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## Tax 'tools' shift burden, treasurer insists

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said York Region's business tax bill is "unacceptable," Munro said.

But while Blackburn argued the problem is not due to municipal or regional mismanagement, Munro continued to point the finger of blame.

Munro suggested many regions did not take full advantage of provincial tools to help local businesses better cope with tax hikes.

York Region is now getting a "second chance," Munro said.

Blackburn didn't agree.

"We need an apology, and we need tools that fit. Every one of these tools just shifts the burden some place else," he said.

Meanwhile, York Region councillors are painting the Tories as enemies of small business after the province rejected an invitation to participate in its rebate plan. The plan would cost York taxpayers \$1.6 million and each municipality would share an \$800,000 tab to give a one-time rebate for any business facing an increase higher than 25 per cent. The province

would have to dish out \$5.4 million but has not yet agreed to the plan.

"We intend to find some means by which the tools can be reintroduced," Munro said.

York civil servants and ministry staff, meanwhile, continue to review the tools that are still available.

It is still possible for York Region to issue amended tax notices in order to implement a phase-in mechanism or to consider municipal rebates and graduated tax rates," Munro said.

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