

March 7th, 2014

Halifax Regional Council

City Hall

1841 Argyle Street, Main Floor

PO Box 1749

Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

To: Mayor Mike Savage and Councillors of the Halifax Regional Municipality

I am writing to you to express concern on behalf of Chamber members regarding city staff's recommendation to increase commercial waste disposal fees from \$125 to \$170 per tonne.

One of the major pillars of the Chamber's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan is 'Creating a Positive Business Environment' and raising fees such as these for business runs completely counter to that goal. Increased waste collection fees not only amounts to higher operating costs for businesses, but also adds yet another barrier for entrepreneurs who may be looking to start their own venture in our city.

We have seen positive signs over the past year that our Mayor and Councillors understand that reducing the costs of running a business in Halifax is good for our city as a whole. We are encouraged that Mayor Savage has gone on the record to say that he does not support this increase in waste costs, and that he does not think Councillors will either. We trust that you will do the right thing -- and vote against this additional cost of doing business in our city.

We feel that the fee increase contained in recommendation seven in the 'Integrated Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy Review - Final Report' is excessive. However, innovative solutions such as allowing businesses to sell their waste to other municipal landfills are well worth considering. It is our understanding that this would allow businesses to potentially decrease their waste collection costs below \$100 per tonne, while still using facilities with high environmental standards. And, importantly, this would reduce the pressure on the HRM's existing Otter Lake facility.

Business costs are much more than tax rates. We encourage Council to take our advice and help our business community grow. If you would like to meet with me to discuss this issue further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Valerie Payn, President & CEO
Halifax Chamber of Commerce