

## The reality of renegotiating NAFTA

By: Sandra Dueck, Policy Analyst, Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce

Round Six of NAFTA negotiations has wrapped up and a quick scour of the landscape concludes a much more positive tone was achieved between negotiators from Canada, United States and Mexico.

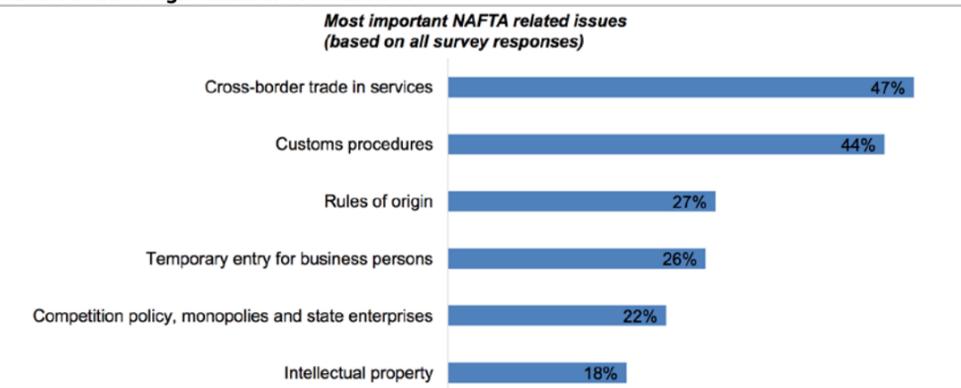
That said there is more work to be done Canadian Chamber has been informing the dialogue since the beginning of the process and offers this insight:

"NAFTA Modernization is a reasonable goal: It's a fact that NAFTA was negotiated more than two decades ago.

### How to Modernize

We need to keep a few guiding principles in mind in order to succeed:

- **Pursue a True Modernization of NAFTA.** A NAFTA for the 21st century must maintain and reach beyond current benefits. Companies of the three countries will benefit from a renewed positioning of North America as the world's most competitive region.
- **Reduce Uncertainty.** Uncertainty about the future of North America's terms of trade could weaken growth and investment, undermining our competitiveness as a region. NAFTA negotiations must continue on a steady timeline and backed by political leadership until a win-win-win deal is achieved.



- **Keep the Agreement Trilateral.** Maintaining NAFTA's three-party framework is critical as transitioning to entirely new bilateral agreements presents real risks. Such a transition could disrupt the flow of commerce and cost jobs. Also, moving to divergent rules would add to costs for companies and erode their global competitiveness.
- **Ensure a Seamless Transition.** Interrupting the \$1.3 trillion in annual trade across our borders or reverting to the high tariffs and other trade barriers that preceded NAFTA could put at risk millions of jobs that depend on trade within the region. A modern NAFTA should retain the existing benefits that our businesses depend on. This approach would simplify and expedite the process and minimize the risk of disruption."

The results show:

- The survey had a very strong response rate of over 260 responses and a completion rate of 88 percent.
- The top three response industries were retail (18%), manufacturing (17%) and professional services (14%).
- The survey notes that 15 percent of the respondents have begun contingency planning for possible changes to NAFTA, including exploring new markets, moving operations to the US, forecasting price increases of goods and shutting down businesses.

Comments to the OCC from the manufacturing sector included:

- Any changes or new approaches to NAFTA with regard to automotive tariffs would have to consider the role tariffs would play in businesses staying in Canada.
- Businesses that have companies in both the United States and Canada are concerned that changes to NAFTA would result

Graph Credit: Ontario Chamber of Commerce

in goods and services provided by the United States company attracting additional costs in the forms of tariffs and duties.

- Equipment price and availability are a concern to many businesses should there be any changes to NAFTA.

From the agriculture industry comments included:

- The grape and wine industry in Canada must be protected.
- Some businesses that work primarily with dairy farmers are already witnessing financial institutions starting to withdraw investments made in the dairy industry.
- There is a strong need to preserve supply management for agricultural products in Ontario.

The latest round of negotiations included discussion around automobiles, dispute resolution and the proposed review clause.

Round 7 of negotiations will be in Mexico starting on February 26th.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) recently released the findings of a survey of Ontario businesses conducted December 15, 2017 - January 15, 2018.

