

Join the call for immediate wage support to respond to COVID emergency! [Mar 23, 2020]

Post from Dan Kelly of CFIB:

Join the call for immediate wage support to respond to COVID emergency!

In many ways, this feels like one of the most important moments in my professional career. I've spent the past 26 years dedicated to fighting for, and supporting small and medium-sized business owners. But I've never seen anything like this before. I'm guessing many of you haven't either.

I have been pouring over the results of this weekend's survey on the impact of COVID-19 and they are deeply worrisome.

Many small businesses are making decisions right now on whether they can maintain their employees and their businesses through the emergency.

Canadian governments have taken a host of actions to support small businesses and many of the measures are welcome and will help. But, for many, it will be inadequate to prevent massive layoffs on top of the 500,000 Canadians who lost their jobs this past week.

The Government of Canada has created a special wage subsidy for small business of 10% of an employee's pay with a maximum of \$25,000 per employer. Our data show this will be entirely inadequate to address the problem.

CFIB has advocated that government create a wage subsidy of at least 75% for all employers – including business owners and the self-employed – who are able to retain their employees during the emergency. This won't be enough for every business to retain staff, but it would help many.

I believe this is the single most important measure the government can take to protect jobs. Keeping an employee connected to, and paid, by the employer will be a much faster way to ensure workers have the money they need and, most importantly, will help Canada recover quickly as soon as the emergency phase of COVID-19 is over.

Governments around the world are adopting similar measures, including a wage subsidy of 80% for all employers introduced in the UK just on Friday

I know many of you are working hard this weekend to keep your businesses going. I urge you to contact your MP: Rob Morrison at Rob.Morrison@parl.gc.ca to:

1. Let them know the impact of COVID-19 on your business and your staff

2. Ask them to push the government for a wage subsidy of at least 75%
3. Inform them of any other ideas you have of how government can help

The entire CFIB team is working hard to support your business through this crisis. In addition to our advocacy work, we created a [special website](#) of critical information to help your business. Our Business Counsellors are responding to 600 calls per day from members and I've just tripled the size of this team (to nearly 90 people) to ensure we can get to your calls as quickly as we can.

I've been incredibly proud to see the contributions and sacrifices small business owners are making to respond to the emergency. CFIB will continue our work to serve you along the way. I ask you to take action today by contacting your MP.

Sincerely,

Dan Kelly
President & CEO, CFIB