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Unit 102, Hamilton,
ON L8L 3A3

Monday July 27th, 2020

To the Standing Committee on Finance – Small and Medium Enterprises,

As you know small businesses are struggling like never before and many are turning to their BIAs for advice, resources and collaboration. Barton Village BIA represents 119 Businesses and 135 Property Owners. In the past two years we have seen a huge revitalization – with more than 20 business opening.

We greatly appreciate some of the measures the government has taken to help support small businesses (i.e. 75% wage subsidy, digital main street grant program). However, small businesses are still looking for increased access to support and assistance with insurance.

At present many of our businesses have been able to reopen at reduced capacity but are still facing the following challenges:

- **Rent Relief** – unfortunately many landlords are not offering rent relief – CECRA is dependent upon the goodwill of the landlord to set it up, we encourage you to modify this so that businesses can apply
- **Insurance** companies are not renewing contracts – we have heard from several of our small businesses that have experienced this (specifically hospitality and service businesses), one of our businesses could only find one provider at four times the cost of his original contract. Business need insurance in order to operate – as such we encourage you to either cap the increase that insurance companies can do and help to ensure all small businesses have fair access to insurance.
- **Support for new businesses** - Small businesses looking to open are facing challenges with increased red tape, no access to any of the supports – for example we have one business that was scheduled to open the week after COVID 19 hit and has still been unable to open but has had to pay rent this whole time. Because they were not open prior to COVID-19 they have no access to any of the government supports.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding steps to support small businesses.

Sincerely,

Rachel Braithwaite
Executive Director
Barton Village BIA

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