

Joleen Kaminski

From: CLRInfo
Sent: May 13, 2020 9:09 AM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Paul Strangway; Joleen Kaminski
Subject: COVID 19 Update: May 13

CLR Members,

The business community in BC is uniting in a statement we are releasing to media next week in support of *all Canadians*. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have experienced growing racism and hate directed at people because of their ethnicity, culture or faiths. Much if this for some people will come from fear as a result of the pandemic, but frankly there really is no excuse. Racism must be called out and it must stop now. These unacceptable acts and behaviour are becoming more and more prevalent in our communities and threaten to divide us and diminish the advantages we enjoy in our country and the reputation we have as Canadians around the world. As construction business leaders I would like to invite you in your own ways to join us in taking a stand against subtle and overt acts of racism and celebrate our diversity and its contribution to our province and country.

Federal Update

In his daily address the Prime Minister (PM) announced that Health Canada has provided its approval for the first serological test for COVID 19 antibodies. This is a critical test that can detect antibodies specific to this virus in an individual's blood that can help us understand immunity in the blood, how the virus spreads, and how it can be used to keep Canadians safe.

The PM announced that the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) has been approved for 120,000 employers with almost 2 million workers, and the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) has been approved for more than half a million small businesses.

The PM revisited his previous announcement of \$1 billion in support for regional businesses including seasonal businesses and those focusing on tourism. The Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) will flow through the 6 regional development agencies with a portion dedicated to the Community Futures Network to assist businesses in rural and remote areas. Details will be released today but the PM says that the bottom line is that these organizations are best suited to ensure the funds go where they are needed and how best to assist businesses in their region. Businesses that are struggling *but did not qualify for other programs* are encouraged to contact their regional agency.

A few weeks ago, the government launched the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), and the PM announced that applications will be accepted starting on Friday of this week. Students are encouraged to set up their "My Account" on the CRA website in advance.

Canadians were reminded to follow the guidelines from health authorities. Stay home and keep distance from others.

In response to reporters' questions, The PM announced that Canada has approached the US to extend the deadline on border closure to non-essential travel until June 21. Without a vaccine the risk of opening the border is still too high. He says the discussions have been very collaborative and sees no reason it will not continue that way. Still, we await a response from the US government. The PM refused to comment on what would happen if the US disagreed with the border closure extension.

Reporters asked why the federal budget has not been released or updated. The PM says that the government is focused on the current challenges and cannot forecast out 12 weeks much less 12 months. That question is not going to go away any time soon and reporters point out that the reasons the PM cites for challenges in forecasting budgets is exactly why a federal budget is so important. Updates can be made, but Canadians should be able to review the country's financial situation with the impacts from the pandemic on our economy, as well as impacts of all the commitments the government has made these past weeks.

Have a safe day,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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