



Mark Gerretsen, MP, Kingston & the Islands
841 Princess Street (Main Office)
Kingston ON K7L 1G7

May 8, 2019

Dear Mark,

The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce, representing over 800 members and speaking for local employees in your community, is writing to express our concerns about our broken, outdated and uncompetitive tax system.

Canada's tax system is simply not working anymore. Kingston businesses say it is deterring investment or driving it elsewhere. Local firms are worried that the tax system is affecting our community's ability to bring labour, talent and skills to our community. Our members tell us it is affecting their ability to expand and compete, leading to slower economic growth.

After decades of cutting and pasting, navigating our bloated and incomprehensible tax code is a significant challenge for Kingston businesses. Small businesses in particular do not have dedicated departments to grapple with complicated tax filing or manage the onerous burden of dealing with the Canada Revenue Agency.

Hundreds of chambers of commerce and boards of trade from across the country find that the tax system has real costs for local businesses in terms of both time and money.

We are asking you to support a Royal Commission on tax that looks at the following areas:

- Broaden the tax base to explore the most effective tax policy solutions.
- Adjust the tax mix to better promote business investment and economic growth.
- Bridge the digital tax divide to ensure a fair and equitable tax system.
- Further simplify the tax filing experience with digital filing solutions.
- Legislate a Taxpayer Charter of Rights to hold CRA accountable.
- Provide a representative for small business to resolve conflicts with CRA.
- Conduct regular comprehensive reviews to keep the tax system up to date.

After 50 years of putting off comprehensive tax reform, businesses of all sizes, from all sectors and all regions of the country believe now is the time to conduct a whole-of-system review. Our tax system can promote competitiveness, simplicity, fairness and neutrality, but we need a strong commitment from our political leaders to make that happen.

Sincerely,

Karen Cross
Executive Director