

*Letter sent by e-mail.*

August 8, 2021.

**Subject: provide small businesses a “stay open plan”**

Dear Premiers,

As you know, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization representing the interests of 95,000 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across Canada. As businesses emerge from the third wave and more than 16 months of continuous restrictions, they continue to struggle. Our [latest dashboard](#) shows that 68% of small businesses are fully open, 45% are fully staffed and only 35% are making normal sales.<sup>1</sup>

Small businesses made significant sacrifices to protect society from COVID-19. Since March 2020 they have struggled from lockdown measures and restrictions that fully or partially closed Main Street for months. While businesses are relieved to be able to open again, the reality is they are reopening to significant ongoing revenue declines, staffing shortages and a cashflow crunch.

All provinces have introduced a reopening plan outlining different stages, objectives and criteria to be followed in order to move ahead with small business reopening. **To provide businesses with reassurance and certainty we now ask your government to commit to a “stay open plan.”**

Further lockdowns or the implementation of significant business restrictions in the fall (or later) would be both financially and emotionally devastating for business owners. Many would not survive.

Preliminary survey results show 79% of businesses are concerned about further lockdowns and 87% want provinces to commit to a stay open strategy to avoid more lockdowns while protecting the health care system.<sup>2</sup>

The best way to ensure a strong economic recovery and small business survival is to keep them open.

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<sup>1</sup> CFIB, Your Voice - July 2021 survey, preliminary results from July 8 to 14, 2021, n = 2,856.

<sup>2</sup> CFIB, Your Voice - August 2021 Survey, preliminary results, August 5 - 10, 2021, n= 2,646.

We ask that your government commit to developing and communicating a “stay open plan” to give small business owners and the communities they support peace of mind as we head into the fall.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Guénette', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr. Jasmin Guénette  
Vice-President,  
National Affairs