intergovernmental relations, specifically identifying the need for the removal of interprovincial trade barriers. The OCC further championed the need to eliminate restrictions on internal trade and labour mobility within Canada during our 2015 federal pre-election campaign and in our report, *In Focus: Federal Priorities for the Ontario Economy*.

✓ **Win:** Effective July 1, 2017, the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) will reduce barriers to trade, investment, and worker mobility. It includes rules with regard to open trade in goods and services, processes that reduce differences in regulations and standards, and provisions that increase access to billions of dollars in government procurement opportunities for Canadian businesses.

○ **ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT:** *Pensions*

Ask: In a September 2016 open letter to the Minister of Finance, the OCC asked that the Ontario government eliminate the current solvency rules and adopt a strengthened going concern approach for defined benefit (DB) pension plans. In partnership with the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, the OCC highlighted the need to enhance the affordability of these plans for plan sponsors, so as to reduce the competitiveness concerns of the business community.

✓ **Win:** In May 2017, the Ontario government signaled it will implement a new framework for DB pension plans by adopting a going concern approach. This shift will yield huge cost savings for businesses that sponsor DB pension plans.



ADVOCACY IN THE NEWS

Making headlines – at the local, provincial, and national level – is a cornerstone of our advocacy strategy. Our media relations approach ensures that we remain a leading voice in the public policy conversations that matter to Ontario’s business community.



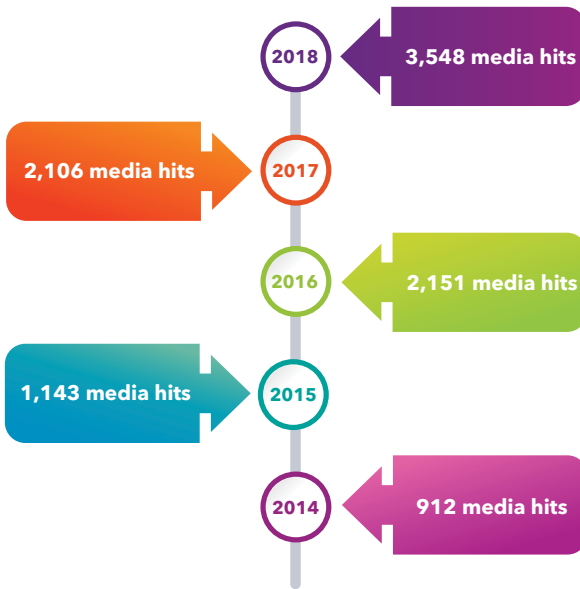
The OCC and the Ontario Chamber Network were covered in both the print and broadcast media on a variety of issues over the past year.

In addition to our policy reports, submissions, and letters, the OCC and the Ontario Chamber Network garnered attention for our considerable advocacy work on Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*. In the summer and fall of 2017, we were frequently in the media, with our representatives providing significant analysis and commentary on how the proposed employment and labour law reforms would impact business.

As NAFTA became a hot topic in late 2017 and early 2018, the OCC publicly joined with other organizations including US state chambers of commerce to show support for the agreement. Our Chamber Network also worked tirelessly in their local communities to support key sectors like steel and automotive.

As such, we continued to have a strong media presence this year, cementing our place as the leading advocate for business in Ontario.

Earned media hits since 2014*



* Each tab represents data from April 1st of the previous year to March 31st of the year indicated. Figures are based on Meltwater media monitoring.



Highlights of 2017-2018 include:

- **Frequent coverage in Canada's major national newspapers**

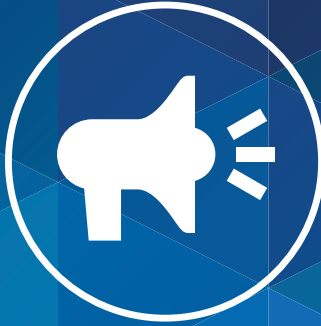
Including the *Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, *Toronto Sun*, and *National Post*.

- **Regular appearances on radio and television**

Including CBC Radio, the Business News Network (BNN), TVO's *The Agenda*, Global News, CTV News, CP24, and local talk radio stations across Ontario.

- **Frequent coverage in Ontario's major daily locals**

Including the *Windsor Star*, *Hamilton Spectator*, *Sudbury Star*, *Kitchener Waterloo Record*, *Guelph Mercury*, *Kingston Whig-Standard*, and the *Sault Star*.



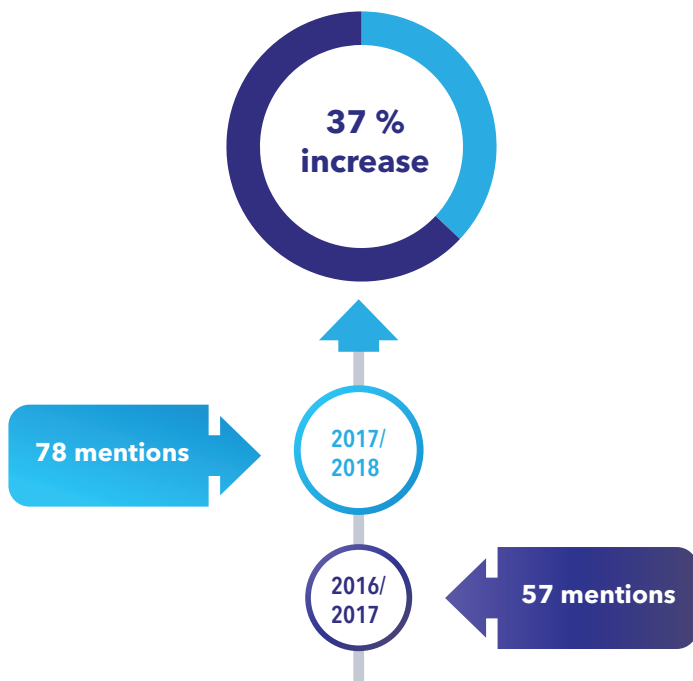
OCC ADVOCACY AT QUEEN'S PARK

Gaining the attention of Ontario's political leaders is the primary goal of our advocacy strategy. Through our government relations work, the voice of the Ontario Chamber Network is heard across Queen's Park, including within the walls of the legislature.



Between April 2017 and April 2018, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce was mentioned **78** unique times in Hansard, the record of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

This represents a **37%** increase over last year.





“ Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, and we have worked very closely with them over the years. In fact, in that very report that the Leader of the Opposition is quoting from, they also report that business prosperity is at a 20-year high, so there are some very, very good things happening in Ontario.”

—**Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario (February 21, 2018)**

“ Last Friday, the Parry Sound Chamber of Commerce hosted a meeting where Karl Baldauf of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and I were invited to speak. I shared the local perspective and the results I have just relayed to you from my business survey; Mr. Baldauf’s presentation highlighted some of the projected unintended consequences that would result from Bill 148. He showed how the various projections for jobs put at risk in the first two years from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Financial Accountability Officer, and the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis were all very similar. He emphasized the fact that most of those who were facing the highest risks were amongst Ontario’s most vulnerable population, including those this legislation is claiming to help.”

—**Norm Miller, MPP for Parry Sound-Muskoka (October 2, 2017)**

“ ...I had a great meeting today with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, reviewing their *Vote Prosperity 2018* election platform of the OCC—just excellent common-sense solutions to some of the challenges we’re having in Ontario, especially just hearing the news a few weeks ago that, in January, we lost, I think it was, 51,000 jobs in the province. It’s the single biggest monthly decline in jobs in this province since the great recession of 2009. A number of things were covered in this chamber report: strengthening business competitiveness, fostering job creation, building healthy communities, and improving government accountability.”

—**Monte McNaughton, MPP for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex (February 26, 2018)**



“ My question is to the Acting Premier. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce recently released their 2018 Ontario Economic Report. In it, they found that the government’s rosy statements about the economy don’t hold true for all regions of this province. The north can expect stagnant unemployment rates into 2018, and southwestern Ontario will lag behind the rest of the province when it comes to creating jobs. Ontario’s non-partisan Financial Accountability Officer agrees with their assessment. Last year in the north, the southwest and eastern parts of this province combined, only 1,600 new jobs were created. Speaker, why is this Liberal government leaving whole regions of this province behind?”

—**Taras Natyshak, MPP for Essex (February 26, 2018)**

“ Today we’re joined at Queen’s Park by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. They’ve come from one corner of this province to the other. But no matter what corner of the province they come from, they have identified the same issue: the ability to recruit and retain top talent was identified as the number one issue by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.”

—**Lisa McLeod, MPP for Nepean-Carleton (February 26, 2018)**

“ When you look at what the Ontario Chamber of Commerce asked of us, they said to allow Ontario businesses to buy into surplus electricity before it is exported. What a concept, Mr. Speaker. Why not protect Ontario companies? Don’t attack them. Give them a fighting chance. Don’t sell our hydro to our competitors and lose jobs in the province of Ontario. There are basic, simple things that we can be doing as legislators.”

—**Catherine Fife, MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo (February 28, 2018)**



PUBLICATIONS

Credible research and analysis is at the centre of our advocacy efforts. In addition to comprehensive policy reports, we respond to emerging issues through letters and submissions to government decision-makers that are based on principled thinking and crafted through direct consultation with our membership.



Letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne on Cap and Trade | *April 2017*

The OCC sent an open letter to Premier Wynne about growing concerns from the business community regarding the impact of the cap and trade program on Ontario's competitive landscape. The letter identifies that more must be done to help manage uncertainty and ensure businesses are not permanently challenged in a transition to a lower carbon economy. Within the cap and trade system, there are mechanisms through which the government can assist the business community, including prioritizing the allocation of cap and trade revenue for businesses, prioritizing innovation funding, and creating greater post-2020 design certainty.

Our cap and trade letter in the news

“In the letter, the chamber warns that the province must measure the impact of cap and trade among other input costs to fully understand the cumulative burden facing Ontario's business community. Because businesses are directly affected by the costs associated with cap and trade, the government of Ontario must ensure that the revenue and design of the system is allocated and developed in a way that supports Ontario's business community.”

— North Bay Nugget (April 5, 2017)

Letter to Federal Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Navdeep Bains on Nuclear Innovation | *May 2017*

The OCC sent an open letter to the Federal Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development emphasizing the importance of continued Canadian investment in nuclear innovation and identified recommendations for further supporting this industry. With a shift away from greenhouse gas emitting fuels and the global transition to a low-carbon economy, nuclear energy is significant part of our future. The letter emphasizes that, with Ontario's nuclear expertise, unlocking global nuclear potential unlocks Canadian economic opportunity.



Letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne on Bill 148 | *May 2017*

The OCC sent an open letter to Premier Wynne on the changes proposed to the *Labour Relations Act* (LRA) and *Employment Standards Act* (ESA) in Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*. It urged government to appropriately subject the proposed reforms in the final report of the Changing Workplaces Review to an economic impact analysis.

The letter reflected a first step in a long-term Bill 148 advocacy effort by the Keep Ontario Working Coalition, supported by the OCC.

Our Bill 148 letter in the news

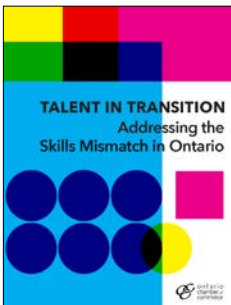
“In a letter sent to Premier Kathleen Wynne on behalf of Ontario’s employer community, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce objected in the strongest terms to many of the reforms that are potentially being considered. Taken as a whole, these reforms will tip our economic balance in a profoundly negative way.”

— OCC op-ed in the *National Post* (May 18, 2017)

Letter to Minister of Finance Charles Sousa on Protecting Investor Choice in Ontario | *May 2017*

The OCC sent an open letter to the Minister of Finance on protecting freedom of choice for Ontario investors and ensuring that consumers can access financial advice regardless of income level. We presented several recommendations to protect consumer interests while ensuring they have the option to work with a commission-based financial advisor should they so choose.

Talent in Transition: Addressing the Skills Mismatch in Ontario | *June 2017*



As a follow-up to the April 2017 Skills & Workforce Development Forum, this report makes ten recommendations to the provincial government, within three priority areas:

- Developing a systems-based approach to training;
- Exploring the potential of experiential learning; and
- Modernizing the apprenticeship framework.

These recommendations outline a strategy for how government and industry can ensure that regions across Ontario have access to the skilled workforce required to compete in the global economy.

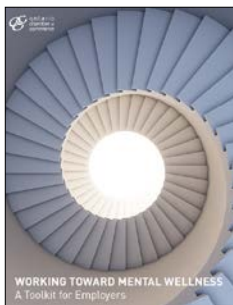


Talent in Transition in the news

“Ontarians are increasingly worried their job skills will be outdated in the changing economy, says a new report from the chamber of commerce that warns of a mismatch between what workers are trained for and what employers need.”

— Toronto Star (July 29, 2017)

Working Towards Mental Wellness: A Toolkit for Employers | July 2017



Following a successful event during Mental Health Week in May, the OCC released a toolkit to illuminate the distinctive character of mental wellness in the workplace, make the case for why employers should take action, and provide resources for starting a conversation about mental health in workplaces across Ontario.

The toolkit received a positive reception from expert stakeholders such as CivicAction and the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Working Towards Mental Wellness in the news

“The Ontario Chamber of Commerce states that mental illnesses are costing the Canadian economy more than \$50 billion annually, with \$20 billion of that stemming directly from workplace losses...”

— Sudbury Star (July 18, 2017)

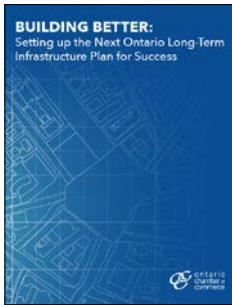


Letter to the Global Affairs Canada NAFTA Negotiating Team |

May 2017

In this letter, the OCC highlighted the importance of the upcoming NAFTA renegotiations to Ontario business, given how a strong Ontario-US relationship has positively contributed to Canadian economic prosperity. We echoed messaging from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce indicating how critical it is the Canadian government enter the negotiation with a “shopping list”, while also emphasizing some areas of priority for Ontario business. These areas included confronting counterfeiting, regulatory co-operation, and rules of origin burden reduction.

Building Better: Setting up the Next Ontario Long-Term Infrastructure Plan for Success | August 2017



This report called on the Ontario government to implement strategies in the Long-Term Infrastructure Plan that will help ensure accountable planning and support building resilient, adaptable infrastructure for the future. It contains eight recommendations designed to enhance the economic return on the province’s future infrastructure investments. Our intention was to influence a sustainable and innovative plan that addresses not merely the current infrastructure conditions, but looks toward creating flexible and comprehensive long-term solutions.

This report was well-received by the Ministry of Infrastructure, and garnered media attention including a major story in the *Toronto Star*, which quoted Alex Benac, the Minister’s press secretary saying, “We’re glad that the [OCC] recognizes both the need for this investment and the benefits it will have for people across the province.”

Building Better in the news

“The Ontario Chamber of Commerce predicts that ‘damaging and costly events are expected to increase, in both number and scale, as the climate warms, increasing pressure on current infrastructure and demanding new assets that can respond to extreme events.’ In a 39- page report on the province’s infrastructure planning, the organization, which represents 60,000 members across the province, said the changing climate is bad for more than just the environment.”

— *Toronto Star* (August 24, 2017)



Measuring the Potential Economic Impacts of the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017* (CANCEA) | *September 2017*



With the support of the OCC and the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA), the Keep Ontario Working Coalition released the first and only comprehensive economic impact analysis of Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*. The study revealed that if the legislation was implemented as drafted, there would be significant, sudden, and sizable uncertainty for Ontario jobs, economy and communities. It was peer reviewed by Prof. Morley Gunderson of the University of Toronto.

This analysis resulted in considerable media and government attention.

Our Bill 148 Analysis in the news

“Karl Baldauf, the chamber’s vice president of policy and government, said the rapid rise in the wage ‘poses great risk to our economy and cannot be resolved through offsets alone.’”

— Toronto Star (September 28, 2017)

“The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce and Keep Ontario Working coalition say a new report released Wednesday shows that if the provincial government delays implementation of its minimum-wage increase to \$15 per hour over five years instead of 15 months, job risk will be reduced by 74 per cent.”

— Sudbury Star (September 28, 2017)

“The Keep Ontario Working Coalition, which includes the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and Retail Council of Canada, said Wynne’s minimum wage hike will cost businesses \$23 billion over two years, put 185,000 jobs at risk, and increase consumer prices on a wide range of goods and services.”

— Toronto Sun (September 28, 2017)



The Flip Side of "Fair": Adding up Bill 148's Unintended Consequences | *September 2017*



This report demonstrated the predictable, unavoidable, and unintentional harm the proposed *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act* would have on businesses and on the workforce, including the harm it will cause Ontario's most vulnerable workers. It features individual testimonials from employers, which highlight the most contentious points of the proposed changes and tie them closely to CANCEA's economic impact analysis of the bill.

Steering Through Change: Bill 148 | *October 2017*



Alongside MNP, Canada's leading accounting, tax and business consulting firm, the OCC released a comprehensive handbook to help Ontario's business community navigate the incoming changes from Bill 148. The handbook outlines the potential risks employers can expect from Bill 148, and offers human resources and operational strategies to help mitigate the impact.

Letter to Minister of Agriculture Jeff Leal on the Agri-Food Sector | *October 2017*

The OCC sent a letter commending the Ministry of Agriculture for its support of the competitiveness of the provincial agri-food sector, but also rearticulating the position of the OCC's members with respect to the legislative proposals in Bill 148. We emphasized that the unintended consequences of that bill must be addressed by government, as it will have a serious impact on farmers and food processors' ability to meet the Premier's 2020 agri-food sector target.



Vote Prosperity: 2018 Provincial Election Platform | *October 2017*



Through consultation with members across Ontario, the OCC developed *Vote Prosperity*, a platform for the 2018 provincial election campaign. This product is designed to provide the province with a strategy to leverage our advantages and strengthen our global competitiveness. The goal of this product is to influence the platforms of all major parties prior to the election, and to drive a clear message from Ontario's business community during the campaign.

Vote Prosperity in the news

“The next provincial election is almost eight months away, but the Ontario Chamber of Commerce wants the major political parties to get down to business. To that end, the non-partisan group representing 60,000 members across the province issued a 33-page wish list, entitled *Vote Prosperity*, for politicians vying to be elected on June 7, 2018.”

