

LIBERAL CAMPAIGN PLEDGE WILL HELP TWO MILLION EMPLOYEES WITH SUPPORT FOR HARDEST HIT BUSINESSES

August 16, 2021 (OTTAWA) - Today's announcement by Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau to provide a bridge program to sustain Canada's hardest hit businesses will help the tourism, hospitality, conventions and festival sectors survive the enduring impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The commitment made in this announcement will help to ensure the survival of our industry," said Beth Potter, President and CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada. "Six in ten of our coalition members said they would not survive without this kind of transition support. We have been advocating for a tailored, sector specific support program to ensure that Canada's tourism economy can recover. This program would help get us there."

"Today's announcement affirms the survival of anchor businesses in tourism, hospitality, events, arts and culture sectors, the large majority of which are locally owned small businesses," added Susie Grynol, President and CEO of the Hotel Association of Canada. "The Trudeau government was responsive and innovative partners through the first 18 months of COVID-19, and today's campaign announcement demonstrates the Liberal Party's continued commitment to critical sectors of the Canadian economy that have been deeply imperiled by the pandemic."

Festivals, concerts, conventions, Indigenous tourism experiences, fairs, exhibitions, and business and sporting events have been unable to operate since the outset of COVID. These events won't resume until 2022. International, business and government travel is expected to only slowly resume this fall. The forecast is another 8 months almost as bad as the preceding 18 months of the pandemic.

The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy allowed our businesses to survive the first 18 months of the pandemic. The program announced this morning by Justin Trudeau would enable the hardest hit of the hardest hit to survive until we can resume normal operations. Our coalition members have been advocating for a bridge program that will only apply to those businesses that are truly hardest hit with a revenue decline of at least 40%.

This Liberal campaign pledge is a direct response to the Hardest Hit Coalition advocating for business survival. This pledge sets the bar for all other political parties and candidates to support and work collectively to pass in the next Parliament. Hardest Hit Coalition membership includes more than 120 associations across the country representing two million Canadians from coast to coast to coast. For more information go to www.hardesthit.ca.

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Established in September 2020, The Coalition of Hardest Hit Businesses is an industry-driven group of over 120 stakeholders representing a variety of sectors employing almost two million Canadians including tourism, travel, arts and culture, events and festivals, motor coach, accommodations and hospitality, and Indigenous tourism experiences.

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