Submission to the Standing Committee regarding Financial Support for Business Sectors due to Covid19

Chair and members, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the extreme need for financial support for the Hospitality/Tourism sector.

There are certainly many subcategories in hospitality Tourism, so with the time allowance permitted I would like to focus on the areas of Waterparks and Event/Meeting facilities.

Waterparks

When the phased approach to reopening was announced waterparks were slated for opening in phase 3 of this plan. At this time, the waterpark industry was told to submit their reopening plans so they can be reviewed on mass and be in the que for when the time comes. Then as of recent it was announced that facilities that wanted to be considered for opening needed to submit plans for review via an online portal, which most parks did this after the initial submittal a month prior. Now waterparks are told in a mass email that consideration would only happen after all regions were in stage 3. For the summer seasonal waterparks which only have an approx. 90 day season, our season is non-existent, as even if we were able to open in the next week or two it would be impossible to generate revenues to reach any level of profitability. To this day, there has been no communication from the province to the industry. Support for this industry is required along the following lines:

1) There should be direct reimbursements for all the opening

costs that parks incurred with the expectation to being allowed to open. This should include but not limited to – costs of opening pools and attractions, repairs occurred that were required to open, chemicals used/purchased, staffing costs, training, uniforms, marketing preparation expenses, inspection fees etc. etc.

2) These facilities have lost if not 100%, close to this, as well as their ability to drive revenues to cover their fixed expenses. There should be financial support for all fixed expenses for facilities that will take them through to June of 2021 assuming there will be a 2021 season; this should include but not limited to property taxes, utility expenses, leases of equipment and

items, mortgage and/or property rental fees, and others

The province needs to understand that how it has handled this situation, has essentially inappropriately branded the industry as unsafe, which in the current environment has damaged the industry reputation with consumers. Keeping in mind, these parks sell their season passes for the next year in the fall and winter to garner cashflow to assist in the off season; this will not be possible at the present time.

Event/Meeting Facilities

This sector of convention centers, banquet halls, event facilities, hotel meeting spaces have seen and are still at over 90% revenue loss since mid-March. Although there is now the allowance for 50 people per building, this is per building not per room. In my case alone with our facilities, we would normally have over 3000 people in our rooms, which now we can only have 200 which is 50 per building we have. Even though we could provide social distancing for up to 300+ in one of our rooms, we are only allowed 50. As this sector looks to enter its busy season this fall and Christmas, we have the realization that there will be very few if any social events, meetings and certainly Christmas parties – the catering Superbowl. These facilities will likely continue at a 80 - 90% loss of revenues for the remainder of this year and well into over half of next year. At this level of revenue loss, how do you expect them to survive? Can you conceive all of the affects this is having over distributors, local vendors, staffing of chefs, culinary staff,

banquet waiters & bartenders, housemen, cleaners and others in the 1000s of the industry?
Support for this industry is required along the following lines:

- There should be financial support for all fixed expenses for facilities that will take them through to June of 2021; this should include but not limited to property taxes, utility expenses, leases of equipment and items, mortgage and/or property rental fees, and others
- From the Federal side, the declining access to the wage subsidy should be held to the maximum level for a much longer period of time into 2021 until bookings return to sustainable levels; immediate allowance to collect the

rent subsidy funds directly – which should 100% directed to their landlords. The Rent subsidy program has been acknowledged to not have the proper pick up, and 100s if not 1000s of firms are in dire need for this support to assist in their survival

Bingemans for those of you that may be aware of us, has been in operation for over 80 years, we are diversified in the hospitality industry, with convention/meeting event spaces, waterpark, restaurants, camping and off premise catering. At peak we can employ over 500 people working in our business outlets while providing a significant financial impact benefiting our regional economy. We execute well over 3500 events serving over 500,000 guests. As an example, the largest event in particular brings over $10M annually into our region. Our firm is certainly one who is currently at 85-98% revenue loss from normal, even in aggregate of all these operations, and we certainly do not see any end of this in sight. We are no different than the 100s of firms in the province.

How do you expect anyone in these sectors to survive without assistance?

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today, I would be happy to take any questions you may have.