

December 7, 2023

The Hon. Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Re: Extreme tax hikes undermine business confidence

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Freeland,

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is the indispensable partner of business and Canada's largest, most influential provincial chamber. It is an independent, non-profit advocacy and member services organization. The OCC has 60,000 members, including large multinational corporations, small-to-medium-sized enterprises, labour unions, postsecondary institutions, non-profits, associations and close to 160 chambers of commerce and boards of trade.

I am writing today to express concerns about the federal government's intentions to implement a 4.7 percent excise tax increase on beer on April 1, 2024. This impending tax hike has not only alarmed our members but also poses a threat to the overall business confidence in Canada. The brewing sector not only provides substantial employment but also largely consists of small, local operators, many of whom are grappling with inflation and the rising costs of doing business in Canada. The proposed increase in excise taxes jeopardizes the livelihoods of thousands of workers and places additional pressures on consumers already grappling with economic challenges.

We urge you to consider the unintended consequences of this decision and its potential to adversely affect the brewing industry and, by extension, the Canadian economy. We trust that you will give this matter your earnest attention and look forward to a positive resolution that favours the well-being of this industry, its workforce, and the many Canadians they serve.

Sincerely,



Rocco Rossi
President and CEO
Ontario Chamber of Commerce