

May 7, 2026

Hon. Sylvia Jones
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
5th Floor - 777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Hon. Victor Fedeli
Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade
18th Floor - 777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 1S5

Re: Safeguarding Ontario's life science ecosystem under global economic and trade pressures

Dear Ministers Jones and Fedeli,

On behalf of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and its [Health Policy Council](#), which represents leading stakeholders from across the health and life sciences sectors, I am writing to urge the provincial government to take decisive action to protect Ontarian interests amidst an emerging realignment of the global life sciences landscape.

Ontario and the U.S. share a deeply integrated life sciences trade partnership, with the province generating over \$11.8 billion in exports, making up 62 per cent of the country's total life sciences exports.¹ This cross-border exchange underpins access to life-saving medicines, vaccines, medical devices and technologies, and treatments in both countries.

Ontario is exposed, given its inclusion in international pricing benchmarks and existing gaps in biopharmaceutical investment, scale-up financing, and time-to-patient access. This risks undermining Ontario's ability to attract investment, sustain innovation, and deliver timely access to new therapies.

To mitigate these impacts, Ontario must scale domestic research and development (R&D) and support SMEs, while preparing for potential impacts on global pricing and trade on pharmaceutical and medical device/technology products.

¹ <https://www.sourcefromontario.com/en/page/life-sciences>

Ontario's Life Sciences Advantage

Ontario is Canada's largest life sciences hub, home to over 2,800 firms (44 per cent of the national total), 72,000 workers, \$1.82 billion in hospital based R&D investment,² and \$58 billion to Ontario's GDP.³ We commend the province's commitment and leadership in advancing timely access and innovation through its [Funding Accelerated for Specific Treatments \(FAST\)](#) program, including fast-tracking access to breakthrough cancer drugs to speed up patients' access to life-changing treatment options.

Despite Ontario's advantages in talent, R&D and manufacturing, and its strong life sciences sector, the province is not realizing its potential. We have fallen behind Québec and B.C.'s life science sector growth rates⁴, where investor incentives, such as provincial tax credits and angel investment matching programs, have nurtured valuable biotechnology firms. Ontario also lags in its support to SMEs seeking to scale their research into full products; they face a shortage of capital (seed stage funding) for projects transitioning from basic research to proof-of-concepts⁵ and long development timelines (on average, 13 years) from initial patent or human trials to the launch of a new medicine.⁶

The United States' new trade and price referencing policy framework risks further eroding the province's life sciences advantage, adding scale-up challenges, reducing investor confidence, diverting R&D and clinical trials away from the province, and further reducing patient access to innovative medicines, treatments, vaccines, and technologies.

With the [Taking Life Sciences to the Next Level](#) strategy, the government aims to grow the life sciences sector with a focus on the commercialization of homegrown technologies. To achieve this goal, the Ontario Chamber and the Health Policy Council recommend the following priorities:

1. Reform market access for innovative medicines, medical devices, and technologies. This includes:
 - a. Speed up provincial listing timelines by adding drugs to the publicly funded drug list no more than 30 days following pCPA negotiations.
2. Develop a patient-centred position on *Buy Ontario* that seeks clear health-specific carve-outs and precise definitions of what is defined as a "Canadian good".

² <https://www.investontario.ca/biopharma-vaccines>

³ https://lifesciencesontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Catalyzing-Ontarios-Life-Sciences-Economy_vF_25June2025.pdf

⁴ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/technology-industry/life-sciences-biomanufacturing/2023_lifesciences_in_bc-sectorprofile.pdf

⁵ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332864463_The_final_leg_How_Ontario_can_win_the_innovation_race

⁶ https://lifesciencesontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Catalyzing-Ontarios-Life-Sciences-Economy_vF_25June2025.pdf

3. Continue leveraging expertise and recommendations from Ontario's Life Sciences Council to bolster workforce development, accelerate commercialization, and encourage the adoption of Ontario-made innovations.

As global trade and pricing dynamics threaten the sustainability of our life sciences sector, Ontario must act proactively and in partnership to protect its innovation ecosystem and ensure all Ontarians have timely access to the treatments and medicines they need.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations and support a coordinated response that positions Ontario as a resilient, globally competitive leader in life sciences.

Sincerely,



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

CC:

John Jordan, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health Anthony Leardi, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health

Jamie Wallace, CEO, Supply Ontario

Jackie Korecki, Chief Operations Officer, Supply Ontario

Matt Anderson, President & CEO, Ontario Health

Robin Saccon, Chair, OCC Health Policy Council & VP, Public Affairs, BD Canada