



November 15, 2018

Mr. Stephen Crawford, MPP
Chair, Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Dear Mr Crawford,

Re: Bill 47, Making Ontario Open for Business Act

I would like to thank you and the Members of the Committee for the opportunity to comment on Bill 47, Making Ontario Open for Business Act. The Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) is supportive of the stated intention of Bill 47 to create and support job opportunities for businesses, communities and residents of Ontario. However, we have concerns that the bill does not provide an adequate regulatory framework to support decent work in Ontario, given recent trends in our workforce. The ONN is the independent network for nonprofits and charities in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy, and services to strengthen Ontario's nonprofit sector as a key pillar of our society and economy. It is our intention to support the government to help strengthen our work with Ontario's residents, communities and businesses.

The nonprofit sector in Ontario is a major player in Ontario's economy, employing one million people - 14 percent of the workforce - and generating \$50 billion of economic impact. Approximately 80 percent of the workers in our sector are women. Ontario nonprofits receive less than half of their revenues from governments (at all levels), and then leverage these public investments -- via social enterprise, other earned income, donations, and the hundreds of millions of hours that their volunteers donate -- into community wealth, providing services that meet the needs of Ontarians while creating employment locally. The numbers speak for themselves: 58,000 nonprofit organizations across Ontario play an extremely important role keeping Ontario's economy vibrant and our people thriving.

At the Empire Club last week, Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy spoke of "the government's promise to create and protect better jobs." Creating and protecting *better* jobs aligns with ONN's efforts to promote "decent work" in the nonprofit sector. Decent work in the nonprofit sector means these organizations can do their important work in the community unimpeded by red tape, insecurity and the uncertainty that comes with a precarious work environment.

We cannot create thriving communities if we don't recognize that our employees are part of our communities. Thus strong employment standards legislation is the cornerstone of decent work in the nonprofit sector. In the context of increasing precarious work, in our view, Bill 47 does not yet create a strong enough regulatory framework that promotes decent work in Ontario workplaces. Employment standards matter; a stronger regulatory framework would allow the nonprofit sector to provide decent work to its employees and volunteers and this in turn strengthens and vitalizes Ontario communities. Employment Standards create the overall conditions for a healthy business environment. Employers and employees work better knowing a framework is in place and doubly so for the nonprofit sector because strong employment standards means the valuable contributions of community organizations extend directly into Ontario communities.

Strong employment standards helps recruit great talent and increase the diversity of Ontario's workforce. Recruitment and retention of Ontario's future young leaders matters greatly to all of Ontario's employers, profit and nonprofit alike.

Our final point is about communicating regulatory requirements to the vast nonprofit sector. With last year's and this year's employment standards legislation, there will be changes in employment law and the many small employers in our sector may need support to understand what the new rules are and when the relevant changes take effect. Here ONN has a depth of experience and track record communicating out to the provincial network any upcoming legislative changes and what impact these changes will have on the sector as a whole. Recently we conducted three webinars and developed budgeting tools and FAQs to help the sector adapt to last year's changes in employment and labour legislation. Our webinars alone garnered thousands of participants. Thus we are ideally positioned to partner with the current government to communicate to the nonprofit sector updates to our employment standards legislation and regulations.

We look forward to further dialogue with the government with regards to Bill 47 to ensure that the stated intentions of the bill align with the need to support the nonprofit sector as employers so that we can move forward together on our important overall mission to keep Ontario residents and communities thriving, healthy and prosperous in to the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathy Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Cathy Taylor
Executive Director