

**TIANB's Federal Counterpart and other industry leaders
Stress Need for Federal Government Support for Tourism Industry**

Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) President & CEO, Charlotte Bell, along with 6 other organizations, appeared before the federal ***Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology*** (INDU) on Monday, August 10, to discuss with Members of Parliament the crucial need for liquidity support for the industry in the face of COVID-19.

MPs on the House of Commons committee heard grim stories on about the devastating toll the pandemic is taking on the travel and hospitality sector. Industry leaders said existing federal programs either do not help their members or aren't enough to keep businesses afloat.

Conservative MP and committee member Blake Richards pointed to a Tourism Industry Association of Canada Report which predicted that without further government action, 61,000 tourism businesses in Canada, or 57%, are projected to fail. That could mean the loss of employment for 1.66 million Canadians.

President and CEO of TIANB, Carol Alderdice, listened to the presentations and took the following notes:

First, it was mentioned many time by MPs that **it was a shame** that, for an industry as important as Tourism, there is only one meeting scheduled to go through 7 presentations from industry – such a short period of time for MPs to get their questions asked and answered.

Presenters included Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), Hotel Association of Canada (HAC), Meetings Mean Business (MMB), Canadian Affairs and Events Association, Canadian Festivals Association (FAME), Restaurants Quebec, and Alliance Quebec (which is the TIA for Quebec).

Each presenter discussed the devastation in their sector. The main message was that liquidity is a must and that Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) should be extended to end of December. Some even said it should be extended until next year.

TIAC explained how the tourism industry was hit first and hardest but denied government-backed liquidity. CEWS needs to be extended and BCAP must be amended to allow backed and fixed costs. Survey showed that 43% were denied and 38% are still waiting to hear if they qualify for BCAP. Tourism industry has conformed to all health and safety requirements with no support from government. Other countries have provided incentive programs for citizens to travel their own country and TIAC is asking for a tax credit for Canadians to travel within Canada. Destination Canada will need dedicated funds to promote Canada when the times is right. Ban on mass gatherings and events have taken its toll on tourism. We cannot afford to lose Tourism and we need to ensure we are here next year.

HAC had a desperate call for liquidity. HAC said that there is only four weeks left before 28% of the hotels go bankrupt. There is a misconception that big brand hotels are owned by big corporations, but most hotels are owned by local SMEs, and use the brand more for marketing. Banks do not want to lend to tourism operators because they are too much of a risk and they do not see how they will pay them back. Requested that government get involved to guarantee the loans.

Meetings Means Business explained how they have always been highly tuned in to the safety of delegates. They can control where they go. Can have an event bubble similar to what sports teams are doing. Convening of industry professionals is very important. This is part of the solution to restart the economy. Empower the industry to convene and move economy forward. Separate business events from mass gatherings.

Events and Festivals group shared their time. They discussed how events brings communities together with spaghetti suppers, sports events, weddings, etc. Government measures are useless to them. They were either rejected or redirected to other departments. Working with TIAC for 100% backed loans. Said Cultural and Sports received \$500M but nothing for festivals.

Alliance Quebec requested that CEWS be extended to August 2021.

Restaurants Quebec discussed the major impact on restaurants and how they can only operate at 50% of capacity but still must pay full rent. 83% of sales dropped. Wants to see CEWS extended.

One final comment from one of the MPs:

“... tourism has been put to the curbside to wait and see ...”

And we think we all feel that way.