

Local Chamber at Queens Park to push for manufacturing sector



CAROLYN THOMPSON, WINDSOR STAR

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Matt Marchand is photographed at the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce offices in Windsor on Monday, December 15, 2014. TYLER BROWNBRIDGE / WINDSOR STAR

The provincial government is hearing concerns of high costs and struggling industries, says a representative of local businesses.

Matt Marchand, president and CEO of the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, was in Toronto Monday for an advocacy day at Queen's Park. The event brought together Chambers of Commerce from across Ontario to rally the government for more support.

He said several sessions with ministers and top government officials looked to highlight concerns and discuss ways to stimulate different sectors of the economy, including auto and food processing.

Marchand said the chambers raised concerns again with the politicians over the rising cost of business: the price of power and cap and trade. Another session delved into solving the skills shortage many local companies say impedes them from growing as quickly as they would like.

Marchand added that a lot of the discussion centred around tapping into small business growth, since most small businesses don't consider exporting their goods.

"Small business is too big to ignore," he said. "How do we scale up small businesses to make them bigger?"

He said officials are also prepared to hear feedback from Windsor's policy forum in May, which will bring together top automotive consultants and industry leaders to talk ideas for bolstering Canada's automotive sector.