

The Newmarket Chamber of Commerce and businesses met with MPP Chris Ballard

Bill 148, the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act will result in significant harm to Newmarket businesses

NEWMARKET, Friday, August 25 –Today, the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce, along with TS Tech and Pheasant Run Golf Course met with MPP Chris Ballard, Newmarket-Aurora, to discuss the results of the independent economic impact analysis of Bill 148, *the Fair Workplaces Better Jobs Act*. The analysis revealed considerable volatility to Ontario’s economy and sizable uncertainty for Ontario jobs if the legislation is implemented without the necessary amendments.

The numbers show that 185,000 jobs will be at risk in the first two years alone. And contrary to what has been said, the most impacted would be Ontario’s most vulnerable workers.

“What our members have been telling us is that changes in Bill 148 will have dramatic consequences that include scaling back hours for part-time workers and possibly cutting back the number of employees” said Debra Scott, President and CEO of the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce. “Particularly concerning is the scheduling portion of Bill 148 which calls for a ‘one size fits all’ provision for scheduling and fails to take into account the different operational requirements of businesses in each sector. We strongly recommend that the Government adhere to the recommendations made in the Changing Workplaces Review and that they adopt a sector-specific approach to any regulation on scheduling.”

Data from the economic impact analysis shows:

- \$23 billion hit to business over the next two years alone
- 185,000 Ontario jobs will be at immediate risk over the next two years
 - 30,000 of the jobs at risk are youth under 25
 - 96,000 employees at risk are expected to be women
- 50 per cent increase to inflation for this year and the foreseeable future. The cost of everyday consumer goods and services will go up by \$1,300 per household on average each and every year.
- The Ontario government would need to borrow \$440 million more to cover the increases in new costs from this legislation. If the government were to provide offsets to businesses, as they have indicated, the province’s treasury will take a bigger hit.
- Municipalities will be forced to increase employee wages by \$500 million without additional offsetting revenues.

Randy Walsh, Vice President at TS Tech Canada, has indicated Bill 148 will have significant impact on the company and is concerned about what that means for future viability. “Many of the proposed changes to the Employment Standards Act are already part of our company culture and encourage sensible business practices. Our most significant concern deals not only with the proposed changes to the minimum wage rate, but also with the timeframe provided to introduce the changes,” he said. “It is our hope that the long term impact to Ontario manufacturing and our employee’s wealth and prosperity will be considered in the upcoming decisions being made at Queens Park.”

From the time of the Changing Workplaces Review to the introduction of Bill 148, the Fair Workplaces Act, the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce has repeatedly called on the government to slow down the pace of this legislation. The uncertainty following the implementation of Bill 148 will have a detrimental effect on Ontario's economy. We thank MPP Ballard and his willingness to hear the concerns of businesses in his riding. We look forward to working with him in advocating for the necessary amendments and offsets needed to ensure our businesses remain competitive.

For details on the economic analysis, visit keepontarioworking.ca

- 30 -

About Newmarket Chamber of Commerce:

Newmarket Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in Newmarket. It represents the interests of over 850 members through: member programs and services, government representation and the development of public policy.

For media inquiries please contact:

Abdus Samad, Manager of Government Relations and Policy, Newmarket Chamber of Commerce, T: 905-898-5900 ext: 222, abdus@newmarketchamber.ca