— Toronto Star (October 11, 2017)

Letter to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change on Cap and Trade Program and Reporting Regulations | *November 2017*

In response to proposed amendments by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to cap and trade program reporting regulations, the OCC submitted a letter of support to the ministry for the proposed provision of treatment of Sarnia Regional Cogeneration customers. The proposed change allows for the intricacies of regional cogeneration to be properly addressed under the cap and trade program and allowed for regional cogeneration to be given the same treatment as an onsite cogeneration system.

In response, the government passed the proposed cogeneration amendment and it is now part of the cap and trade emission allowances methodology.



Letter to Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Ahmed Hussen on the OINP Allocation | *November 2017*

This letter presented the case for increasing the share of economic immigrants to Ontario and increasing the allocation for Ontario under its provincial nominee program, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP). Economic class immigrants are needed to address growing demographic concerns across Canada and Ontario, including the erosion of the tax base from an aging population and low labour productivity, as well as the skills mismatch.

In January 2018, the Ontario government announced that the OINP had received an increased federal government allocation for 2018 of 6,600 nominations, an increase of 600 places over 2017.

Letter to Minister of Environment and Climate Change Chris Ballard on the Blue Box Program | *November 2017*

The OCC provided a response to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change regarding the amendments to the Blue Box Program, which propose a transition from the current shared cost model to a full producer responsibility. In its correspondence, the OCC cautioned against implementing the proposed changes in haste, and requested participation in the development of the amendment plan. The correspondence reflected concerns by OCC members that the timeline for the amendment plan does not provide enough time to have comprehensive consultations and dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. The OCC advised that as the amendment plan is being developed, there be a detailed economic impact analysis done as well as robust initiative to include a wide array of stakeholders in the consultation of any considered course of action.

Letter to Metrolinx on the Agency's Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan | *November 2017*

In this letter, the OCC highlighted that long-term planning is an essential component in ensuring that the movement of goods and people at local, regional, and provincial levels is efficient and responsive to population growth. The letter also noted that the OCC would like to see the Draft Plan contain strong emphasis on the concept of the “movement of goods”, which is an essential element that affects business and impacts Ontario’s ability to remain competitive. We also emphasized that in terms of governance, to streamline transportation services and remove operational silos, the OCC proposes that the Province establish a single transportation authority to serve the GTHA.



Driving Digital Innovation in the Ontario Health Care System: Event Summary | *December 2017*



On September 19, 2017, the OCC hosted expert stakeholders from government, research, and the private sector for a day-long discussion on digital innovation within the Ontario health care system. Speakers identified opportunities for improved integration of digital health technologies and data analytics in our system and provided insight into the considerations for, and barriers to, their use. As a theme, participants were invited to discuss how to activate private sector innovation in service of the public good. This document summarizes each session and identifies a series of key insights of value to both public and private stakeholders.

Submission on *Employment Standards Act* Exemptions and *Labour Relations Act* Exclusions | *December 2017*

As part of our Bill 148 advocacy, the OCC submitted comments regarding the Province's review of exemptions and special rules under the *Employment Standards Act* and the exclusions under the *Labour Relations Act*. In collaboration with the Keep Ontario Working Coalition, OCC corporate members and the Chamber Network, we received feedback on four occupations for which we hope to see no changes made: managerial and supervisory employees, IT professionals, pharmacists, and homemakers. If changes to current exemptions are deemed necessary, the OCC strongly urges the government to conduct a complete economic impact analysis as well as comprehensive evidence-based research into the actual need for changing these long-held exemptions. The OCC also strongly advised that any reforms to the current exemptions are phased in over time and there is no sudden change to the established status quo.



2018 Pre-Budget Submission: A Comprehensive Plan to Build Prosperity in Ontario | January 2018



Prior to the 2018 provincial Budget, the OCC released our *2018 Pre-Budget Submission: A Comprehensive Plan to Build Prosperity in Ontario*. This report outlines 11 recommendations to the provincial government in the areas of tax reforms for increased competitiveness, spending to maximize growth, and spending reforms to benefit all Ontarians. In January, the OCC's President & CEO Rocco Rossi presented the submission and its recommendations to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs in Thunder Bay.

2018 Pre-Budget Submission in the news

“The OCC says that the recommendations will help businesses manage costs, offer smart spending ideas, and help secure the province’s competitive advantage.”

— CTV Windsor (January 16, 2018)

Ontario Economic Report | February 2018



As the landmark research platform for the OCC, the Ontario Economic Report (OER) presents a new perspective on the economic health of our province. Through the Business Confidence Survey, the Business Prosperity Index, and the Economic Outlook, this document highlights data that will lead to a candid conversation about how to support economic growth in Ontario.

This year, clear trends have emerged that together demonstrate serious vulnerability within our economy, driven by low business confidence and a climate that discourages growth. Industry in Ontario is feeling the impact of a rising minimum wage and substantial labour reforms, increasing global and US competition, consistent overregulation, rising input costs (particularly, electricity), and a tax system that is unable to relieve these pressures. All of these factors are impeding the prosperity of Ontario’s businesses and are driving down business confidence to record low levels.



2018 Ontario Economic Report in the news

“Entrepreneurs are losing confidence in the economy and even the future of their companies as the cost of doing business continues to rise, a new report by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) says.”

— Toronto Sun (February 7, 2018)

“Businesses don’t feel confident about the economy or their own futures and blame rising costs, taxes and the boost in the minimum wage, says a new survey by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. One-quarter of small businesses across the province not only expect lower profits this year, but say they will also continue to shed jobs for the next six months or halt hiring, the survey also found.”

— Toronto Star (February 7, 2018)

Letters to US Chambers of Commerce on NAFTA | February 2018

As the Government of Ontario introduced legislation to allow the province to respond in-kind to “Buy American” laws enacted by American states, the OCC sent correspondence to those state-level chambers of commerce with strong economic ties to Ontario. These letters sought to explore forming positive bilateral cooperation, and has resulted in a series of joint statements with chambers as diverse as California, Colorado, and Kentucky.

Our NAFTA Letters in the news

“The Ontario Chamber of Commerce is worried about ‘any approach that risks escalation of trade barriers, especially when it is taken only by Ontario,’ said president Rocco Rossi. ‘No other province in Canada has legislation in place that would escalate trade sanctions when they occur.’”

“The chamber ‘believes that the best approach for Ontario is the formation of positive bilateral cooperation with our American neighbours. We applaud the premier and her government for taking this approach to date and we must continue to do so.’”

— Toronto Star (February 19, 2018)



Letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne on Superlinx Strategy |

January 2018

In January 2018, the OCC released a letter to Premier Wynne regarding the Superlinx strategy document developed by the Toronto Region Board of Trade. In this letter, the OCC offered its support for key elements contained within the Superlinx strategy. It emphasized that, given transportation infrastructure is a vital component to the movement of people and goods, it plays a critical role in the economic competitiveness and the development of Ontario.

The correspondence highlighted that both the OCC and the Board believe in the creation of a single regional transportation agency to which all responsibility for transit is uploaded and which has authority over transit planning, operations, and expansions. It noted that we share the belief that part of our province's current transportation challenges stem from a lack of proper prioritization of projects and a need for greater evidence-based planning. Finally, we highlighted that broader regional considerations should be reflected in provincial public transit policy as many communities struggle with similar transportation issues to the GTHA.

Letter to Minister of Transportation and Minister of Transport on VIA Rail | *March 2018*

In a letter to the Ontario Minister of Transportation and the federal Minister of Transport, the OCC expressed its support for VIA Rail Canada's dedicated tracks for their High-Frequency Rail plan, as well as the renewal of VIA Rail's corridor fleet of 160 cars and 40 locomotives. The letter highlights that VIA's proposal for dedicated passenger corridor will create significant economic development along the route, including providing an estimated 336,000 person-years of employment. The letter also notes that renewing VIA's fleet will provide new, modern, and accessible fleet of trains to improve the intercity rail service and long-term service levels.

On March 19, the Minister of Transport announced that the Government of Canada will provide funding for VIA Rail to replace its fleet in the Quebec City-Windsor Corridor.

Principles for an Effective Pharmacare Program | *March 2018*



In response to the OHIP+ expansion announced in Budget 2017 and growing political interest in pharmacare at the federal level, the OCC released a set of guidelines for governments to follow when considering reforms to pharmaceutical coverage plans, including a universal pharmacare program. It highlights five principles against which pharmacare proposals can be tested to ensure an effective and sustainable system that leverages the assets of the current public/private coverage model.



EVENTS

The OCC is proud to host numerous advocacy, consultative, and educational events throughout the year.

Additionally, we present a line-up of signature events that celebrate business in Ontario, connect our members with government decision-makers, and demonstrate our thought leadership to major stakeholders.



Skills and Workforce Development Forum | *April 2017*

The OCC hosted a half-day event to address critical issues affecting workforce development in Ontario. The event leveraged data to identify the mismatches between employers' needs and individuals' skills sets across the province with consideration as to how this mismatch affects Ontario's competitiveness.

The insights shared by participants at the Forum were included in a later policy report, *Talent in Transition: Addressing the Skills Mismatch in Ontario*.

Economic Leadership Series | *April – July 2017*

From April 2017 to July 2017, the OCC hosted a total of five Economic Leadership Series (ELS) events in Cornwall, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, Durham Region, and Ottawa. Each event brought together leaders from business, government, academia, and the NGO community to develop ideas that will drive regional/sectoral growth and tackle specific economic policy challenges. The focus of each discussion centred on the ways in which government and business can collaborate to grow either an industry sector or the economy of a region within Ontario.

