

Media Release

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## **Federal government fails Saskatchewan business.**

The changes announced today to the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program failed to demonstrate a clear understanding of the need for more workers and the current value of the TFW program to businesses in Saskatchewan.

“The changes announced reflect a public policy decision made without sufficient facts or hard labour market data. This is a reaction to political pressures not reality. Businesses in all Saskatchewan industries have worked diligently to attract and retain Canadian workers and even with greatly enhanced efforts, the need for more workers exist in all sectors and in all regions of the province. The policy change today makes a difficult situation even worse,” said Steve McLellan, CEO, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce.

The changes announced by the Federal government today include:

- Instituting a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) fee on applications of \$1000 per employee, up from \$275 - plus a “Privilege Fee” of \$100 on all applications for LMIA to offset the current federal government costs for skill and job training.
- Reducing the period of time a TFW may work in Canada
- Separating low skilled jobs and defining that as those who are paid under \$21.63/hour
- Restricting the number of TFW in a specific workplace to a maximum of 10%
- Plus many more changes.

‘Saskatchewan business people want to continue to grow their businesses, serve their customers and have their staff share in the success. The current economic growth we are experiencing means we need many more workers and the TFW program offered an avenue to great workers who wanted to work here. We needed the program simplified not made more complex,” added McLellan. “With the exception of ending the moratorium on Food Service sector application opportunities for TFW, these changes will not served Saskatchewan business people, foreign workers or our province well.”

“The rationale for these changes was drawn from lacking labour market data; fortunately this is being addressed with the recently announced data collection enhancements and we applaud the government for this effort. However, this offers little comfort for businesses being impacted today as these two new surveys do not start until the spring of 2015, and it’s unlikely any information will be available until well into 2016 or later.’ said McLellan

*The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of 10,000 businesses across the province through Chamber Network. The mandate of the Saskatchewan Chamber is to make the province a better place to live, work and invest.*

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