



Business Community Applauds Labour Reforms Critical to a Strong Ontario Economy

North Bay, ON – Today, Wednesday, November 21, 2018, President and CEO Peter Chirico of the North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce along with the Ontario Chamber Network released the following statement in response to the Government of Ontario's receipt of royal assent for *Bill 47, Making Ontario Open for Business Act, 2018*.

On behalf of our members and the Ontario Chamber Network, we are pleased the Government of Ontario is holding strong in its commitment to make Ontario open for business.

Bill 47 restores balance to both employers and workers as well as reduces significant financial and administrative burden felt by businesses of all sizes throughout the province. With the competitiveness of our province at a critical point, the labour reforms introduced by Bill 47 are fundamental to the long-term prosperity of our people, our businesses, and our economy.

The North Bay & District Chamber of and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce network have long called for labour reforms that are both reasonable for employers and fair to workers. The compounding reforms previously introduced by Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017*, forced Ontario businesses to decrease staff hours, halt capital investment, and increase their reliance on automation - all in an effort to stay afloat.

The North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce and the network have also long advocated for the Ontario College of Trades to modernize the apprenticeship application system, promote the skilled trades as a viable career option for young people, and revise the journeyman-to-apprentice ratio framework to create more opportunities within the skilled trades. As these reforms were not made, the Chamber network recommended to dismantle the College and return responsibility for trades regulation to the Province.

With 77 percent of Ontario business stating that access to talent is critical to their competitiveness, today's news is a bold step in building a stronger Ontario and creating an economy that connects workers to jobs.