Annual General Meeting | *May 2017*

The Ontario Chamber Network's 2017 Annual General Meeting took place in Sarnia and featured a theme of "It's ON! Driving Prosperity in Ontario". This annual event brings together the entire network to debate policy, hear from political and thought leaders, and learn from the experiences of their network peers. The AGM is one of our most important initiatives, as the policy resolutions put forward by the network help shape the policy agenda of the OCC and drive our advocacy work.

The Business Case for Mental Wellness in the Workplace | *May 2017*

To mark Mental Health Week 2017, the OCC highlighted the business case for addressing mental wellness issues in the workplace at a morning event. Speakers featured research into the value of employer action on mental wellness, discussed how employers of all sizes can support their employees, and identified best practices from across sectors.

This event was followed by the release of *Working Towards Mental Wellness: A Toolkit for Employers* in July 2017.

An Evening with the Deputy Ministers | *May 2017*

The OCC and its members have long recognized the important role that the Ontario Public Service holds in shaping the policies that contribute to a competitive business environment. An Evening with the Deputy Ministers affords business and community leaders the unique opportunity to connect directly to top influencers in the Ontario government, the deputy ministers.

Informing Ontario's Long-Term Infrastructure Plan | *June 2017*

In advance of the Government of Ontario's Long-Term Infrastructure Plan, the OCC hosted an afternoon consultation session to discuss how Ontario's business community can enhance the



economic return on the province's infrastructure investments. The event featured the Minister of Infrastructure, the Hon. Bob Chiarelli, who shared Ontario's vision for infrastructure investment.

This consultation informed a later policy report, *Building Better: Setting Up the Next Ontario Long-Term Infrastructure Plan for Success*.

Roundtable with Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy | June 2017

In partnership with the Ministry of Energy, the OCC organized an intimate roundtable with Minister Glenn Thibeault. The event brought together 30 individuals from within the energy sector (including the fuels industry, the nuclear industry, renewables) and the Chamber Network. The roundtable format allowed business leaders to ask pertinent questions about the Province's then recently announced Fair Hydro Plan and its forthcoming Long-Term Energy Plan.

An Evening with the Chiefs of Staff | September 2017

An Evening with the Chiefs of Staff is an exclusive event at which our premier members mix and mingle with Ontario's top decision-makers and talk policy and politics. From the perspective of government, this event provides the opportunity to hear directly from Ontario's leading businesses on the most pressing issues of the day.

Driving Digital Innovation in the Ontario Health Care System | September 2017

The OCC hosted experts on the digital health revolution at a day-long conference in order to identify how to utilize data-driven techniques within Ontario's health care system and how public-private collaboration can make innovative change a reality. As a theme, participants discussed how to activate private sector innovation in service of the public good.

A [summary](#) of the event's conclusions was released in December 2017.

Roundtable with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Green Ontario Fund Chair | October 2017

This roundtable event with key government stakeholders provided an opportunity for OCC members to meet the new Minister, Hon. Chris Ballard, and Green Ontario Fund Chair Parminder Sandu. Participants discussed priorities including cap and trade, the GreenON Fund, waste diversion, and growing Ontario's low-carbon economy through the use of nuclear and other energy sources.

Capitalizing on Disruptive Change | October 2017

The OCC facilitated an event to identify the forces and trends that are fundamentally changing the business landscape in Ontario, with an emphasis on the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation, resilience, and technology. Through a series of engaging conversations, speakers identified opportunities to capitalize on these forces by showcasing the thought leadership and best practices developed by the Ontario business community.



Ontario Economic Summit | *November 2017*

From November 8-10, the OCC hosted the 14th annual Ontario Economic Summit (OES) in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The sold-out event brought together leaders in business, government, and the non-profit sector to deliberate on the future of Ontario's economy. The theme of this year's summit was "Opportunity | Inclusion | Transformation: Driving Ontario's Economic Agenda". Over 200 delegates had the opportunity to hear from the Premier of Ontario, both opposition leaders, and a diverse range of expert speakers. They also had the opportunity to engage in candid roundtable discussions with Ontario Cabinet Ministers. Notable speakers included: President and CEO of Indspire Roberta Jamieson, President and Vice-Chancellor of York University Dr. Rhonda Lenton, Mayor of Brantford Chris Friel, former federal cabinet minister James Moore, Head of Uber ATG Raquel Urtasun, and Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization Alan Wolff.

Ontario Business Achievement Awards | *November 2017*

Each year, large, medium, and small businesses come together as finalists, sponsors, and supporters for the OCC's annual Ontario Business Achievement Awards (OBAAs). For over 30 years, businesses have been awarded OBAAs for their achievements in sustainability, innovation, skills and training, service excellence, market expansion, and exporting.

Roundtable on Ontario's Aging Population | *December 2017*

The OCC convened a multi-ministry roundtable with political and bureaucratic representatives to discuss how Ontario's changing demographics are influencing our economy. Along with representatives from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth, the roundtable featured remarks and participation from the Minister of Seniors Affairs, Hon. Dipika Damerla.

2018 Ontario Economic Report Launch & Event Series | *February 2018*

The second iteration of the OER was launched with a panel of top Ontario political journalists discussing how the economy is going to factor into the province's upcoming election. The launch also featured presentations on the new data contained within the OER, and reflections on that data from Secretary of Cabinet Steve Orsini.

In partnership with CPA Ontario and the Ontario Chamber Network, the OCC hosted a series of regional OER events in the first half of 2018. These events provided a platform for local leaders to discuss emerging economic issues in local communities and highlight the vulnerable environment faced by Ontario's businesses.

Advocacy Day | *February 2018*

The third annual Advocacy Day at Queen's Park took place on February 26, 2018. Given that this year's Advocacy Day occurred during an election year, the event provided an opportunity to advance the priorities identified in *Vote Prosperity*, the OCC's platform for the 2018 provincial



election. Participants met with MPPs from both government and the opposition, discussing issues such as infrastructure, education, energy, the environment, health care, housing, and more.

Participants also heard from expert speakers, including a panel of government relations professionals that shared best practices, tips, and expert advice for running an effective government relations meeting with MPPs.

The Hon. Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and Minister Responsible for Small Business, provided opening remarks along with Giles Gherson, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Growth and Research, Innovation and Science.

International Women's Day Event | *March 2018*

On International Women's Day, the OCC partnered with BMO Financial Group to host an inspiring discussion about female entrepreneurs and a new approach to innovation. In front of 200 attendees, panelists deliberated how industry and government can create a robust ecosystem to encourage emerging female business owners.

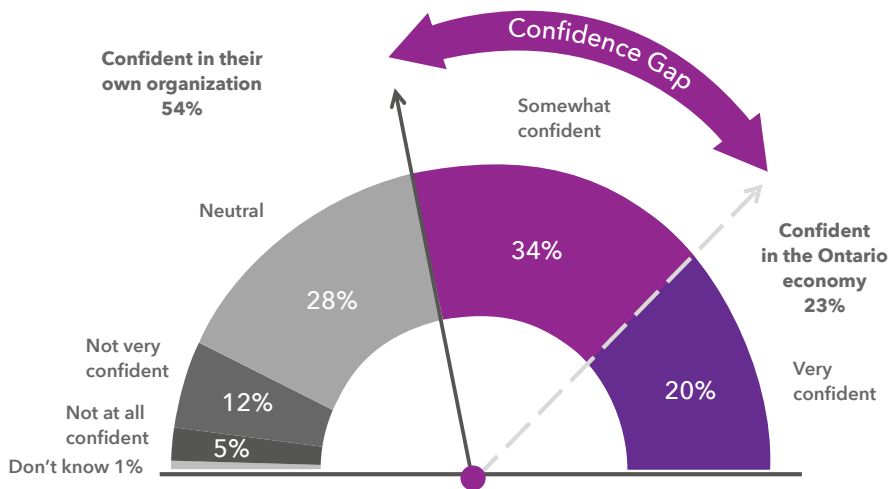


MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

The OCC's policy surveys regularly gage opinion on issues that matter to Ontario business. This research has become one of the most significant indicators of business opinion in the province, led by our annual Business Confidence Survey.

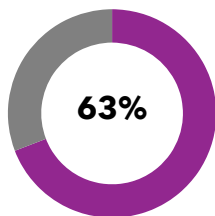


How confident are you about Ontario's economic outlook as of right now? / How confident are you in your own organization's economic outlook as of right now?



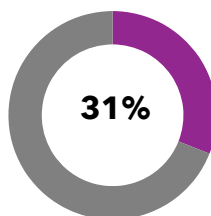
Which of the following explain why you are not confident about your organization's economic outlook?

Cost



63% of Ontario businesses cite cost reasons for their lack of confidence, such as the price of raw materials and electricity, regulation, taxes, and the increase in the minimum wage.

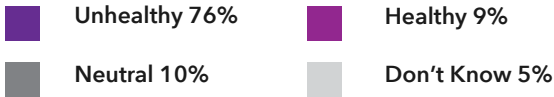
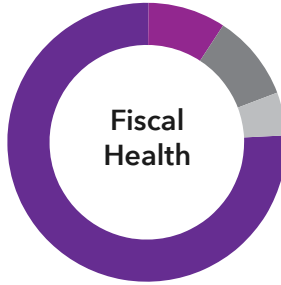
Other Competitive Barriers



Compared to only **31%** who name competitive barriers, such as other market players, declining consumer demand or changing client behaviour.



