

## OCC Set to Deliver its 2004 Pre-Budget Submission to Standing Committee

Today is the deadline for providing written submissions to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The submission includes many of the highlights and policy recommendations emerging from the 2004 OCC Pre-Budget Survey. It also includes a provincial economic outlook, budget priorities, policy and tax recommendations, as well as the final report from the Borders Task Force and a copy of the Infectious Diseases Brochure.

Based on the aggregate of our members forecasts, the OCC expects real GDP to approach 3 per cent this year. Results from the survey's over 700 responses, indicate that members have a positive outlook for 2004 and 2005, and are even more optimistic for their own company's performance.

In its submission to the Standing Committee, the OCC recommends several budget priorities for the 2004 Ontario budget. OCC members recognize that the

government faces a projected deficit this year and recommends that they proceed cautiously while pursuing a balanced budget. The majority of members (65%) would accept a balanced budget by fiscal 2006 or a small deficit (\$1-2B) for several years. Once the deficit is eliminated, OCC members continue to reiterate their message that debt reduction must remain a priority. When asked to list their top three funding priorities in an assumed period of expenditure restraint members selected health care, energy and debt reduction. Other recommendations have been made in the areas of transportation and infrastructure and education and training. The OCC continues to advocate for policies that promote a competitive business climate with an overarching goal of making Ontario one of the most competitive jurisdictions in North America.

A copy of the complete submission and the survey results are available online at [www.occ.on.ca](http://www.occ.on.ca).

## March 19 Deadline for Submitting AGM Policy Resolutions Only One Month Away

The Annual General Meeting & Convention is one of the OCC's most important events of the year. This AGM marks our 92<sup>nd</sup> year and we are pleased to be holding it in Thunder Bay, Ontario from April 30 to May 2, 2004.

The AGM is a great opportunity for members to work together on OCC policy priorities as we develop our advocacy plan for the year ahead. It is important for our members to provide their input and policy direction to the OCC, both at the AGM and in advance by submitting resolutions.

We strongly encourage member Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade to submit their policy resolutions before the Friday, March 19 - 5:00pm deadline. Policy resolutions should be directed to Stuart

Johnston at [stuartjohnston@occ.on.ca](mailto:stuartjohnston@occ.on.ca). Areas of focus for the resolutions should be related to Finance & Taxation, Health Policy, Transportation & Infrastructure, Education, Energy and Borders and Trade Development issues.

Please visit our website at <http://www.occ.on.ca/members/2AGM.asp> for more information on this year's AGM as well as important travel and accommodations materials.

*Be sure to register before March 29 to save on registration fees.*

For more information or to register for the 2004 AGM & Convention, please contact Scott McCammon at (416) 482-5222, extension 228.

## Brampton Appoints General Manager

Last month, Brampton Board of Trade President, Michael Collins, was pleased to announce that Sheldon Leiba had assumed the role of General Manager, effective January 5.

As part of his former responsibilities, Sheldon was the editor of Trade Talks, the Board's monthly publication; oversaw the operations of the Board-owned Motor Vehicle Licence Office at Torbram Rd. and Steeles Ave., and; was an active member on all of the Board's standing committees, including Public Affairs, Finance, Marketing, Business Development and Youth & Business.

Prior to joining The Brampton Board of Trade in 2001, Leiba had served four years with the City of Brampton as Executive Assistant to the Mayor.

## Burlington Appoints Executive Director

Diana Tuszynski, President of the Burlington Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce the appointment of its new Executive Director, Keith Hoey, effective February 2, 2004.

Keith is a familiar face to the Chamber having served in prior years on the Political Action Committee and the Mayor's Business Breakfast subcommittee in Burlington and as Chair of the Business Education Committee in Oakville. Keith has worked at various local companies including Dofasco and Union Gas and he brings to the Chamber a wealth of senior management experience.

*The Ontario Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome Sheldon and Keith to the management roles in our Chamber family.*