

Canadian Chamber of Commerce: Emergency Wage Subsidy concept only as good as execution, 6 weeks too long

Phil Taylor – 01/04/2020 – [0](#)

(OTTAWA) – April 1, 2020 - The Canadian Chamber of Commerce today issued the following statement regarding the additional details provided by the federal government on its Emergency Wage Subsidy Program:

“We appreciate that the federal government is working very hard to develop and deliver financial measures to help businesses and Canadians weather the impact of COVID-19.

The Emergency Wage Subsidy is an important tool to help keep our economy afloat during this crisis, and its effectiveness depends on execution that reflects the realities and timelines of its intended audience: businesses that are struggling.

Keeping Canadians connected to their employers will be critical to quickly getting our economy back up and running after the crisis. We cannot overstate the importance of maintaining trained employees who can get a business back up and running at a moment’s notice.

Many businesses that are not essential services have been operating with skeleton staff or completely shut down for nearly 3 weeks. Today, they are being asked to wait an additional 6 weeks before funds are available. We know that many smaller businesses do not have enough cash reserves to wait another 6 weeks. Those affected will likely now place greater demand on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB).

We urgently need to get these funds into the hands of employers. Every day that we delay these funds will lead to more businesses shutting down and more Canadians facing unemployment.

Many businesses that need support will also not be covered by the details announced today. These include businesses with small profit margins that are being hurt by a revenue decline of less than 30%, as well as service firms that are invoicing but do not know when or if these invoices will be paid.

There will also be many businesses whose operational realities do not allow for month over month revenue comparisons. We stand ready to work closely with the government in the coming days to ensure that those companies have access to this important measure.

The Emergency Wage Subsidy will surely protect countless Canadian jobs and, with proper execution, we can help avoid many more job losses. We look forward to continuing to work with the government on behalf of Canada’s businesses to ensure the help they receive is sufficient to get them through - and out of - this crisis in the best shape possible.”