Overall, how would you rate the fiscal health of the Ontario government?

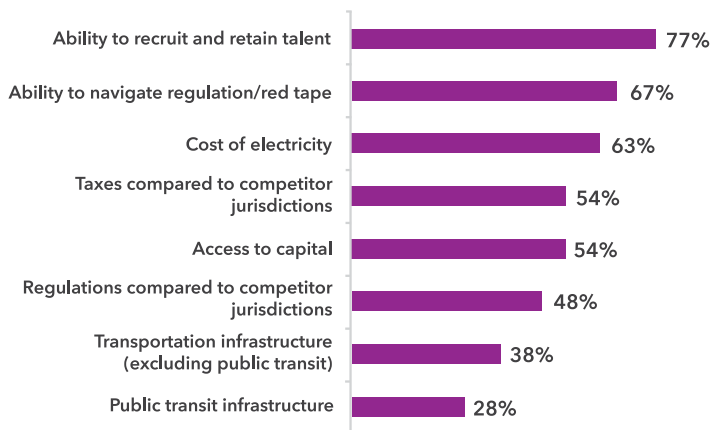


How concerned, if at all, are you about the impact of the provincial debt on the Ontario economy?

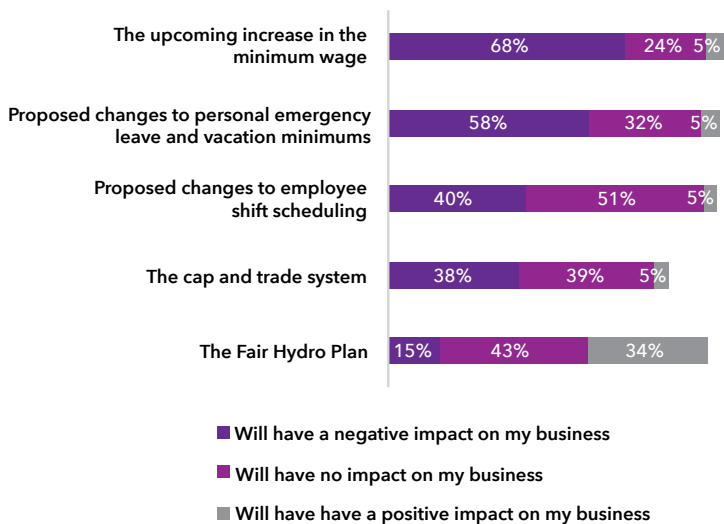




There are a number of factors that contribute to an organization's competitiveness. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following factors are critical to your organization's competitiveness?



Thinking about recent policy initiatives discussed by the Government of Ontario, in your opinion, which statement best describes their likely impact on your organization? (Among those aware of each initiative)





RESOLUTIONS TRACKER

The policy resolutions passed by the Ontario Chamber Network represent the cornerstone of the OCC's policy and advocacy work. Every year, we take stock of how the OCC has seen progress on each resolution.

COMPETITIVENESS

● RESOLUTION: Business Regulations and Enforcement - Expanding 'Open for Business' Focus to Municipal Service Delivery

- ✓ **Action:** The Government of Ontario has announced the creation of Small Business Access, with marketing activities that will be supported by the OCC and the broader Chamber Network. This service will ease regulatory compliance of all types with our membership.

● RESOLUTION: Implementation of a One Business Number

- ✓ **Action:** As part of Small Business Access, there is a single number that business can access for information across a range of services: 1-888-999-5970.

● RESOLUTION: Promoting Innovation to Improve Competitiveness and Productivity

- ✓ **Action:** Innovation continues to be a key theme of the OCC's policy and advocacy work, and will serve as a core component of our Resilient & Sustainable Innovation conference later in 2018.

● RESOLUTION: Reduce the Cumulative Regulatory and Cost Burden on Ontario Employers

- ✓ **Action:** In *Vote Prosperity*, we recommend that Ontario work with federal and municipal governments to establish a publicly available cost-of-doing-business in Ontario. This analysis would aggregate all policy-induced input costs (at all three levels of government) and would be updated annually to highlight the cumulative impact of any new government policies implemented in the past year or proposed in the year ahead.

● RESOLUTION: Support Growth with Expanded Broadband Access

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has long recognized that inadequate access to ultra-high-speed internet is compromising the ability of communities across Ontario to attract and retain businesses. In a joint announcement between the provincial and federal governments, each committed the necessary funding to bring high-speed internet to the Ring of Fire. The investment will help residents and businesses in the North bridge the digital divide. In Budget 2018, the government announced its intention to provide \$500 million over three years to expand broadband connectivity in rural and northern communities. This will include an investment of up to \$71 million towards improving cellular coverage in eastern Ontario, and up to \$20 million to Telesat to support a low earth orbit satellite constellation project.

● RESOLUTION: WSIB Reforms for a New Generation

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has established a close working relationship with the WSIB over the course of the last year, including integration of the WSIB into Small Business Week last October. This work has resulted in the creation of events where members have been able to provide direct feedback to the WSIB on how modernization can best reflect the needs of business.

● RESOLUTION: Advance Ontario's Bioeconomy

- ✓ **Action:** In May 2018, the OCC will host a major conference on Ontario's health and life sciences sector, (a.k.a. the bioeconomy). The goal of the conference will be to advance the shared interests of this sector.

● RESOLUTION: Drive Innovation with Affordable Energy Costs

- ✓ **Action:** In 2017 the OCC launched the Know Your Power program, which successfully established itself as a platform for engagement on business energy programs and energy related issues. Through the OCC's partnership with the Ministry of Energy, Know Your Power was expanded to include 15 additional events and workshops, four sector-specific webinars, and more social media engagement in 2018. Additionally, through a series of three events, the OCC will convene stakeholders to focus advancing the principles in our Long-Term Energy Plan Submission. Each event will emphasize how we can prioritize the principles of affordability, reliability, and flexibility through appropriate messaging and narratives.

● RESOLUTION: Financial Protection for Canada's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Industry

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC's continued advocacy around NAFTA has prioritized key sectors of trade, including agriculture. We will continue to focus on this issue as renegotiations move forward.

● RESOLUTION: Support for Ontario Food Processors

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC's continued advocacy around NAFTA has prioritized key sectors of trade, including agriculture. We will continue to focus on this issue as renegotiations move forward.

● RESOLUTION: Creating a Competitive High-Speed Internet Policy

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has long recognized that inadequate access to ultra-high-speed internet is compromising the ability of communities across Ontario to attract and retain businesses. In a joint announcement between the provincial and federal governments, each committed the necessary funding to bring high-speed internet to the Ring of Fire. The investment will help residents and businesses in the North bridge the digital divide. In Budget 2018, the government announced its intention to provide \$500 million over three years to expand broadband connectivity in rural and northern communities. This will include an investment of up to \$71 million towards improving cellular coverage in eastern Ontario, and up to \$20 million to Telesat to support a low earth orbit satellite constellation project.

● RESOLUTION: Restoring Ontario's Research Competitiveness with the SR&ED, ORDC, and OITC Credits

- ✓ **Action:** As part of the OCC's Bill 148 advocacy, we emphasized the importance of these credits as well as their potential as an offset for the unintended consequences of the bill. We recommended that government restore the Ontario Research & Development Tax Credit to 4.5%, as it was before the 2016 Budget, and restore the Ontario Innovation Tax Credit to 10%, as it was before the 2016 Budget. Additionally, in May 2018, the OCC will host a major conference on Ontario's health and life sciences sector, a major user of R&D tax credits. The goal of the conference will be to advance the shared interests of this sector.

● RESOLUTION: Improving the Process for Establishing Regulations that Impact Business

- ✓ **Action:** A foundational pillar of *Vote Prosperity* is business competitiveness. As part of this platform, we recommend the provincial government work with federal and local levels of government to establish a publicly available analysis of the cost of doing business in Ontario. This analysis would aggregate all policy-induced input costs (at all three levels of government)

and would be updated annually to highlight the cumulative impact of any new government policies implemented in the past year or proposed in the year ahead.

● **RESOLUTION: Access to Development Charge Information for Ontario**

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC met with staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. There had been a review of development charges but there is no action plan from government at this time on this issue.

● **RESOLUTION: Expanding Ontario's Export Capacity by Harmonizing Agri-Food Cross-Border Trade Regulations**

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has been working to facilitate stronger partnerships between the Ontario and key US states where many Ontario businesses trade or operate. In March 2018, we released three joint news releases with the Chambers of Commerce of California, Colorado, and Kentucky on the importance of free trade and the continuation of NAFTA. The OCC is also working closely to facilitate MOU between these states and the Province of Ontario similar to the MOU that Ontario has with the State of Michigan on auto.

● **RESOLUTION: Mitigating the Risks of Cap and Trade on Business**

- ✓ **Action:** In October, the OCC hosted a roundtable event with then-new Minister of Environment and Climate Change Chris Ballard and Chair of the GreenON Fund Parminder Sandu. The roundtable provided an opportunity for members to meet the new minister as well as discuss some of the main issues of interest, including cap and trade, the GreenON Fund, waste diversion, and growing Ontario's low-carbon economy through the use of nuclear and other energy sources.

