



**FREDERICTON
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

— *The Voice of Business* —

364 York Street, Suite 200
Fredericton, NB
E3B 3P7



March 8, 2017

Hon. Brian Gallant
Premier
Province of New Brunswick
Chancery Place
PO Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1

Dear Premier Gallant:

Re: Proposed Legislative Changes to the *Workers' Compensation Act*

We are writing today to express our concern that proposed legislative changes to the *Workers' Compensation Act* may not move forward in the spring 2017 session of the New Brunswick legislature.

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce, as part of the New Brunswick Employers Coalition, has been engaged with departmental and WorkSafeNB staff members since the fall on recommended changes to the legislation in an attempt to curb the recent large increase in workers' compensation costs - and more specifically as those costs correlate to a 33% premium increase in 2017.

These changes relate to:

- Limiting the retroactive application of Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal decisions
- The calculation of the non-injury portion of CPP disability benefits
- Annuity set-aside for CPP disability benefits
- Non-compensable intervening conditions issues

Without implementing these changes in the spring session, it is widely expected that rates will increase even more dramatically next year - suppressing small and medium-sized enterprises ability to grow and impeding employers' ability to create jobs in 2018 and beyond. It is therefore imperative that your government act without delay to apply these proposed changes and mitigate some of the damage done to SMEs through the unintended consequences of the changes passed into law in 2015.



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As sole funders, employers recognize that it is in the best interests of all New Brunswickers to have a strong and sustainable workers' compensation system. We appreciate the high level of engagement of all parties involved with this matter - Minister Arsenault and his staff, departmental staff, WorkSafeNB and the appeals tribunal.

Please contact our office anytime should you have further questions. We continue to be available to assist in any way possible to resolve this issue forthwith.

Sincerely,

Paul Simmonds
Robert Simmonds Clothing
President, Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

Krista Ross, CEO
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

cc: Hon. Donald Arsenault, Minister, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
Greg Byrne, Principal Secretary, Office of the Premier
Jordan O'Brien, Chief of Staff, Office of the Premier
Jean-Marc Dupuis, Deputy Minister, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour