

September 10th, 2018

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Families, Children & Social Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Duclos:

On September 4th, the Mayors of Hamilton, Brantford, Kawartha Lakes, and Thunder Bay wrote a joint letter to you, asking the Federal Government to assume oversight of the Ontario Basic Income Pilot project. The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce strongly encourage the Federal Government to consider this request.

The economy has and will continue to drastically change in the years ahead. With developing technologies and increased automation, government policy needs to adapt in order to respond to potential disruptions in the labour market.

If the Ontario Basic Income Pilot project had reached its planned conclusion, it would have provided lawmakers the data they need to evaluate the merit of this approach to managing market disruption.

The basic income project was intended to help guide evidence-based policy-making. That is why we, in conjunction with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, were supportive of the pilot and interested in its outcome.

Federal oversight of the pilot would revive the critical information generated over the full course of the experiment.

In particular, we are keen to understand if basic income payments:

- Influence recipients' socio-economic outcomes, their participation in the labour market, and/or their uptake of education/training opportunities;

- Alter participants' use of existing social and/or income redistribution programs;
- Lead to an increase in entrepreneurial activity.

As of March 2019, those participating in Ontario Basic Income Pilot project will receive their last payment from the Provincial Government. Thus, federal support is required to continue the pilot project thereafter.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce are pleased to join the ongoing dialogue surrounding this important policy initiative. We join the City of Hamilton, City of Brantford, City of Kawartha Lakes, and City of Thunder Bay in encouraging the Federal Government to continue the Basic Income Pilot Project and thoroughly examine its results by assuming project oversight.

Sincerely,



Keanin Loomis
President & CEO, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce



Charla Robinson
President, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce

CC: Honourable Filomena Tassi, MP for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas

CC: Bob Bratina, MP for Hamilton East — Stoney Creek

CC: Honourable Patty Hajdu, MP for Thunder Bay-Superior North

CC: Don Rusnak, MP for Thunder Bay-Rainy River