In November, as part of proposed amendments by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to the Cap and Trade Program and Reporting Regulations, the OCC submitted a letter of support to the ministry for the proposed provision of treatment of Sarnia Regional Cogeneration customers. The proposed change of providing free allowances to capped facilities that are customers of this regional cogeneration system in the Sarnia area was a step in the right direction for supporting equitable treatment amongst cap and trade program participants. The proposed change allowed for the intricacies of regional cogeneration to be properly addressed under the cap and trade program and allowed for the regional cogeneration to be given the same treatment as an onsite cogeneration system. The proposed cogeneration amendment passed and is now part of the cap and trade emission allowances methodology.

● **RESOLUTION: Keep Ontario Competitive by Taking a Measured Approach to Changes to Ontario's Labour Laws**

- ✓ **Action:** In 2017, the OCC worked tirelessly to confront new labour and employment standard provisions in Bill 148. We were able to achieve some concessions from government and also helped to frame the positions of other political parties in the process.

● RESOLUTION: Support Ontario's Steel Industry and its Supply Chain Clusters

- ✓ **Action:** In light of possible levying of duties on Canadian steel and aluminum exports to the United States, the Hamilton, Sault Ste. Marie and Windsor–Essex Chambers of Commerce authored an open letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau highlighting the importance of these industries to the Canadian economy.

● RESOLUTION: Regulating the Sharing Economy for a Competitive Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** In 2018, the OCC will turn its attention more closely to the role transportation plays in facilitating economic growth and prosperity. We will develop a report that examines, among other issues, autonomous technology such as that in development by major sharing economy firms.

● RESOLUTION: Positioning Ontario to be a Global Leader in Smart City Development

- ✓ **Action:** In 2018–9, the OCC will turn its attention to urbanization and housing policy. We will explore the scope of this challenge and begin to formulate a business-friendly response. Our goal is to achieve better outcomes for more people by recommending changes to legislation and regulation, as well as innovative approaches such as “smart city” policies.

● RESOLUTION: Investing in Tourism Promotion

- ✓ **Action:** Recognizing the lack of accountability in measuring key strategic initiatives such as Ontario's tourism action plan, the OCC recommended in *Vote Prosperity* that the government establish criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of strategic goals and publicly publish these targets to ensure transparency and success.

● RESOLUTION: Ensure the Competitiveness of Farm Businesses in Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** Recognizing the lack of accountability in measuring key strategic initiatives such as Ontario's agri-food sector 2020 target, the OCC recommended in *Vote Prosperity* that the government establish criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of strategic goals and publicly publish these targets to ensure transparency and success.

● RESOLUTION: Ensure the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Creates an Equitable Trade Environment for Ontario's Auto Sector

- ✓ **Action:** On March 8, 2018 Canada, along with Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam signed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Tariff and non-tariff outcomes for the automotive and auto parts sectors include: Phased tariff elimination will apply for all vehicles and vehicle parts into CPTPP markets.
 - Japan is already designated a most-favoured nation and duty-free;
 - Canada's 6.1 percent tariff on passenger vehicle imports will be phased out over four years, through five annual back-end loaded cuts to retain greater tariff protection during the first two years—higher protection than in the Canada-Korea FTA and CETA;

- Canada's tariffs of up to 8.5 percent on auto parts will be eliminated upon entry into force of the Agreement;
- Canada's bilateral automotive agreement with Japan, including a safeguard mechanism that applies in cases of import surges, binding accelerated dispute settlement procedures, and the establishment of a bilateral committee on motor vehicle trade to discuss issues affecting trade and investment;
- Canada has negotiated a more liberal rule of origin for motor vehicles with Australia and Malaysia to ensure that Canadian manufacturers can benefit from preferential tariff treatment to these markets;
- Commitments on standards and regulations will address non-tariff measures that prevent Canadian companies from realizing their full export potential.

● **RESOLUTION: Identify the Cost-Drivers behind Electricity Prices**

- ✓ **Action:** In *Vote Prosperity*, the OCC advocated for greater transparency in energy pricing, calling on the government to conduct and publish the results of a comprehensive review of the electricity sector, including an objective economic impact analysis assessing the full range of inputs that make up the Global Adjustment (GA), and then pursue cost-reducing measures based on the results. Government should then consider approaches to make sustainable change to the electricity market. In 2017, we launched the Know Your Power program in partnership with the Ministry of Energy, to develop informative workshops, webinars, and social media engagement to help business conserve energy and save money on their electricity bills.

In spring 2018, the OCC will convene a series of energy sector advocacy roundtables to inform our future activity on this file.

RESOLUTION: Support Commercialization for New Technologies

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has seen significant movement on commercialization from the Office of the Chief Health Innovation Strategist, including a Health Technologies Fund, the introduction of Innovation Brokers, and a Value-Based Innovation Program. We continued to advocate on this issue at our 2017 event, Driving Digital Innovation in the Ontario Health Care System.

RESOLUTION: Supporting Ontario to Become a Leader in Global Mining Innovation

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC met with staff from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines to advocate for the need to expedite the process to enhance Ontario's economic development. This issue was also presented to the PC Party PAC on Mining and Northern Development as part of their pre-election policy development.

RESOLUTION: Bending the Cost Curve of Ontario's Electricity Prices

- ✓ **Action:** *Vote Prosperity* emphasizes the importance of affordable electricity as a key component of securing Ontario's continued competitiveness.

RESOLUTION: Expanding Ontario's Trade Capacity Through Maximizing Export Market Opportunities in Japan

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC is working with strategic US states to facilitate the formation of an MOU on trade, similar to the one the Province of Ontario signed with the State of Michigan on auto. To date, the OCC has released three joint news releases with the Chambers of Commerce of California, Colorado, and Kentucky in support of free trade and the renegotiation of NAFTA.

RESOLUTION: Creating Northern Ontario Economic Hubs, Technology Clusters and the Innovation Ecosystem

- ✓ **Action:** This issue will be addressed in our mandate letter to the Minister of Northern Development (or equivalent).

RESOLUTION: Reducing Permitting Delays in Mining Exploration

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC met with staff from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines to advocate for the need to expedite the process to enhance Ontario's economic development. This issue was also presented to the PC Party PAC on Mining and Northern Development as part of their pre-election policy development.

RESOLUTION: In the Spirit of Business

- ✓ **Action:** This issue will be addressed in our mandate letter to the Minister of Finance.

RESOLUTION: Addressing the Challenges of Ontario's Largest Economic Sector: Small Business

- ✓ **Action:** During our *Small Business Too Big to Ignore* Campaign, culminating in the *Obstacles and Opportunities* report, the OCC urged government to establish a "one-window regulatory concierge service" to assist small businesses in understanding, navigating, and achieving compliance with relevant regulatory requirements. In May 2017 the government introduced new legislation to cut unnecessary red tape through a "one-window service" for small businesses. The program promises to help small businesses access support, information, and resources when navigating Ontario's regulatory environment.

RESOLUTION: Helping Industries and Communities Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy

- ✓ **Action:** In November, in response to proposed amendments by the Ministry of Environment and Climate to cap and trade program reporting regulations, the OCC submitted a letter of support to the ministry for the proposed provision of treatment of Sarnia Regional Cogeneration customers. The proposed change allows for the intricacies of regional cogeneration to be properly addressed under the cap and trade program and allowed for regional cogeneration to be given the same treatment as an onsite cogeneration system.

In response, the government passed the proposed cogeneration amendment and it is now part of the cap and trade emission allowances methodology.

RESOLUTION: Reducing Energy Costs in Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** A capacity market was a recommendation in *Leading the Charge*, the OCC's submission on the Long-Term Energy Plan. We have also participated in the IESO Market Renewal group, which is aimed at re-examining energy procurement in Ontario.

RESOLUTION: Lowering Ontario's Energy Costs for a more Competitive Province

- ✓ **Action:** In *Vote Prosperity*, we recommend that Ontario allow businesses to purchase surplus electricity at rates equal to or better than the exported price to other jurisdictions.

RESOLUTION: Making the Ontario Energy Board Hearing Process More Accessible

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC met with staff from the Ontario Energy Board who informed us that the OEB hearing process was currently under review and that the OCC's position would be taken into consideration.

RESOLUTION: Improving Canada's Trade Policy for Greater Business Prosperity in Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC surveyed business' perspective on NAFTA renegotiations that determined priority areas for advocacy. Building on the results of the survey, the OCC is working with strategic US states to facilitate the formation of an MOU on trade, similar to the one the Province of Ontario signed with the State of Michigan on auto. To date, the OCC has released three joint news releases with the Chambers of Commerce of California, Colorado, and Kentucky in support of free trade and the renegotiation of NAFTA.

FISCAL/TAXATION

● RESOLUTION: Maintaining Ontario Mining Tax Rates

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC met with staff from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines who informed staff that changing current mining tax rates was currently not a priority of the government.

● RESOLUTION: Reconsider Approach to Addressing Ontario's Retirement Savings Problem

- ✓ **Action:** In June 2016, Finance Minister Charles Sousa announced that the Government of Ontario would be abandoning the ORPP in favour of an enhanced CPP, avoiding increased regulatory fragmentation and thus administrative burden – avoiding significant consequences for Ontario's business community.

