



SAINT JOHN REGION

THE CHAMBER

CHAMPIONS FOR BUSINESS

The Saint John Region Chamber of Commerce statement on Federal budget 2021

Economic response and recovery programs are welcome.

Saint John, NB April 20, 2021 – The Chamber announces its support for the Federal Budget released by Finance Minister yesterday.

“We understand that government was in a difficult position to find the right balance between pandemic and economic recovery initiatives. Although the debt levels and deficit are alarmingly high, many people are living in extremely disadvantaged environments and conditions and this budget acknowledges this”, said David Duplisea, CEO of the Chamber.

We are encouraged and support many aspects of the budget, including:

- Extension of business supports like CEWS and CERS for the hardest-hit sectors and small businesses.
- Creation of the Canada Recovery Hiring Program to help the hardest hit businesses hire staff when they are ready for recovery.
- Reskilling and upskilling to get Canadians back to work, as well as producing better data on labour market demand in individual communities and building talent pipelines based on employer needs.
- National leadership on reducing interprovincial trade barriers by collecting data, identifying barriers, and allocating federal transfers to provinces and territories to address these issues.
- Recapitalization of the National Trade Corridors fund to support trade-enabling infrastructure.
- Support for SME technology adoption through capital expenditures and financing to improve Canadian productivity.
- The NTCF (National Trade Corridor Fund) recapitalization could directly help the Port and Airport.

We are pleased to see much needed attention to childcare and early learning, mental health, and seniors long term care. Working with provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners, the introduction of the National Early Learning and Child Care Plan will help support the recovery plans as well as bring fees for regulated childcare down to \$10 a day on average within the next five years. This has been a major ask, both on provincial and federal levels, for years.

As we recover from the pandemic and the spending it has required, we will be concerned about the economic challenge of such a large increase in federal expenditures.

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The Saint John Region Chamber of Commerce is a nationally accredited business organization dedicated to fostering an economic climate that enhances growth, prosperity, and improved quality of life in the community. With more than 600 member businesses, representing the interests of 37,000 people, The Chamber is a dynamic advocate and the principal voice for the business community of Greater Saint John. It offers a variety of programs, activities, services, and networking opportunities designed to enhance the business prospects of members and the overall business climate of the area.