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August 1, 2014

The Clerk of the Standing Committee on Finance  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Re: 2014 Pre-budget consultation submission

Dear Mr. Rojotte

The Clarington Board of Trade advocates on behalf of, and is the voice of the Clarington business community. The Board of Trade provides a forum for the business community to develop programs and opportunities to promote trade and commerce within the Municipality of Clarington. Through our continued Economic Development contract with the Municipality of Clarington we have taken a leadership role in attracting and retaining business growth and development investment in our community.

It is encouraging to see our governments take action in these challenging economic times, with programs and opportunities to keep our communities working and creating jobs through business support and infrastructure investment.

The Municipality of Clarington is well positioned for investment as we sit on the eastern border of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), but remain a rural community with a population of approximately 90,000. As well the majority of our green space is protected through various environmental legislation including the Green Belt and Oak Ridges Moraine.

The new federal gas tax agreements have a very positive impact on the local communities ability to deliver road and infrastructure projects which in turn create a workable environment for business growth. These great steps forward include:

- Annual municipal compliance audit requirement has been removed and replaced with municipal treasurer reporting
- Schedule C's are no longer required for every single road and bridge project
- Agreement extends to 2024
- Eligible project categories have been broadened considerably. This can now cover disaster mitigation, broadband connectivity, brownfield redevelopment, and recreation and culture. Previously, for us it was primarily roads and energy efficiencies
- Funds will now be indexed in the future

We commend the Federal Government for their recent funding announcement of \$88,000.00 to the Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries to help them promote CANDU reactors abroad and create more opportunity to the supply chain that makes this Canadian technology world class. Clarington's economy is mainly driven by two key sectors including Energy and Agriculture. In addition, we have a strong small to medium size manufacturing and service industry and a vibrant Tourism sector is growing and prospering in Clarington.

As home to Ontario Power Generation's Darlington Nuclear Station, Clarington produces approximately 20% of Ontario's energy. The station is currently working on a refurbishment project expected to commence construction in 2016.

*Question: What is Canada's future in strengthening our place in the nuclear market both at home and abroad?*

Our diverse agriculture community continues to produce products to help feed Canada including vegetable and fruit farms, cereal crops, and livestock farms. Access to markets and product processing is essential for market growth which is critical to help keep our farms active and prosperous.

*Question: How do we maximize the Agriculture sector to be sure that Canadians are fed, and international opportunities for commerce and education are realized?*

In our discussions with business leaders in all sectors there are many topics that arise which fall in the buckets for various levels of Government. We respectfully acknowledge that some concerns sit within the mandate of either the Provincial, Regional or Municipal governments.

#### **Our Recommendations:**

**Stability in decisions:** It is critical that major infrastructure projects contain a long term commitment and pace to support business. When companies are bidding on massive public projects (including projects such as the Darlington Refurbishment and the Proposed Future New Nuclear Build or the Highway 407 extension), they must look at the long term impacts of this work for their company. Considerations can include, staffing and commitment to additional projects and other resources and demands on their capital to successfully complete these bids. The challenge arises when public projects start and stall for political reasons the projects become more costly and there may be resources that could be spent on alternate projects to ensure continued cash-flow and employment.

**Broadband:** Technology is moving very quickly and with it there is a greater need to file and transmit business using data. We have heard from several existing businesses that the broadband width is insufficient to transfer files electronically and have had some share with us that they have to go to their homes to send and or receive files with clients. As the high tech element to doing business increases it is critical that support for infrastructure growth with broadband be accessible to all communities.

**Rural infrastructure:** Accessory to field and farm production is the processing and transportation of our crops and livestock. It is essential to develop programs that respect the process to get food from the farm to the table. Food processing is now very automated and requires expanded broadband.

**Start Ups:** Many Rural communities are struggling to keep their young and energetic population living and working in our communities rather than leaking this talent to major centers. We are seeing an increase in the entrepreneurial spirit in our youth. What they need however is access to seed or start-up capital and having the infrastructure (ie: broadband) in place is repeatedly a vital piece to helping this demographic succeed.

**Funding Program Qualifications:** Many programs available are based on geography, access to funding should not be tied to geography, but to the demographic and capability of a community to make a difference in an industry initiative that will show economic growth with wide reaching results. Businesses make decisions based on a business plan, checks and balances, returns and rewards. It would be nice to have access to funding based on a plan and deliverables rather than proximity to major centres. For example, in Clarington's case, there are funding programs available to all neighbouring communities with similar demographics and infrastructure which we don't qualify for; because we are associated with the GTA we are excluded. Clarington does not have the resources and infrastructure to compete with others in this major centre.

Your consideration of these recommendations is greatly appreciated. Let's get Canada working in our own communities by listening to what business needs. In our experience small business have great ideas and are more than willing to share them, it is our job to listen. If you have any questions regarding this matter please feel free to contact me any time.

Respectfully,



Sheila Hall  
Executive Director,  
Clarington Board of Trade/Office of Economic Development

Cc: James Rajotte, MP and Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance  
Erin O'Toole, MP Durham  
Granville Anderson, MPP Durham  
Roger Anderson, Regional Chair, Durham  
Adrian Foster, Mayor, Clarington  
Allan O'Dette, President & CEO, Ontario Chamber of Commerce

