

Hon. Christina Gray
Minister of Labour, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal
Members of Executive Council
Executive Branch
107 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T5K 2B6

July 5, 2017

Dear Minister Gray,

Following the passing of Bill 17, the Fair and Family-Friendly Workplaces Act, the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce recommends that a strict representative balance of union and management sector individuals be maintained on the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) to ensure that the decisions and initiatives of the Board remain balanced and fair.

We are aware of the excellent record that the ALRB has of dispute resolution and how effective they have been at maintaining relative labour peace over the past decade, and we are grateful for the work the Government of Alberta has done in facilitating these outcomes. On behalf of the hundreds of businesses that our Chamber represents we express satisfaction with the ALRB and the Labour Code as they have hitherto been constructed. However, with the recent changes to the Labour Code, we are concerned that the new system heavily empowers the bargaining position of unions at the expense of employers.

The Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce recommends in the attached policy, that the Government of Alberta maintain a fair balance on the labour relations board, strictly adhering to the traditional 1 to 1 ratio of representation between union and management sectors, and that this balance be reflected as well in the appointments of the Chair and Vice-chairs of the ALRB. We would like to specifically request of you, as the Minister of Labour representing the needs of both business owners and labour interests, to commit to maintaining this balance. Albertan businesses simply need a level playing field and fair treatment, especially at a time when so many new costs are being passed on to them. We appreciate your influence in pursuit of this goal; believing that the role of the ALRB is one of providing independent and impartial oversight of labour issues to the benefit of both business owners and labour interests.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the recommendations contained in this policy further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Mr. Ryan Miller
President and Chair of the Board
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
cc.

Mr. William Johnson, Alberta Labour Relations Board
Nancy Schlesinger, Alberta Labour Relations Board
Lyle Kanee, Alberta Labour Relations Board
Ian Smith, Alberta Labour Relations Board
Gwen Gray, Alberta Labour Relations Board
Hon. Rachel Notley, Premier of Alberta
Hon. Christina Gray, Minister of Labour
Mr. Jeff Parr, Deputy Minister of Labour
Hon. Shannon Phillips, MLA Lethbridge – West
Ms. Maria Fitzpatrick, MLA Lethbridge – East
Ms. Rachael Harder, Member of Parliament for Lethbridge
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Enclosure:

Maintaining a Fair Balance on the Labour Relations Board