



Timmins Chamber of Commerce  
Chambre de commerce de Timmins



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **BUSINESSES CAUTION AGAINST IMMEDIATE MOVE TO \$10 MINIMUM WAGE**

**TIMMINS** – An immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$10 per hour would hit some sectors harder than others, causing a majority of members of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce to register opposition to the idea in a recent survey.

“Businesses in Ontario are not just concerned about the bottom line,” explains **Len Crispino, President and CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce**. “While we do not want our province to prosper on the backs of cheap labour we must find the right balance in order to protect Ontario’s position in a competitive global marketplace.”

While only a small majority of the 2124 respondents were opposed to an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$10, business owners in areas such as agriculture, retail, restaurant and food services, and tourism and hospitality indicated that this sudden adjustment would have a significant negative effect on their businesses.

“Some sectors would clearly suffer more than others,” says Ken Petersen, 206-2007 Chamber President. “Timmins’s service sector is a major source of local employment and we must be careful that increases to the minimum wage do not significantly impact employment levels or consumer prices.”

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce had previously expressed support for the gradual increase in minimum wage. “A gradual increase is simply prudent as it allows businesses to adjust to increased labour costs and plan their budgets accordingly,” adds Crispino. “We would continue to advocate any increases maintain this measured approach.”

Medium sized companies (25- 250 employees) have expressed stronger opposition than any other group to the increase in the minimum wage to \$10. Within this group, companies employing less than 50 employees have shown the greatest disagreement (64%) to an

immediate increase to \$10, and appear to be most vulnerable to wage increases. Half of these companies indicated that the increase in minimum wage will negatively affect their business.

Social and ethical concerns about low-wage Ontarians appear to be the primary considerations for those supporting the increase, echoing previous support by Ontario Chamber members for policies addressing the needs of lower income Ontarians and reducing the tax burden on the poor.

The survey was conducted from January 25 to January 29, 2007. 2124 respondents from across Ontario participated.

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*The OCC represents over 57,000 businesses through 160 local Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade, and has been Ontario's business advocate since 1911. Its advocacy and policy initiatives focus on six areas key to the economic well-being of the province: health; education; energy; finance & taxation; transportation & infrastructure; and border issues.*

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