● RESOLUTION: Reinstate Scheduled Corporate Income Tax Rate Reductions by 2017-18

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2018 Pre-Budget submission, the OCC focused on the need to strengthen business competitiveness through improved taxation. As part of that ask we recommended that government reduce the CIT from 11.5 to 10 percent.

● RESOLUTION: Enforcing Wage Restraints for Senior School Board Officers

- ✓ **Action:** This issue will be addressed in our mandate letter to the Minister of Education.

● RESOLUTION: Lack of Transparency and Accountability of School Boards to the Property Taxpayers

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC will endeavour to take appropriate action on this issue in the future.

● RESOLUTION: Essential Service Designation for Provincially Funded Transit Services

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC will endeavour to take appropriate action on this issue in the future.

● RESOLUTION: Ontario's Debt and Deficit Management Strategy

- ✓ **Action:** As a foundational pillar of *Vote Prosperity*, we focus on the need for improved government accountability. We recommend that the government create a meaningful plan to tackle the debt and move towards balanced or surplus budgets.

● RESOLUTION: Using the Private and Not-For-Profit Sectors to Deliver Public Services

- ✓ **Action:** Alternative service delivery, particularly in health care, has been a foundational principle of the OCC's work and we continue to advocate for this option in a variety of contexts.

● RESOLUTION: Support for Travel Rebate Incentive Program (TRIP)

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 Pre-Budget submission, the OCC called for government to support the TRIP rebate as a means to boost the Canadian economy by encouraging additional spending by US travelers.

● RESOLUTION: Educating Ontario Businesses and Establishing an Offset Strategy for the ORPP

- ✓ **Action:** In June 2016, Finance Minister Charles Sousa announced that the Government of Ontario would be abandoning the ORPP in favour of an enhanced CPP, avoiding increased regulatory fragmentation and thus administrative burden – avoiding significant consequences for Ontario's business community.

● RESOLUTION: Getting Ontario Back to Fiscal Balance

- ✓ **Action:** As a foundational pillar of *Vote Prosperity*, we focus on the need for improved fiscal responsibility. We recommend the government create a meaningful plan to tackle the debt and move towards balanced budgets and surpluses.

● RESOLUTION: Strengthening and Modernizing Workplace Defined Benefit Pension Plans

- ✓ **Action:** Through a series of open letters and meetings with government officials, the OCC advocated that the government eliminate solvency rules and adopt a strengthened going concern approach for Defined Benefit (DB) pension plans. Last year the government signaled it will implement a new framework for DB pension plans by adopting a going concern approach.

● RESOLUTION: Maintaining Provincial Tax Exemptions on Employer Health and Dental Plans

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2018 Pre-Budget submission, the OCC focused on the need to strengthen business competitiveness through improved taxation. As part of that ask we recommended that government reduce the CIT from 11.5 to 10 percent.

● RESOLUTION: Reforming Ontario Auto Rate Regulation for Competitive Insurance

- ✓ **Action:** Following the release of the Marshall report on Ontario's auto insurance sector, the OCC urged the government to move quickly on the proposed changes within the report, with particular emphasis on those recommendations that will make auto insurance more affordable in the short term for Ontario drivers.

● RESOLUTION: Protect Public Sector Services by Monitoring the Public Sector's Total Compensation Premium

- ✓ **Action:** As a foundational pillar of *Vote Prosperity*, we focus on the need for improved government accountability. This resolution was included in our 2017 provincial Pre-Budget submission.

● RESOLUTION: Increasing Transparency in Crown Corporation Divestment

- ✓ **Action:** As a foundational pillar of *Vote Prosperity*, we focus on the need for improved government accountability. This resolution was included in our 2017 provincial Pre-Budget submission.

● RESOLUTION: Protect Canadian Business by Keeping the De Minimis Threshold Low

- ✓ **Action:** Led by the Windsor Chamber of Commerce, a coalition of network members have been engaged in an on-going conversation with the federal government to ensure Ontario does not lose its cross-border business.

● RESOLUTION: Collecting 'Share' Revenue

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC will endeavour to take appropriate action on this issue in the future.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

● RESOLUTION: Ensuring Competitiveness for Ontario's Marine Transportation Industry

- ✓ **Action:** As part of our work on trade, the OCC met with an Economic Counsellor from the Embassy of the United States of America in Ottawa, who leads the Regulatory Cooperation Council's work. He indicated his openness to discussing regulatory issues and improving the regulatory process between Canada and the US.

● RESOLUTION: Expanding Economic Opportunities through the Niagara GTA Corridor

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has consistently advocated for trade-enabling infrastructure, in reports such as *Building Better* and in letters to government. In 2018, we will release a transportation policy report that will address needs related to both the movement of goods and people.

● RESOLUTION: Goods and People Movement Long-Range, Multimodal, Integrated Transportation Plan

- ✓ **Action:** In November 2017, the OCC released an open letter to Metrolinx's Chief Planning Officer regarding the agency's Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan. In its letter, we highlighted that long-term planning is an essential component in ensuring that the movement of goods and people at local, regional, and provincial levels is efficient and responsive to population growth. The letter also noted that the OCC would like to see the Draft Plan contain strong emphasis on the concept of the "movement of goods", which is an essential element that affects business and impacts Ontario's ability to remain competitive. We also emphasized that in terms of governance, to streamline transportation services and remove operational silos, the OCC proposes that the Province establish a single transportation authority to serve the GTHA. The Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan was adopted by Metrolinx in March 2018.

● RESOLUTION: Moving Forward on the GTA West Corridor

- ✓ **Action:** The government announced that they would not be proceeding with stage 2 of the environmental assessment for the GTA West corridor.

● RESOLUTION: Support for TransCanada's Energy East Project - New Jobs, Investment and Growth for Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** As part of our 2018 energy micro-event series, the OCC will convene stakeholders to focus on advancing the principles identified by the OCC in the Long-Term Energy Plan Submission. One event will focus on Ontario's energy security and the role of the fuel industry in ensuring that the principle of reliability is sustained in our energy system.

● RESOLUTION: Bridge the Broadband Gap

- ✓ **Action:** In a joint federal-provincial announcement on October 6, 2017, each government committed the necessary funding to bring high-speed internet to the mineral-rich Ring of Fire region in Ontario. This funding will help residents and businesses in the North bridge the digital divide. As part of the governments Long Term Infrastructure Plan, released in November 2017, the government committed to implementing a broadband strategy outlining a vision for broadband connectivity across the province. In Budget 2018, the government announced its intention to provide \$500 million over three years to expand broadband connectivity in rural and northern communities. This will include an investment of up to \$71 million towards improving cellular coverage in eastern Ontario, and up to \$20 million to Telesat to support a low earth orbit satellite constellation project.

● RESOLUTION: Addressing Ontario's Infrastructure Deficit through Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP)

- ✓ **Action:** We supported AFP reform in our 2017 infrastructure report, *Building Better*.

● RESOLUTION: Expanding Natural Gas Service in Rural Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2018 Pre-Budget submission, the OCC prioritized expanding natural gas access to rural communities.

● RESOLUTION: Modernizing the Connecting Links Funding Program

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 Pre-Budget submission, the OCC called for a one-time, \$30-million enhancement of the Connecting Links fund as a transitional measure to assist affected communities in addressing the two-year gap in which the program was discontinued. In Budget 2017, the government announced that funding for the Connecting Links program will increase to \$30 million per year by 2018-9.

● RESOLUTION: Link Investment in Core Infrastructure to Productivity Performance and Enhancement

- ✓ **Action:** Our 2017 infrastructure report, *Building Better*, notes that investment in infrastructure directly contributes to the productivity enhancement and performance by noting that for every \$1 billion in infrastructure spending, GDP is boosted by \$1.14 billion, resulting in a multiplier effect of 1.14. It also outlines a series of recommendations to more effectively build on this relationship.

● RESOLUTION: Empower all Municipalities to Build and Maintain Essential Infrastructure

- ✓ **Action:** Our 2017 infrastructure report, *Building Better*, highlighted that there should be continued focus by the government on asset management planning, including working with municipalities to improve their capacity to integrate asset management practices into their operations and capital planning processes.

● RESOLUTION: Addressing the impact of Climate Change on Transportation Infrastructure in Ontario's Far North

- ✓ **Action:** Our 2017 infrastructure report, *Building Better*, recommends infrastructure be resilient and adaptable to the changing environment. The report profiled the impact of climate change in Ontario's north and highlighting that Canada's ice roads – more than 3,300 miles of them – have been freezing later and melting earlier, drastically reducing the window of time that isolated communities rely on to restock a year's worth of vital supplies.

● RESOLUTION: Addressing the Niagara to GTA Transportation Corridor

- ✓ **Action:** In 2018, the OCC will turn its attention more closely to transportation work and the role transportation plays in facilitating economic growth and prosperity. We will develop a report that examines the transportation deficit in Ontario and explore how rail, governance, and autonomous technology can provide solutions to the transportation issues across the province.

● RESOLUTION: Support for Metrolinx Big Move and 'Next Wave' Priority Projects

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2018 Pre-Budget submission, the OCC focused on the need to dedicate revenue for the Metrolinx The Big Move's Next Wave priority projects.

