



July 14, 2022

Hon. Monte McNaughton
Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
Government of Ontario
14th Flr, 400 University Ave,
Toronto, ON M7A 1T7

Sent electronically

Dear Minister McNaughton:

On behalf of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO), we would like to extend our sincere congratulations on your re-election and re-appointment to Cabinet as Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.

As you know, RCCAO is a unique alliance composed of management and labour groups that represents a wide spectrum of the Ontario construction industry. RCCAO's goal is to work in cooperation with government and related stakeholders to offer realistic solutions to a variety of challenges facing the construction industry and which also have wider societal benefits.

Our membership includes the Greater Toronto Sewer and Watermain Contractors Association; Heavy Construction Association of Toronto; International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793; Joint Residential Construction Association, LiUNA Local 183; Ontario Formwork Association; and Toronto and Area Road Builders Association.

RCCAO wants to commend the work you, your team and the government have accomplished on improving the skilled trades process and system in Ontario. You have taken important and meaningful steps toward simplifying and streamlining the provincial skilled trades and apprenticeship system. Your focus on having clear and consistent pathways to entering the system, are crucial to ensuring that Ontario has the workforce necessary to support the province's infrastructure needs.

As infrastructure investments and projects remain a focal point for the next several years, industry will need significant number of workers to keep pace with this work. According to BuildForce Canada outlook for 2021-2030, during this period, industry will need to hire, train and retain more than 116,200 additional workers and to replace the 92,500 workers – 21% of the current labour force – expected to retire. These statistics reflect the importance of having a skilled trades and apprenticeship system that is responsive and streamlined.

The government's focus on the skilled trades is commendable and will have positive impacts on getting people into the trades. However, the scale of the issue requires that we look beyond domestic policies and toward reforming the immigration system to help address Ontario's critical labour shortage. RCCAO supports yours and Premier Ford's asks of the Federal Government to increase Ontario's allocation within the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP). In addition to that, other specific immigration changes that would make a positive impact to the labour supply include:

- Designating annually 1,000 of the 9,000 allocations within the OINP for NOC Level D general labourers, who self-attest to having construction skill sets;
- Implementing changes to the OINP, such as the In-Demand Skills stream, by expanding the list of eligible professions to include NOC skill level C and D positions; and
- Ensuring that the application process for various OINP streams, particularly the In-Demand Skills stream, is not overly onerous as to disincentivize employers, especially small-and-medium sized ones, from participating.

Given that immigration is a shared responsibility between the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada, we urge the Province to continue collaborating with the Federal Government to ensure that Ontario benefits from any immigration reforms that take place.

You have been a steadfast supporter of the skilled trades and understand their importance to building the critical infrastructure that Ontarians rely on. RCCAO would appreciate the opportunity to meet you at your earliest convenience to discuss our continued collaboration.

Regards,



Nadia Todorova
Executive Director

Copy to:

David Smith, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Deepak Anand, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Joshua Workman, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Ben Lamb, Senior Manager Partnerships and Immigration, Minister's Office, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development