



Canadian Employee Relocation Council

44 Victoria Street, Suite 1711

Toronto, ON M5C 1Y2

Tel: 416- 593-9812 Fax: 416-593-1139

Toll-free: 1-866-357-CERC (2372)

E-mail: info@cerc.ca www.cerc.ca

June 1, 2016

Mr. Bryan May
Chair,
Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6
Canada

Re: Temporary Foreign Worker Program Review

Dear Mr. May,

On behalf of our members, the Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC) respectfully requests the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities to consider our comments and recommendations regarding Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), which are detailed in the attached submission.

There is a growing global demand for highly skilled workers, and Canadian employers are competing with many other developed and emerging nations for a shrinking pool of talent. Over the next decade Canada is expected to experience severe shortages in its talent pool.

In today's global economy the movement of key personnel is vitally important to business success and Canada's future prosperity. The current rules and regulations governing the TFWP are hampering the efforts of many organizations to secure highly skilled in demand talent that is not available, or is in short supply, in the Canadian labour market.

In meeting their talent needs, Canadian employers will look first to fill roles by hiring Canadians and permanent residents. However, there are many circumstances today where domestic skills may not be available, or the requirements for the position(s) demand expertise at an international level.

In the past several years there have been significant changes to Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), which have made it very difficult for employers to access much needed highly skilled talent. The TFWP continues to be plagued with inconsistencies, inefficiencies and unnecessary red tape that negatively impact the ability of Canadian employers to compete.

In a recent survey, conducted by the Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC), of major Canadian businesses that access the TFWP, 60 per cent of employers said the changes to the Program over the past few years have had a negative impact on business planning strategies. Over two thirds of employers say

they do not have access to timely and reliable information from the Ministry of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour.

In 16 per cent of the companies surveyed, work has been moved outside of Canada as a consequence of the changes. Several of the companies also note that hiring strategies have been changed and positions are instead being moved to other countries with less immigration lead times (Germany, Ireland, UK, and India).

The TFWP was created to alleviate shortages in the Canadian labour market early in the last decade. Many of those shortages were in the low skilled categories. As the program matured, restrictions were placed on the program to protect low skilled domestic jobs. Today there is no distinction in the processing rules between an application for a low skilled worker and the senior vice president of a major company, each application is treated in the same manner.

There are a number of important measures that can be taken to improve the current TFWP as it applies to highly skilled, in demand occupations. We welcome this opportunity to share our recommendations, which we believe will deliver significant improvements to the current program.

The Canadian Employee Relocation Council represents the interests of many of Canada's leading corporations employing hundreds of thousands of employees. They require access to an adequate supply of well-skilled, highly trained workers to grow their businesses. Skilled workers help the Canadian economy grow and remain competitive in the global marketplace. With an aging workforce and the emergence of the "new economy", access to skilled workers is essential to maintaining that competitiveness.

We trust the Standing Committee will find these recommendations constructive and of assistance in the review of the TFWP. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss our recommendations in further detail with the Committee and provide any additional information you may require.

Sincerely,



Stephen Cryne

President and CEO, Canadian Employee Relocation Council

cc: The Honourable John McCallum, P.C. M.P.

The Honourable MaryAnn Mihychuk, P.C. M.P

attachment