

April 16, 2020

Dear Premiers:

As the Presidents and CEOs of Canada's national and provincial chambers of commerce, we represent hundreds of thousands of businesses of all sizes in every sector across the entire country. We are writing you to urge all provincial governments to work collaboratively in concert with the federal government on a coherent designation of essential services and industries in the wake of the respective states of emergency you have declared due to COVID-19.

As effects of COVID-19 continue to reverberate in this country and around the world, our member businesses and their employees are thankful for your collective leadership during this unprecedented public health and economic crisis. During this fragile period for our economy, it is critical that companies not face additional unnecessary barriers to doing business between provinces. The nature of our supply chains means that an essential business in one province may rely on inputs from another.

Your governments have already designated their essential services and industries in some form. Our members are telling us that disparities between, and within, provincial rules make it difficult and confusing to operate. Some of the concerns raised with us include:

- Trucks being stopped at provincial boundaries with police not allowing entry.
- A lack of coherence on the servicing of critical appliances – such as refrigeration, washer, dryers – that prevents the ability of companies to provide products and services to support the welfare of all Canadians.
- The overall chilling effect on companies moving goods, and businesses producing self-generated letters without any assurances that these will suffice within their jurisdictions.
- Uncertainty about the distribution of personal protective equipment across the country and what it means for essential businesses who need PPEs to protect their employees and customers.

Alignment will help ensure security of food, transportation, fuel, medical supplies, and other goods and services that are critical to the well-being of all Canadians are available in a timely manner. It is also essential to have a coherent approach as the pressures build on our economy and health systems with the number of confirmed cases growing.

The guidance published by Public Safety Canada on April 2<sup>nd</sup> provides a starting point for these discussions. However, at a time when millions of Canadians are losing their jobs it is crucial that your governments act urgently at the next federal-provincial heads of government virtual meeting. Our organizations would be pleased to engage with your offices and government officials to assist with this work to ensure we have essential service coherence across provinces and territorial lines during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Val Litwin  
President and CEO  
BC Chamber of Commerce

Ken Kolby  
President and CEO  
Alberta Chamber of  
Commerce

Steve McLellan  
CEO  
Saskatchewan Chamber of  
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Chuck Davidson  
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Manitoba Chambers of  
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Rocco Rossi  
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Hon. Perrin Beatty P.C.,  
O.C.  
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