

February 14, 2024

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs  
Premier's Office; Room 281  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy  
Minister of Finance  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Frost Building South  
7 Queen's Park Crescent  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

The Honourable David Piccini  
Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor, 400 University Avenue  
Toronto, ON M7A 1T7

**RE: Our support for fully enabling automatic features in voluntary workplace pension and savings plans**

Dear Premier Ford, Minister Bethlenfalvy, and Minister Piccini,

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of 60,000 businesses of all sizes across Ontario and over 150 local chambers and boards of trade. With the rising cost of living and affordability challenges in our economy, saving for retirement has become more difficult. To address these challenges, it is important that Ontario adopt innovative policies that can seamlessly put money into the hands of workers.

On behalf of the OCC and its members, I would like to express our strong support for Sun Life's call for legislative changes in Budget 2024 to fully enable automatic features, such as enrolments in benefits, pensions and saving plans, with employee opt-out provisions.

Many Ontario employers offer their employees a voluntary workplace pension and savings plan; however, many Ontarians are not participating in their plans. Ontario employers are seeking to use automatic features that they cannot implement under the current legislative framework. Once implemented, automatic features would reduce red tape, and help workers more easily save for retirement, at no cost to government.

Automatic features work best when used in tandem with each other and they include:

- **Automatic enrolment and deductions** from employee pay into voluntary workplace pension and savings plans so employees can receive the benefit of matching company contributions, and
- **Annual savings rate increases** so employees can gradually increase their savings over time. Employees could also receive additional matching company contributions.

When fully enabled, employers would be able to apply each of these features to their plan without having to collect express employee consent, which is an administratively tedious process. In all cases, workers should have the right to opt out and change their savings rate as they desire.

Automatic features can help increase employee participation in workplace pension and savings plans by addressing barriers workers may face, such as feeling overwhelmed by decisions, a lack of knowledge to decide, and procrastinating on taking action.

They would also improve business competitiveness with jurisdictions in the U.S. and U.K., where employers can easily incorporate automatic features into their plans. Ontario's employers want the ability to treat Canadian employees as similarly as possible to ensure we are competitive and attract talent.

Fully enabling automatic features will help more Ontarians achieve greater financial security and live healthier lives in their retirement while reducing red tape and administrative burden for employers.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and welcome the opportunity to discuss it further.

Sincerely,



Daniel Tisch, APR, FCPRS, ICD.D  
*President and CEO*  
*Ontario Chamber of Commerce*