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Ontario Chamber calls for support for healthy and prosperous communities

Following the federal election, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and Ontario Chamber Network called on the next Parliament to take decisive action to support healthy and prosperous communities as the foundation of a robust and inclusive economic recovery.

In the second pillar of its *Ontario Business Matters* federal election platform, released on September 7, *Healthy People and Prosperous Communities*, the OCC underscores the importance of strategic investments in health care, child care, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and reskilling opportunities for those hardest hit by the pandemic.

"The COVID-19 crisis has strained Ontario's health care system and the economic impacts of the pandemic have been disproportionate for women, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, and racialized peoples," said Rocco Rossi, President and CEO of the OCC. "Targeted policies – such as mak-

ing childcare more accessible and affordable for families as well as advancing re-skilling opportunities for those hit hardest by the pandemic – will be critical to Canada's rapid recovery and long-term growth."

The campaign also notes the need to address growing health care needs, support the prov-

ince's aging population, and prepare for future crises. It also calls on federal parties – along with businesses to do better to confront Canada's racist legacy and the enduring implications of the residential "school" system.

"When people are healthy and prosperous so too is the economy and business. We all must do better when it comes to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, including the business community, as outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations on Business and Reconciliation," said Rossi.

The second pillar of the *Ontario Business Matters* campaign is Healthy People and Prosperous Communities. Recommendations include:

- **Advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples** by implementing the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission's Calls to Action.

- **Increasing health transfers to Ontario** to address growing healthcare needs such as the surgical backlog and limited cancer screening, support the aging population, and prepare for future crises.

- **Improving accessibility and affordability of childcare** by working collaboratively with the province to reduce childcare costs and improve access for families.

- **Advancing opportunities for women and equity-seeking groups in economic recovery** such as enhancing reskilling and education programs for those displaced by technology adoption and pandemic-related job losses.

Through the *Ontario Business Matters* federal election campaign, the OCC, along with more than 155 local chambers and boards of trade, are sharing pressing policy issues related to Ontario business that need to be front and centre in the federal election.

For more information about the Ontario Chamber of Commerce's *Ontario Business Matters* campaign, please visit the OCC's website occ.ca.



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