

THE CHAMBER.

GREATER VICTORIA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

October 15, 2018

Honourable Carole James,
Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier
PO Box 9048 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Re: Business leaders call for changes to EHT before implementation

Dear Minister James:

Thank you for meeting with me and Dan Dagg, Board Chair of the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, earlier this summer. We appreciated the opportunity to speak to you directly on behalf of our 1,400 members.

At that meeting, we expressed gratitude on behalf of the business community for what government has done, specifically regarding improvements to public transit and transportation as well as child care and housing availability, all of which make our region more affordable for working families.

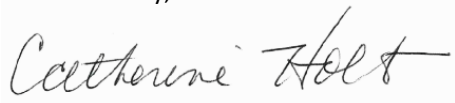
We also urged you to consider the long-term ramifications of the Employer Health Tax. While we applaud the decision to eliminate MSP premiums, the EHT as proposed will create a major, unexpected cost that is affecting investment decisions.

In April, you received a letter, expressing a range of concerns about the EHT, signed by the Chamber along with the City of Victoria, Destination Greater Victoria, Greater Victoria Harbour Authority and Downtown Victoria Business Association (attached). Our five organizations work closely with thousands of businesses in Greater Victoria, and we want you to be aware of what our members are saying about the EHT. We are also hearing similar concerns from other chambers around the province as businesses grapple with this sudden cost.

We are now following up with letters (enclosed) from CEOs and community leaders in Greater Victoria. They are looking for you to signal that government has heard their concerns.

The EHT will affect employers first. But this tax will also hurt workers and families. Employers are already looking for ways to decrease their payrolls by reducing jobs and freezing wages to minimize their tax risk. The EHT adds a burden we can't afford.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Holt
CEO, Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce

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