## Chamber Survey on impact of Bill 148

Bill 148 has resulted in a significant number of changes to the Employment Standards Act and Labour Relations Act, from the amount of minimum wage to the calculation used in determining statutory holiday pay to the definition of an independent contractor.

The Peterborough Chamber of Commerce wants to hear how your business has chosen to approach the changes that came into effect on January 1, 2018.

The answers will inform our continued advocacy efforts to the provincial government on this issue.

Thank in you advance for taking the time to fill out this brief survey of three questions. It should take you

no more than five minutes.

On the Chamber's Advocacy Bill 148 page you will find links to:

- Human Resources professionals and handbooks to help guide you through the changes
- A Bill 148 Checklist
- Industry-specific exemptions
- The Employment Standards poster that is to be placed in a high traffic area of your workplace

You can access the survey through the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce Bill 148 Advocacy page.

Take the Survey: [peterboroughchamber.ca/advocacy-bill-148.html](http://peterboroughchamber.ca/advocacy-bill-148.html)



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## Event Calendar

PBX PETERBOROUGH BUSINESS EXCHANGE  
TUESDAY, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Peterborough Axe Club**  
Unit 1  
280 Perry Street, Peterborough

**4:00pm – 6:00pm**

**Details:** Here's your chance to be the champion of the Chamber Axe Throwing PBX! (trophy to be determined).

PBX is a great opportunity for the business community, employers, consumers, and community agencies to make valuable connections.

Bring your business cards and get ready to get connected to the Peterborough business community.

**Cost:** Free, courtesy of Shorelines Slots at Kawartha Downs

**Note:** Space is limited; pre-registration is required

CHAMBER AM  
TUESDAY February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**What's on the horizon for Peterborough**

**The Carousel**  
116 Lansdowne Street East  
**Coffee's on at 7:00am**  
**Speakers from 7:30-8:30am**  
**Cost:** Pay for your breakfast  
**Speaker:** Jeffrey Humble, Director of Planning, City of Peterborough

Be ready with your 30-second elevator pitch to tell others what's going on in your business.

LUNCHBOX LEARNING  
WEDNESDAY February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018  
(Chamber & WBN Members only)

**Cybercrime Prevention**

**Chamber Boardroom**  
175 George Street North  
**12:00pm - 1:00pm**

**Speaker:** Carlye Boruta, VP Shaw Computer Systems Inc.

**What you'll learn:**  
As technology continues to move forward, making our lives easier and more connected, cyber criminals are developing more sophisticated techniques to exploit technology for their benefit.

**Cost:** Free (Bring your lunch)  
**Note:** Pre-registration required

Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan

FOR FIRMS WITH 1-50 EMPLOYEES

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contact: Brian Bulger at 741-1400

PTBO CHAMBER MEMBER  
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**Business raises funds for music therapy**

Long and McQuade raised \$3,175 for music therapy during November and December for Five Counties Children's Centre.

The staff are a mix of the former Bud's Music staff and Long & McQuade veterans and between all of them, have a great knowledge of

all departments within the store. They count their acoustic guitar department as especially impressive stating it would be hard to find a better selection of instruments anywhere in the area.

They are located at their huge new store at 129 Alymer St. N.

More: [long-mcquade.com/location/Ontario/Peterborough](http://long-mcquade.com/location/Ontario/Peterborough)



**Featured Member Discount Program: Loyalty Pricing at Leon's**

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Chamber members, send your Member Milestones to [reception@peterboroughchamber.ca](mailto:reception@peterboroughchamber.ca) or call 705-748-9771 x0.

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Studio-N @studiocreative · Jan 12  
Noses to the grindstone this late on a Friday! Deadlines are our life. #happyfriday #troll #deadlines #clientsfirst #designgram #webdesign #graphicdesign #weekend #lovelocalptbo #canada #ontario #kawartha #branding #community

[www.peterboroughchamber.ca](http://www.peterboroughchamber.ca)

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We moved our Peterborough location:  
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705.748.9570

63 Kent St. W, Lindsay  
705.878.8908  
[markscommercial.ca](http://markscommercial.ca)

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