

**An Open Letter to the Regional Chair and Niagara Town / City Mayors  
June 12, 2020**

To: Regional Chair Jim Bradley  
Mayor David Bylsma  
Mayor Jim Diodati  
Mayor Sandra Easton  
Mayor Jeff A. Jordan  
Mayor Wayne H. Redekop  
Mayor Bill Steele

Mayor Frank Campion  
Lord Mayor Betty Disero  
Mayor Kevin Gibson  
Mayor Marvin Junkin  
Mayor Walter Sendzik  
Mayor Terry Ugulini

Re: Pandemic Impact on Local Government Finances and Taxation

From: Concerned Group of Niagara Business Owners

We, the undersigned, a group of Niagara business owners, who have been in business on average for over 60 years and collectively employ more than 2,000 people in Niagara, request a meeting to discuss the reduction of municipal and regional business taxes.

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on Niagara's economy. We commend the Federal Government for their massive and timely action. The CEWS is likely the single most positive response that a government has made for business and their employees. Similarly, the Ontario Government has acted effectively to reduce the spread of this virus. Their role in supporting a recovery and protecting the essential social safety net is as important as ever. It is now time for local government to do their part. The success of your efforts will directly relate to how well we recover. All levels of government must, like private business, jettison outdated policies, eliminate waste and reduce unnecessary spending. Many past procedures are no longer viable.

The present economic situation is dire for all Niagara businesses. Some firms have experienced a complete loss of revenue for the past few months and face possible closure. All firms, at a minimum, have seen significant revenue decreases, resulting in devastating double digit employee reductions.

It is not an understatement that most private sector Niagara businesses are in survival mode. And what is survival mode? Managers need to match income to expenses: as income drops, expenditures must follow. This means reducing payroll, cutting non-critical costs and new hires, conserving cash and postponing new equipment purchases. A well-run business aggressively cuts superfluous expenses.

Taxpayers have seen a regional 9.72% tax increase cumulatively over 2019 and 2020 and municipal increases of 17% during the same time period (Region makes ask for cash to help with COVID costs: The Niagara Independent, May 29, 2020). This is unconscionable in today's economic climate. These increases need to be immediately reversed.

This pandemic and resulting unemployment levels have not existed here for one hundred years. If local government will not effectively and permanently effect change to significantly lower their cost base now, during these extraordinary times, then when? When the private sector is largely bankrupt and out of business?

Local government must fundamentally and permanently restructure its cost base to reflect the new reality. We request an immediate meeting with the Regional Chair and local mayors to begin discussions on our collective new reality. Please do not ignore this request.

Yours Truly,

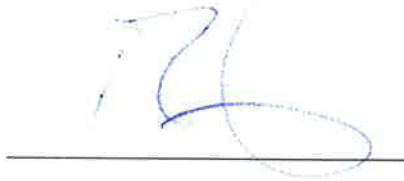
The Undersigned:

Name	Signature	Company Year Est. # of Employees	Phone / Email
E. Spencer Fox, President		E. S. Fox Limited Est. 1934 Employees = 1100+	[REDACTED] spencer.fox@esfox.com
Steve Cohen, President		Myer Salit Limited Est. 1905 Employees = 1000	[REDACTED] scohen@salitsteel.com
George Darte		George Darte Funeral Home Est. 1911 Employees = 34	george@dartefuneralhome.com [REDACTED]
Daniel Trabucco, President		Artcraft Kitchens Est. 1962 Employees = 100+	[REDACTED] daniel@artcraftkitchens.com
Stephen Parker, President		Flexo Products Limited Est. 1918 Employees = 80	[REDACTED] sparker@flexoproducts.com

Alex Digenis

Henley Honda  
Subaru of Niagara  
Skyway Fine Cars  
alex@henleyhonda.caGreg Pinder  
PresidentPinders Security  
Products  
Est. 1886  
Employees = 36  
gpinder@pinders.com


Rob Forstinger

FBT Inc.  
Est. 1945  
Employees 94  
rob@fbtinc.caJOHN  
NBEST WESTERN  
HOLIDAY INN  
HAMPTON  
EST 1975 340  
NO EMPLOYEES  
JOHN Natsopoulos  
canSteve Cohen  
PresidentMyer Salit Limited  
Est. 1905  
Employees= 1000  
scohen@salitsteel.com

Shawn Rapone

CMI Heavy  
Industries  
(Clark Machine Inc.)  
Est. 1922  
65+ Employees  
Shawn.rapone@cmihi.com

Joseph Viola

Viola-Salter Group/  
ScotiaMcLeod  
8 employees  
joseph.viola@  
scotiawealth.comSunil Bahadoorsingh  
Chairman & CEO



PennTerra

sunil@pennterragroup.com

Local government must fundamentally and permanently restructure its cost base to reflect the new reality. We request an immediate meeting with the Regional Chair and local mayors to begin discussions on our collective new reality. Please do not ignore this request.

Yours Truly,

The Undersigned:

Name	Signature	Company Year Est. # of Employees	Phone / Email
E. Spencer Fox, President		E. S. Fox Limited Est. 1934 Employees = 1100+	 spencer.fox@esfox.com
Victor Oreskovich President		JTL Integrated Machine Ltd Est. 1964 Employees 100	 victor@jtlmachine.com
Victor Oreskovich President		Trenergy Inc. Est. 1997 Employees 90	 victor@trenergyinc.com
Daniel Trabucco, President		Artcraft Kitchens Est. 1962 Employees = 100+	 daniel@artcraftkitchens.com
Victor Oreskovich President		HTCC Port Weller Complex Est. 1978 Multiple Lease Facility	
Victor Oreskovich President		Machina Transportation System Est. 2019 ASMI tenant	

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Yours Truly,

The Undersigned:

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E. Spencer Fox, President		E. S. Fox Limited Est. 1934 Employees = 1100+	[Redacted] spencer.fox@esfox.com
RUB FORETINKER		FBT Est. 1945 90 Employees	[Redacted] rub@fbtinc.ca
AKK Architects		Est. 1998 20+ Employees	[Redacted] wallen@ackarchitects.com
Daniel Trabucco, President		Artcraft Kitchens Est. 1962 Employees = 100+	[Redacted] daniel@artcraftkitchens.com
DAVID DADDIO		MAPLE LEAF COLLISION EST. 1965	[Redacted] david.daddio@mapleleafcollision.com
Ameer Latif		White Oak Resort 550 team members all laid-off	[Redacted] awati@whiteoakresort.co



Name

Signature

Company

Phone / Email

Year Est.

# of Employees

Dean Karachi

Niagara Protective Contrip  
1957

info @ niacast.com

15 employees +

Field employees

FELICE  
VALVANOVALVANO SALON  
2000/12

FELICE@VALVANO.CA

Tony  
ValvanoValvano Salon  
2000 / #12

Tony Qualvano.ca

Scott Wright, P. Eng.  
President and GM

Gordon Wright Electric Ltd.

Est. 1930

Employees = 40+

swright@gordonwrightltd.com

Bob Robinson

Est. 1971 now have  
45 employeesbob@bobrobinsonconstructi  
on.com

MARIO PINGUE

Year Est.  
# of Employees

2003 / 14

mariopingue@niagarafoodspecialties.com