



Canada's Premiers continue to have concerns with proposed Canada Job Grant

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, July 25, 2013 - Provinces and territories have jurisdiction for skills training and labour market programs. Each designs, delivers, and reports publicly on training programs that reflect local labour market needs, including some programs funded in part by the federal government.

In its 2013 Budget, the federal government announced its intention to change the way it contributes to training programs in Canada. While Premiers support involvement by employers in skills and job training and targeting programs to better meet employers' needs, they are concerned that the proposed changes would jeopardize the success of current training programs already in place, particularly those programs that help the most vulnerable people who need additional supports to find jobs.

If implemented, the proposed Canada Job Grant would effectively remove all of the funding for labour market agreement programming. It would require provinces and territories to find more than \$600 million in additional funding to maintain current labour market training programs for vulnerable people as well as funding for cost-matching of federal programs. Furthermore, it is unclear if employers, particularly small businesses, will participate.

The federal government must collaborate with provinces and territories and support them in a way they can ensure the most effective and successful programs will continue to benefit Canadians. Premiers reiterated that federal funding agreements or initiatives such as the proposed Canada Job Grant must allow jurisdictions to opt out, with full compensation.

Federal funding for skills training and labour market programs must be adequate, flexible, equitable, long-term, predictable and not mandate cost matching to ensure workers can access the labour force and employers can hire the workers they need.

As a way forward, Premiers asked Premiers Clark and Alward to take the lead on the issues of labour market and labour force development and skills training. They will report back to Premiers in Fall 2013. All Premiers are calling for a federal-provincial-territorial meeting of the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to discuss these important issues.

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