

Monday, January 12, 2015

Halifax Regional Council

City Hall

1841 Argyle Street, Main Floor

PO Box 1749

Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

To: Mayor Mike Savage and Halifax Councillors

I am writing to you to reiterate the Chamber's position on the city's proposal to increase commercial waste disposal fees in Halifax from \$125 to \$170 per tonne.

Reducing the tax burden is one of the Chamber's main priorities under our 2013-2018 Strategic Plan this year, and increasing fees is just another version of higher taxes. 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 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.

While we feel that the proposed fee increase is excessive, the recommendation to allow businesses to sell their waste to other municipal landfills is well worth considering. It is our understanding that this would allow businesses to potentially reduce their waste collection costs below current rates, while still using facilities with high environmental standards. Additionally, this would reduce the pressure on Halifax's existing Otter Lake facility.

We encourage Council to take our advice and help create a positive business environment in Halifax.

Sincerely,



Valerie Payn, President & CEO
Halifax Chamber of Commerce