

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**May 7, 2014**

**Windsor-Essex Chamber Resolutions on Year-Round  
Greenhouse Operations, Energy Competitiveness and  
Workforce Approved at Ontario Chamber AGM**

**Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario** – The Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce was successfully behind three key member priority resolutions approved at this year's Ontario Chamber Annual General Meeting held in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, May 1<sup>st</sup> - May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

The Chamber resolutions (attached) are in the following three areas: energy as a development and competitiveness issue, the greenhouse industry and workforce development. The Windsor-Essex Chamber partnered with the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce on the issue of energy and competitiveness.

*Year-Round Greenhouse Growing Operations*

The greenhouse industry is one of the most important economic sectors in Ontario. Currently, many of the greenhouse growing operations only have seasonal production and are unable to provide year-round operations. This places Ontario greenhouse growers at a competitive disadvantage compared to producers such as those located in the South of the United States and Mexico. The Chamber urges the government of Ontario to work with industry on adequate access and supply of electricity and other forms of energy to the greenhouse producers to allow year round production to be viable.

*Energy Cost Competitiveness*

Major industrial and Agri-Food energy users in Ontario have long cited high energy costs as a deterrent for growth in the province. The high cost of energy has been referenced by numerous businesses, including the Agri-Food businesses in the Windsor-Essex region as a critical factor in their decisions to locate and do business. Ontario needs more competitive energy prices to take full advantage of new and existing economic development opportunities across the province. The chamber urges the government of Ontario to ensure a reliable, modern and efficient supply of energy to its customers at competitive rates. This is critical for our competitiveness in a global market place and small business.

*Workforce Development for the Agri-Food Industry*

To meet current and future challenges, the Agri-Food industry in Ontario needs to develop its workforce. Among the critical needs for the industry are training and education to develop industry specific skills and direct exposure of the potential workforce in training with opportunities in the industry. Key recommendation is for the government of Ontario to provide the necessary training and skills development programs for all significant Agri-Food regions in

# WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL Chamber of Commerce

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the Province in consultation with the Agri-Food industry and regional workforce related organizations.

“The Chamber continues to create policy solutions to issues of interest to our business community and will be actively pursuing the implementation of these resolutions in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce” said Matt Marchand, President and CEO, Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce.

To access the Windsor-Essex Chamber Resolutions you can visit the Chamber’s website at:  
<http://www.windsorchamber.org/about-us/policy-advocacy/>

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