



PRESS RELEASE

Canada's convenience industry welcomes Ontario budget actions that support small businesses

TORONTO, ONTARIO – (April 11th 2019) – The Convenience Industry Council of Canada (CICC) applauded actions taken by the Ontario government in its maiden budget that will result in red tape reductions, lower business costs and put consumers first across Ontario. The Council also welcomes measures designed to address regulatory burdens in the small business sector and spur growth and investment across the province.

“Small businesses welcome the message in today’s budget: Ontario’s beverage alcohol policies are moving into the 21st century,” said Anne Kothawala, President & CEO of the CICC. “As the organization representing convenience store retailers, distributors and other members of the supply chain, we are excited to help make expanded beverage alcohol sales in our Ontario stores a reality.”

“We know consumers want expanded beverage alcohol sales; 74% of alcohol consumers say they support expanded sales,” noted Kothawala. This was one of the findings in a new poll conducted by Abacus Data for the CICC.

The CICC also applauded a number of measures in Ontario’s budget which are designed to reduce red tape and costs for businesses, including:

- a reduction in WSIB premiums;
- accelerating the 25% red tape reduction to 2020;
- holding the minimum wage to \$14/hour and tying future increases to inflation; and,
- reaffirming its commitment to cutting the small business tax rate.

Other measures in Budget 2019 also bode well for the convenience store industry, including breaking down interprovincial trade barriers between Ontario and Quebec. “Our retailers have considerable experience in Quebec, and we are pleased to see Ontario’s leadership in working with our neighbouring province to grow trade.”

Lastly, the industry welcomed the commitment to press the federal government to legalize single sport wagering in Canada. “We commend this government for treating adults like adults and trusting our retailers to responsibly sell lottery and beverage alcohol to our adult customers” noted Kothawala .

“Overall, our sector is very pleased with today’s budget which recognizes the importance of our businesses and the contributions we make to communities across the province,” said Kothawala. “We



look forward to working with the government in the coming weeks and months to ensure small businesses continue to be heard and that these policies come to fruition as quickly as possible.”

ABOUT THE CICC

The Convenience Industry Council of Canada is a new organization that brings together retailers, distributors and manufacturers that sell a variety of products in convenience stores across the country. Our 7,500 retailer and distributor members include established banners like Circle K, 7 Eleven, Parkland, Suncor, Canadian Tire, MacEwen and Husky as well as independents and franchisees. Our mission is to advance the interests of the convenience industry through effective advocacy and education. We are proud to represent an industry that contributes over \$22 billion in taxes nationally (\$540,000 per store in Ontario), employs over 250,000 Canadians and brings convenience to communities from coast to coast. We reflect the communities we serve and offer opportunity to new Canadians.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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