



Office of the Premier
1700 Granville Street, 5th Floor
One Government Place
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1X5

May 25, 2021

Re: Consumer spending habits impacting small business

Dear Premier Iain Rankin,

I am writing as a follow up to a letter sent to you last week as a joint submission by the Truro and Colchester, Amherst and Pictou County Chambers of Commerce, asking for your government's consideration to amend the lockdown measures to allow for small businesses to open on appointment terms.

In the days following our joint submission to your government, the members of our collective business communities applauded our efforts to voice their concerns and propose a solution. As the doors of many small businesses continue to remain closed, respecting lockdown orders, entrepreneur mental health suffers as they remain powerless to sell inventories, retain staff, pay bills and plan for business survival.

Citizen's purchasing habits are being shaped by government actions to control the pandemic. Online sales, many to international corporations, have ballooned as witnessed by the increased frequency of courier trucks navigating our communities, while in-person purchases are being limited to a few vendors that offer "essential" items/services.

The change in purchasing habits threatens the fabric of our province with the prospect of business profits being sent to shareholders rather than reinvested in the province or used to support charitable efforts. The overall tax base is further threatened, putting an even greater burden on the private sector.

Small business is what brings uniqueness to our communities and our province. It faces unparalleled pressure that could be eased with some slight modifications to lockdown orders as soon as possible to allow for their continued operation in a controlled and responsible manner. The province can't afford to lose the strengths of this demographic that this pandemic is bringing enormous pressure on.

As you work within a variety of departments to prepare reopening and recovery plans for our province that co-ordinate with public health, we extend an opportunity to you to hear directly from our rural business owners about the challenges they have faced during this pandemic in an effort to guide your decisions.

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Businesses are willing to work with government to protect our communities but their livelihoods are at stake. We ask for your urgent attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Sherry Martell
Executive Director
Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce

CC: David Ritcey, MLA Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River
Karen Casey, MLA Colchester North
Larry Harrison, MLA South Colchester