



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Time is running out - Canadians want successful employment and skills training programs saved while governments figure out Canada Job Grant

Vancouver, February 4, 2014 - Canadians across the country have shown their support in preserving vital employment and skills training programs under the current federal-provincial/territorial Labour Market Agreements (LMA), now threatened by the federal Canada Job Grant. Valuable employment programs for Canada's most vulnerable populations are at risk of being chopped as governments negotiate the new national job grant. All governments must work together to preserve the proven LMA training initiatives, alongside any new training programs like the Canada Job Grant (CJG). With a new federal budget scheduled for February 11th, the clock is ticking.

In support of LMA-funded initiatives, Canadians generated over one million Twitter impressions through a cross-country social media day on January 15, 2014, organized by the Employability Training Alliance (ETA). [LMA success stories](#) were shared by businesses, training organizations and participants, and various levels of government. The ETA is a national group of organizations supporting job creation and skills training.

Chris Atchison, ETA member and chair of the Canadian Coalition of Community Based Employability Training (CCCBET), said, "The overwhelming support from Canadians in joining this national conversation on the achievements of workforce training through LMAs demonstrates that we need to make sure these programs and services aren't thrown out. Changes shouldn't be made unless alternatives will give all Canadians the chance to gain the skills and knowledge to fully participate in the labour market."

In addition to the enthusiastic support Canadians across the country showed for the value of LMA employment training and services and the benefit to taxpayers and the economy, the Department of Employment and Social Development, the federal body responsible for the LMAs, also documented their effectiveness. A department report found that 86% of LMA participants were employed after completing job training programs (compared to 44% before entering), with average earnings increased by \$323 per week.

Business, labour and community leaders, alongside training experts, strongly agree that programming and services under the Labour Market Agreements are working and that if Canada needs a new national grant program, it shouldn't come at the expense of successful LMA initiatives. Said Alan Odette, president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, "Pulling funds out of existing programs that seem to be working well is not, to my mind, a good way to go".

Ontario Federation of Labour President Sid Ryan said, "Under the guise of addressing skills shortages, the Canada Job Grant will actually divert crucial funding for literacy training and skills upgrading away from vulnerable workers who need it most- women, immigrants, young workers and older workers."

The Employability Training Alliance commends efforts by the provinces and territories in standing up for quality employment and skills programs for Canadians who need them most. Provinces and territories have been on the right side of this issue since the Canada Job Grant was first announced and advertised in 2013. The ETA urges the federal government to maintain full funding of Labour Market Agreements, in addition to negotiating terms and conditions for any other labour market initiatives.

- 30 -

Media contact for Employability Training Alliance

Chris Atchison, Chair
CCCBET - The Canadian Coalition of Community Based Employability Training
catchison@aspect.bc.ca
Office: 250 382 9675 ext: 233
Cell: 250 818 9671
www.cocde-cccbet.com/en/cccbet/

About the Employability Training Alliance (ETA)

The ETA is a coalition of over 20 organizations across Canada established to provide a voice for non-governmental organizations developing, delivering or supporting effective labour market programs.

[Click here for a list of founding partners on the LMA Works website.](#)