

TALKING POINTS

GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES AMID COVID-19

- *Today's announcements represented important steps forward in dealing with the economic impacts of COVID-19. The measures are the first stage of the government's fiscal strategy and the chamber network will continue to work with them and with other partners to maintain the vital connection between employers and employees and mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic.*
- *We know that all businesses, and particularly small businesses, are feeling severe pressure. We still have much more work ahead to offer them the support they need in the next phase of government's response.*
- *Today's announcement was the product of teamwork among government, business and labour. Canadians should know that all sectors of society are working hard to minimize the impacts of the virus. We're all in this together, and when business, government and workers act as one, we are at our best.*
- *It is important to remember that this crisis is not only about what government can do to help business and workers, but also what business can do to help all Canadians. A good example is today's announcement by several Canadian banks to offer a 6-month deferral on mortgage payments for those impacted by job loss or reduced hours. Other companies have offered to retool to manufacture essential medical equipment to mobilize our industrial capacity in the fight against COVID-19.*

Of note to our small business members, the following are of utmost importance:

- *Allowing all businesses to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after today and before September 2020.*
- *The Canada Revenue Agency will not contact any small or medium Canada business to initiate any post assessment GST/HST or Income Tax audits for the next four weeks. For the vast majority of businesses, the Canada Revenue Agency will temporarily suspend audit interaction with taxpayers and representatives.*
- *To support small businesses that are facing revenue losses and to help prevent lay-offs, the government is proposing to provide eligible small employers a temporary wage subsidy for a period of three months. The subsidy will be equal to 10% of remuneration paid during that period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer.*

- Increasing the credit available to small, medium, and large Canadian businesses. As announced on March 13, a new *Business Credit Availability Program* will provide more than \$10 billion of additional support to businesses experiencing cash flow challenges through the Business Development Bank of Canada and Export Development Canada.
- Provide flexibility on the Canada Account limit, to allow the government to provide additional support to Canadian businesses, when deemed to be in the national interest, to deal with exceptional circumstances.
- Small and medium-sized Canadian businesses should explore these measures with their existing business service partners. More information on such support programs will be available through the Canadian Chamber network, the Business Development Bank of Canada and Export Development Canada in the coming days.