● RESOLUTION: Regional Transportation Fare Integration

- ✓ **Action:** On October 5, 2017, the Ontario government signaled it is moving towards improved public transit integration within the GTHA. Effective January 2018, the Ontario government is lowering the cost of commuting by introducing a 50 percent discount for PRESTO card users who transfer between GO Transit or the Union Pearson Express (UP Express) and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), in both directions. For those riders whose regular commute includes GO/UP Express-TTC transfers, this step towards regional fare integration and more affordable transit options will save them approximately \$720 per year.

SKILLS

● RESOLUTION: Creating Pan-Canadian Training and Certification Standards

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we address the regulatory and financial barriers that are closing the skilled trades sector to new workers.

● RESOLUTION: Good Governance at the College of Trades

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we recommend that the government reform the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT). If OCOT is unable to implement these reforms, we recommend the government dismantle OCOT and return responsibility for trades regulation to the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Development.

● RESOLUTION: Reforming the College of Trades

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we recommend that the government reform the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT). If OCOT is unable to implement these reforms, we recommend the government dismantle OCOT and return responsibility for trades regulation to the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Development.

● RESOLUTION: Strengthening Labour Market Information for Business Competitiveness

- ✓ **Action:** In 2018-9, the OCC will undertake a major project on the future of Ontario's workforce. It will be supported by an analysis of current LMI availability and recommendations for improving LMI in Ontario.

● RESOLUTION: Workforce Development in Ontario Agriculture and Food Processing

- ✓ **Action:** In *Vote Prosperity*, we highlight the need for government to work with industry and post-secondary institutions to ensure that program offerings remain responsive to changing labour market dynamics and the regional and sectoral needs of Ontario's business community to address the looming labour shortages in the agricultural industry.

● RESOLUTION: Address the Growing Labour Force Disconnect by Creating a Stronger Business/Commerce Curriculum

- ✓ **Action:** The Ontario government is in the process of rolling out a comprehensive financial literacy program in all schools for 2018.

● RESOLUTION: Improve Workforce Competitiveness for Rural Communities and Small Urban Centres by Creating a Flexible Apprenticeship Program

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, the OCC recommends that Ontario pursue a more flexible apprenticeship system. We focused on modernizing the apprenticeship application process, revising the journey-person-to-apprenticeship ratio, and enhancing support for employer consortia.

● RESOLUTION: Moving the Ontario Colleges of Trades from Regulator to Promoter

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we recommend that the government reform the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT). If OCOT is unable to implement these reforms, we recommend the government dismantle OCOT and return responsibility for trades regulation to the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Development.

● RESOLUTION: Addressing Local Labour Market Needs through the Ontario Provincial Nominee Program

- ✓ **Action:** In November 2017, the OCC wrote a letter to the federal government emphasizing the importance of increasing the number of immigrants granted entry as part of our Ontario Provincial Nominee Program. Our advocacy in this area successfully resulted in an expansion of this program.

● RESOLUTION: Implementing an Innovative Approach for the Regulation of Skilled Trades

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we recommend that the government reform the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT). If OCOT is unable to implement these reforms, we recommend the government dismantle OCOT and return responsibility for trades regulation to the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Development.

● RESOLUTION: Improving Indigenous Education in Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we recommend that the government leverage experiential learning opportunities to promote inclusive economic growth throughout the province. We recognize that the unemployment rate for Indigenous peoples living off the reserve is 11.9 percent. Additionally, only 10 percent of the working age Indigenous population has a university degree, as compared to 26 percent of the non-Indigenous population. Consistent with this resolution, we recognize that bridging this gap would have considerable economic impact. Furthermore, we recommend that government identify and allocate the financial resources necessary to enhance the experiential learning opportunities accessible to underrepresented groups.

● RESOLUTION: Promoting Skilled Trades by Ensuring an Adequate Supply of Secondary School Technical Teachers

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, we recommend that the government promote career pathways to the skilled trades.

● RESOLUTION: Implementing a Moratorium on School Closures

- ✓ **Action:** In June 2017, the government announced that it will overhaul the process for school closures, and that school boards must pause all on-going plans to close schools.

● RESOLUTION: Providing Post-Secondary Students with the Supports Needed to Gain Employment:

- ✓ **Action:** In our 2017 report, *Talent in Transition*, the OCC addressed Ontario's skills mismatch and focused on solutions to help overcome the lack of work experience opportunities for post-secondary students. Among the recommendations included in the report were calls to better help facilitate experiential learning opportunities as well as shifting towards an outcomes-based employment and training funding model to better help graduates find jobs.

SPECIAL ISSUES

● RESOLUTION: Increasing Democracy and Promoting Entrepreneurism in Small Construction Workplaces

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC highlighted this resolution during our Bill 148 advocacy and throughout the government's consultations. We will continue to address these recommendations with the Ministry of Labour.

● RESOLUTION: Promoting Greater Transparency in the 'Open for Business' Initiative

- ✓ **Action:** As part of Small Business Access, there is a single number that business can access for information across a range of services: 1-888-999-5970.

● RESOLUTION: Permanent Protection of Industrial Fibre Supply

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has conducted outreach with Ministry of Natural Resources staff.

● RESOLUTION: Support the Proposed Great Lakes Protection Act and Monitor to Ensure Timely Creation and Implementation of Conservation and Prevention Programs

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC will continue to ensure that the Great Lakes Guardian Council considers the interests and perspectives of Ontario business.

● RESOLUTION: Canadian Nuclear Innovation

- ✓ **Action:** As part of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's review of the Major Component Replacement Project at Bruce Power, the OCC provided a submission highlighting the importance of the nuclear industry to Ontario, not only as a source of low-cost electricity generation but as a leading innovator and environmental steward in our low-carbon economy.

● RESOLUTION: Fairness for Businesses in Customer Initiated Transactions

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has conducted outreach with Ministry of Labour staff.

● RESOLUTION: Province of Ontario Wide Load Permit

- ✓ **Action:** In August 2016, the Ministry of Transportation acknowledged challenges to the wide-load permitting process and began a process to change the administration of provincial oversize/overweight (O/O) permits. The OCC will continue to advocate to address these challenges with Ministry staff.

● RESOLUTION: Unrealized “Heads and Beds Levy” Hurts Ontario’s Economic Competitiveness

- ✓ **Action:** This resolution was addressed in the 2018 provincial Pre-Budget submission.

● RESOLUTION: Workplace Mental Health Strategy

- ✓ **Action:** In July 2017, the OCC released a toolkit to help employers manage mental wellness issues in the workplace. We are also in the process of building partnerships with expert organizations to bring more resources to our members, particularly small businesses.

● RESOLUTION: Banning Weekend Union Drives

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC highlighted this issue throughout our Bill 148 advocacy work and we will continue to do so with the Ministry of Labour.

● RESOLUTION: Establishing a Cost-Effective Drug Distribution System

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC released a test of principles against which pharmacare program proposals can be tested, with effective and efficient drug distribution being part of that test.

● RESOLUTION: Fixing the Arbitration System for Fire and Police Services in Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** This resolution was addressed in the 2018 provincial Pre-Budget submission.

● RESOLUTION: Maximize the Economic Benefit of Recreational Marijuana in Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC is currently waiting for the results of both the provincial election and the federal implementation of cannabis legalization legislation to move forward with this issue.

● RESOLUTION: Support Provincial Jurisdiction in Air Quality Management

- ✓ **Action:** This issue will be addressed in a mandate letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (or equivalent).

● RESOLUTION: Addressing the Challenges of Health Care in Rural and Northern Ontario

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC hosted an Economic Leadership Series session in Sault Ste. Marie on this issue, as well as addressed it in *Adopting our Advantage: Supporting a Thriving Health Science Sector in Ontario*.



● RESOLUTION: Personal Real Estate Corporations

- ✓ **Action:** This resolution was addressed in the 2017 provincial Pre-Budget submission.

● RESOLUTION: Ontario's Residential Tenancies Act

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC has conducted outreach with Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff. They indicate that there no more changes expected after the *Fair Housing Plan*, but the OCC will seek opportunities to work with future governments on this issue.

● RESOLUTION: Providing More Clarity for Industry's Duty to Consult

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC is committed to improving the connection between business and indigenous communities, as well as improving government accountability in its dealings with all stakeholders. Government accountability is one of the four pillars of the *Vote Prosperity* platform.

● RESOLUTION: Remove Requirement for Canadian Directors on Ontario Corporations

- ✓ **Action:** The OCC will endeavour to take appropriate action on this issue in the future.

● RESOLUTION: Finding Balance in the *Endangered Species Act* and *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*

- ✓ **Action:** This issue will be addressed in a mandate letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (or equivalent).

THE OCC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM

Karl Baldauf, *Vice President, Policy and Government Relations*

647-243-3543 | karlbaldauf@occ.ca

Ashley Challinor, *Director of Policy*

647-243-3538 | ashleychallinor@occ.ca

Files: Health and life sciences

Rahul Bedi, *Senior Manager of*

Government Relations

647-243-0882 | rahulbedi@occ.ca

Nadia Todorova, *Senior Policy Analyst*

647-243-3544 | nadiatodorova@occ.ca

Files: Infrastructure and transportation, environment/cap and trade, immigration, trade

Jamie Cleary, *Government Relations*

Specialist

647-243-3566 | jamiecleary@occ.ca

Reid McKay, *Economic Analyst*

647-243-3563 | reidmckay@occ.ca

Files: Skills and workforce development

Andrew Thiele, *Policy Analyst*

647-243-3564 | andrewthiele@occ.ca

Files: Energy and natural resources, urbanization and housing



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