



April 16, 2020

Hon. Bill Morneau  
Minister of Finance  
Department of Finance  
90 Elgin St.  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0G5

Dear Minister Morneau,

UNITE HERE requests the opportunity to speak with you or your staff as soon as practically possible.

UNITE HERE represents over 18,000 workers who work in hotels, restaurants, food service, airports, remote resource camps, casinos, and racetracks. These workers were among the first and worst hit by layoffs and closures resulting from COVID-19. For those who remain on the job, their work – cleaning rooms and public places, cooking and serving food, welcoming guests – puts them in daily contact with the public and in areas with a very high risk of viral transmission. UNITE HERE's membership reflects the diversity of the hospitality industry. A majority of hospitality workers are women, and the industry employs thousands of recent immigrants to Canada from all over the globe.

Many Canadian hospitality workers live paycheque to paycheque and lack the financial resources to survive the next few months. We understand the road to economic recovery will be challenging, but it will be even more challenging in the hospitality and tourism sector where recovery is expected to be slow. In an already heavily seasonal industry, workers likely will return to work in fit and starts, long after those in most other industries.

### **Economic Relief to Airline and Hospitality Industries**

Covid-19 has an extraordinary impact on travel-related industries. Any future support provided to industry sectors such as hotels, airlines & airline caterers, airport or sports stadiums, whether it is a forgivable loan, grant, tax deferral or other economic relief, the UNITE HERE is calling on the government to compel employers to:

- Agree to participate in CEWS and return at least 100% of workers laid-off due to COVID to the payroll covering wages and benefits throughout the life of the CEWS program.
- Calculate hospitality workers' CEWS income with a 12-month average. Workers will otherwise fall through the cracks. Winter is normally marked by short hours, low income and even layoffs, an inappropriate CEWS measure for seasonal workers.
- Put in place an extended recall period for workers for up to 24 months.
- Guarantee workers in high Covid-19 risk worksites government certified health and safety training, full PPE and appropriate hazard pay.

Sectoral relief for airlines and airport authorities must include resources to ensure that all employees in those sectors receive the same support. Airline catering workers who make the

food that passengers eat on airplanes and airport concession workers who sell food to passengers in the terminals are nominally employed by food service companies. However, their employers are entirely dependent on the airlines and airport authorities with whom they contract.

- Sectoral relief for airlines and airport authorities must include sufficient resources to support airline catering and airport concessions contractors and their workers.
- Sectoral relief packages must be linked to CEWS participation.
- Airport concession contracts are likely to be rebid in 2020 and 2021. Should contractors change, concession workers face the possibility of an additional round of job loss. To prevent persistent instability, UNITE HERE asks that the federal government require any airport authority in receipt of sectoral relief, including rent relief announced March 30, to make any new contractor a successor employer of the existing workforce.

We look forward to having the opportunity to speak with you and your staff further about economic relief to these sectors. Please feel free to contact Michelle Travis at (778) 960-9785 or [mtravis@unitehere.org](mailto:mtravis@unitehere.org) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Ian Robb  
Canadian Director, UNITE HERE  
President/Administrator UNITE HERE Local 47

cc: Mr. Elder Marques, Chief of Staff