



caem CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
of EXPOSITION MANAGEMENT
acge L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
de GESTION D'EXPOSITIONS

Canadian Association of Exposition Management
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Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Nina Tangri, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction and Small Business

August 10, 2021

cc

Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
Jeff Parker, Chief of Staff, Office of the President of the Treasury Board
Gregory Gordon, Chief of Staff, Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Giles Gherson, Deputy Minister, Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Olivier Vander Zaag, Director of Stakeholder Relations and Appointments, Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Natalia Tkacz, Director of Stakeholder Relations, Red Tape Reduction and Small Business

Dear Minister Fedeli and Associate Minister Tangri,

Since the start of the pandemic, The Canadian Association of Exposition Management (CAEM) has been working collaboratively with each of the provinces to safely restart commercial events - including trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions. As an industry group, we believe in the importance of working with governments on practical solutions.

Commercial events exist to facilitate buying and selling within a specific sector (e.g.: boating, automotive, home renovations, construction, machinery, farming etc.). These vending marketplaces mirror the purpose of shopping malls, farmers markets and big stores. In Ontario, commercial events generate \$14 billion in economic impact and employs 112,000 people.

Across the country - with the exception of Ontario - provincial governments have now recognized the commercial nature of trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions, and have directly aligned the reopening of these commercial events with the retail sector.

As a result, in all the major provinces - including Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec - trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions are now exempt from indoor capacity limits and are only required to restrict capacity to the number of members of the public that can maintain physical distancing.

CAEM is calling on the province of Ontario to look at this retail distinction – now adopted by these other provinces - and to lift the 1,000-person capacity limit on trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions.

Trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions take place in massive exhibition halls that can safely accommodate significantly more than 1,000 people (for the purpose of facilitating commercial business activity) while still ensuring the public maintains 2-meters of physical distancing, at all times.

The current 1,000-person capacity restriction in Ontario makes it impossible for business activity in the commercial events sector to restart viably. While organizers of trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions are now actively investing in the production of fall shows in Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec, all sector activity in Ontario continues to be on complete pause as a result of the 1,000-person capacity restriction.

Organizers of commercial events in Ontario are now cancelling their fall shows in the province, choosing instead to focus on the production of fall events in Alberta, British Columbia, and Quebec, where indoor capacity limits have now been lifted from trade shows, consumer shows and exhibitions. This is resulting in continued furloughs and job losses in our sector in Ontario as well as the loss of the significant economic spin-offs commercial events create in the province's major cities and communities. A level playing field with other provinces is critical to prevent further cancellations of trade shows and consumer shows in Ontario into the winter and spring months, and to ensure the province is not overlooked by business operators and entrepreneurs in the sector.

CAEM would welcome the opportunity to engage in a meaningful discussion with your government on how we can safely - and viably - reopen the commercial events sector in Ontario, in a manner similar to retail, based on the current science, evidence and precedent set by provinces like Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec. Minister, we want to continue our commitment of working proactively and collaboratively on matters of mutual interest and we hope such conversations will take place.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Bianca Kennedy
President
Canadian Association of Exposition Management



Jennifer Allaby
Executive Director
Canadian Association of Exposition Management