

January 10, 2024

The Honourable Sylvia Jones [Sylvia.Jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:Sylvia.Jones@pc.ola.org)

The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy [Peter.Bethlenfalvy@pc.ola.org](mailto:Peter.Bethlenfalvy@pc.ola.org)

**Re: Alcohol Expansion into Convenience, Grocery and Big Box Stores**

Dear Minister Jones and Minister Bethlenfalvy,

We are writing in response to the recent [announcement](#) about **Alcohol Expansion into Convenience, Grocery and Big Box Stores** on December 14 by the Ontario Government.

We were encouraged by the confirmation that the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario will continue to manage the licensing of alcohol sales. We are also encouraged by the commitment to “providing an additional [\\$ 10 million](#) over 5 years to support social responsibility and public-health efforts ....” We urge the province to commit resources towards the creation of a Provincial Alcohol Strategy to help guide this work. The OPHA would be well positioned to facilitate or partner in the development of a provincial alcohol strategy.

Recommendations from our recent letter: [Modernizing the Alcohol Marketplace and Product Sales](#) were informed by current evidence on reducing societal impacts of alcohol use. We would like to reiterate that we stand behind the recommendations provided previously, which include:

1. Reducing retail density, especially in neighbourhoods with low socio-economic status (SES).
2. Maintaining or decreasing hours of sale, with no exceptions.
3. Strengthening Ontario's alcohol pricing policies, including taxation, minimum pricing or other means.
4. Stopping further privatization of alcohol sales.
5. Applying a whole of government, health-in-all-policies approach to alcohol modernization.

Once again, as the province moves towards implementation, our priority is that the health and wellbeing of all the residents of Ontario are in the forefront of government decisions on alcohol policy.

Sincerely,



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