



March 18th, 2017

Hon. Christina Gray
Minister of Labour
Government of Alberta
107 Legislature Building
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

RE: Alberta Government *Labour Code Review Feedback*

Dear Minister Gray,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Alberta Government *Labour Code Review*. The changes being proposed address legislation that has been static for the last 30 years. There have not been any major changes in the Labour Code for over three decades.

The Alberta Liquor Store Association has represented privatized liquor stores for over 23 years in the Province, and we can agree much has changed since 1993. The liquor retailing industry grew from 208 liquor stores to over 1,400 across Alberta. The industry today hires over 12,000 employees in over 350 communities Province wide.

To date the Labour System in Alberta has worked well, allowing employees their constitutional right to choose unionization. Those Alberta Liquor Stores that have decided to unionize have done so by secret ballot. The majority of employees have not unionized as Alberta retailers have the highest earning rate in Canada, according to Statistics Canada, aside from NWT and Nunavut.

Average weekly earnings (including overtime), by province and territory

Average weekly earnings (including overtime), by province and territory

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
All industries excluding unclassified businesses					
current dollars					
Canada	895.58	911.45	935.58	952.24	956.50
Newfoundland and Labrador	926.63	952.40	994.86	1,021.19	1,017.58
Prince Edward Island	738.36	752.46	773.82	800.70	819.21
Nova Scotia	788.07	797.18	819.72	834.54	847.26
New Brunswick	806.94	804.78	832.44	855.42	875.15
Quebec	822.92	832.61	849.69	867.67	878.34
Ontario	906.17	920.03	938.30	962.94	973.56
Manitoba	822.66	827.34	862.99	880.17	888.52
Saskatchewan	917.86	945.48	975.00	980.97	988.40
Alberta	1,070.09	1,107.85	1,149.45	1,146.07	1,118.57
British Columbia	866.16	875.32	896.32	910.43	919.25
Yukon	1,003.25	1,014.24	1,041.95	1,050.83	1,053.75
Northwest Territories	1,322.14	1,343.11	1,398.21	1,421.41	1,403.08
Nunavut	1,125.66	1,177.59	1,238.21	1,255.98	1,275.38

Notes:
Data include overtime and are based on gross taxable payroll before source deductions.
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), 2012.
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 281-0027.
Last modified: 2017-03-31.

ALSA strongly believes that the right to unionize should be exercised in a democratic fashion without undue influence from either employers or unions. The fairest way for employees to exercise this right is a secret ballot vote. The majority of Provinces and the Federal Government have mandated voting systems. Today, card check certification is only available in QC, NB, and PEI.

ALSA and its members are unequivocally against a card check certification system.

More time is required for Consultation

The issues that are being contemplated by the Labour Code review are complex in nature and have the potential to dramatically impact the way businesses operate in the Province. The Alberta labour code has not been changed in 30 years, and a limited consultation of five weeks does not provide sufficient time for meaningful discussion.

Ontario is currently completing a labour code review as well, however they have allowed for two full years to do a full and comprehensive consultation with all stakeholders impacted by the changes. ALSA is of the opinion that it is imperative that we get the labour consultations completed right, instead of right away.

As such the Alberta Liquor Industry Association respectfully requests that the Labour Code Review be extended to allow for a longer consultation period that adequately addresses the complexity of the issues and provides for meaningful engagement with all stakeholders.

Best regards,



Ivonne Martinez
President