



2 April 2020

Hon. Mary Wilson, Minister of Economic Development and Small Business  
Chancery Place, PO Box 6000  
675 King Street  
Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 1E9  
Via email: [mary.wilson@gnb.ca](mailto:mary.wilson@gnb.ca)

**Re: Government of New Brunswick Support for Business Through COVID-19 Crisis**

Dear Minister Wilson:

Thank you for the effort and long hours put in by you, your team and all of government as the COVID-19 crisis continues to evolve and we begin to get a clearer picture of the resulting economic devastation that is growing daily. We appreciate the actions taken by your government to date including an extension to the property tax appeal deadline, a pending loan program through Opportunities New Brunswick, the Workers' Emergency Income Benefit and using ONB's Business Navigators to provide guidance. Payment deferrals by NB Power and WorksafeNB will also be helpful.

These are dynamic circumstances and unlike anything we have faced in our lifetimes - it will be critical to maintain open lines of communication between government and business in the weeks and months ahead.

As time passes, it is becoming clearer that in order to weather this economic storm, businesses throughout the province will require more assistance from the Government of New Brunswick. We also understand the position articulated by Premier Higgs that the Province's strategy is to fill gaps identified in the federal government's support.

To that end, below is a list that summarizes the various relief measures that our organizations have previously communicated to you and/or your colleagues that are solely within the purview of the Government of New Brunswick:

- Defer all taxes and fees owed to the Government of New Brunswick until revenue streams improve – specifically this would include property taxes.
- Freeze all payments to government entities without penalties or interest.
- Do not implement any new regulations, taxes or fees
- Allow restaurants to provide take-out alcohol service as has been done in Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia and other provinces.
- Modify the Small Business Investor Tax Credit to allow business owners to invest their personal savings into their existing businesses in the coming months and receive the 50% personal credit during next year's tax period.
- Develop a Small Business Rental Deferral Guarantee Programs, similar to PEI and Nova Scotia
- The development of an Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging and Printed Paper regime be put on hold until the crisis subsides.
- Forming a Business/Employee COVID-19 Response Team, similar to one that has been set up and led by government in Nova Scotia.



It is our position that the time for action is now. The faster and more decisively that we can meet this crisis head-on, the better our businesses can cope in the short term and recover in the long term. We have all advocated in the past for strong financial stewardship from our provincial government and part of the reason for that is to be able to have funds available to support bold action when needed.

We would all have liked New Brunswick to be in a stronger financial position to face this crisis, but the fact remains that if there was ever a time for the government to provide unprecedented support to business in order to salvage our future economy – this is it.

Sincerely,

John Wishart, CEO  
Chamber of Commerce  
For Greater Moncton

Krista Ross, CEO  
Fredericton  
Chamber of Commerce

David Duplisea, CEO  
Saint John Region  
Chamber of Commerce

cc: Hon. Blaine Higgs, Premier, Province of New Brunswick  
cc: Hon. Ernie Steeves, Minister of Finance, Province of New Brunswick  
cc: Hon. Sherry Wilson, Minister Responsible for Service New Brunswick, Province of New Brunswick  
cc: Kevin Vickers, Leader, Liberal Party of New Brunswick  
cc: David Coon, Leader, Green Party of New Brunswick  
cc: Kris Austin, Leader, People's Alliance of New Brunswick