

The Honourable Marci Ien, P.C., M.P.,
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario,
Canada
K1A 0A6

Cc: Hon. Randy Boissonnault, P.C., M.P., Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance; Hon. Carla Qualtrough, P.C., M.P., Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion; and Nancy Healy, Commissioner for Employers

March 16, 2023

Sent via Email

Ref: Amending the Quota of Canada Summer Jobs Positions to Support Canada's Future Workforce through Tourism

Dear Minister Ien,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), representing over 200,000 tourism businesses in sectors including short-term accommodation, resorts, restaurants, food and beverage vendors, live events, attractions, recreation, transport operators, and culture and heritage.

Tourism makes up about 1 in 10 Canadian jobs. It is the training ground for the wider economy, providing first jobs and foundational skills for 30% of Ontarians. A \$105 billion industry in Canada, tourism contributes to adjacent industries and powers main streets by bringing in visitors year-round. Our industry's economic impact extends further, benefiting other businesses, industries, communities, and the economy through tax revenue and community infrastructure.

However, the tourism industry has had longstanding recruitment and retention challenges, with declining domestic enrolment in tourism and hospitality postsecondary programs and year-over-year labour gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these challenges, displacing tourism workers and deterring prospective workers from tourism jobs. Indicative of recruitment and retention challenges, TIAO's own research shows that 69% of tourism businesses are concerned about how recruitment and retention challenges will affect the future of the industry. Between 2020 and 2025, Ontario is projected to lose \$33 billion in direct and indirect tax revenue from tourism and hospitality. As our industry rebuilds, the labour crisis threatens to set back our progress, curtail future growth, and compromise the long-term sustainability of our workforce.

We thank the Government of Canada for their ongoing support of the tourism industry and investments in workforce development. The Canada Summer Jobs program has been an important workforce and economic development tool for tourism sectors in Ontario and across Canada, addressing immediate staffing needs while supporting long-term workforce development. In addition to supporting operators' capacity during their peak commercial season, Canada Summer Jobs provides tourism work experience

to our future talent, promotes tourism career awareness, builds tourism skillsets, and cultivates long-term tourism careers.

But as we have heard from operators, the Canada Summer Jobs program could be better leveraged to support tourism sectors. Given the seasonal nature of tourism, many operators experience disproportionate staffing gaps during peak summer months compared to other employers—challenges which have only worsened post-pandemic, and which hinder not only recovery but the long-term growth, sustainability, and competitiveness of local tourism economies. To support economic growth and sustainability and the career development of Canada's future workforce, **TIAO therefore recommends that:**

- **Tourism and hospitality sectors be given a higher quota of Canada Summer Jobs positions, particularly in regions where tourism and hospitality jobs are in high demand**

Tourism is the lifeblood of many communities across Ontario and Canada. Critically, tourism matters for the professional development of Canada's young workers, with service training imparting the social and emotional skills that are critical to retention and success in the evolving workplace. TIAO welcomes the opportunity to work together with your ministry to better leverage the Canada Summer Jobs program to support our future workforce through tourism.

Thank you for your consideration of the contents of this letter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me.

Yours sincerely,



Jessica Ng
Director of Policy & Government Affairs
Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
jng@tiaontario.ca