



April 30, 2021

The Honourable Mélanie Joly, P.C., M.P.
Minister Responsible for Western Economic Diversification Canada
Government of Canada
Canada Place, Jasper Avenue Suite 1500
Edmonton AB T5J 4H7

RE: Regional Economic Development Authority Structure and Funding

Dear Minister Joly,

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce (SCC), I am writing to express our support for the preservation of program funding for Western Economic Diversification (WD) given the establishment of a British Columbia Regional Economic Development Authority (BC RDA) as announced in Budget 2021. Given the state of the current western economy, making additional economic development support available for businesses in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba is timely and welcomed news.

As we have illustrated previously, western Canada has historically received significantly less funding for regional economic development from the federal government relative to the Atlantic provinces based on a variety of different measures. Our complete report on this issue is available at www.saskchamber.com. For consultations prior to the release of Budget 2021, the SCC expanded upon this report to determine our position on the establishment of a BC RDA (see attached for your reference). We are very pleased the federal government's Budget 2021 announcement aligned with our recommendations.

We look forward to working with you on how the increased funding for western Canada is best invested. The potential for new programming is an exciting opportunity for Saskatchewan businesses. We understand that the development of a new RDA and the distribution of new funds will take some time to execute but we urge you to ensure the resources are in place to facilitate this process as quickly as possible.

To reiterate, the SCC is supportive of the federal government's initiatives around regional economic development funding in Budget 2021, and we are committed to working with WD to determine the best use of the funding.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Monica Kreuger, Chair
Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce

CC: Mr. Dylan Jones, Deputy Minister, Western Economic Diversification Canada
Dr. Abdul Jalil, Assistant Deputy Minister, Western Economic Diversification Canada