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*Representing Northern Business Since 1973*

May 07, 2020

Hon Premier Caroline Cochrane  
4570 48th St Yellowknife, NT  
[Caroline\\_cochrane@gov.nt.ca](mailto:Caroline_cochrane@gov.nt.ca)

RE: An Urgent letter from Chambers of Commerce to Canada's Premier's

Dear Hon Premier Cochrane

The NWT Chamber of Commerce represents over 150 members which are comprised of businesses across the NWT as well as over 3,500 businesses of every size and sector throughout the territory. On Friday, May 01, 2020, we issued you a letter from ourselves requesting your urgent action to call a temporary moratorium on commercial evictions. This [letter](#) was sent to all provincial and territorial Premiers whose jurisdictions did not already have a moratorium in place as the Canada Emergency Rental Relief Program is not yet in place.

We are extremely disappointed that to date we have not even had an acknowledgment of receipt of this letter from your office. When a follow-up phone call was placed earlier this week, we were told it had been sent to the Ministry of Justice to review. This lack of action or commentary by the GNWT has spoken volumes to the business community in the NWT. May 01, 2020, was probably one of the hardest days for business owners as a majority were realizing the impact of payroll, operating costs, and rent payments due all at once for the first time with a full month of significantly reduced revenue to NO revenue. Many would be falling back on personal savings if any to cover these costs. Though there are many federal and territorial programs, businesses do not nor can afford additional financing burdens at this time and a majority of the business sector in the NWT does not qualify for the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy or the CanNor grants. An issue that has been flagged to both the federal government and yourself & the GNWT on several occasions by many organizations including ourselves over the last 7 weeks.

Unlike residential tenancy, commercial tenants do not have a Tenancy Act to fall back on, one missed payment constitutes a breach of contract. The tenant typically has until the 4th of the month (this past Monday) to pay and then will be notified by their landlord that they have 10 days to pay or respond and then to following actions will occur:

- To terminate the lease and sue for arrears and future loss and/or;
- To sue the tenant for arrears and maintain the tenancy agreement and/or;
- To seize the tenant's goods and furniture and sell them to pay off the arrears



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The above is common practice in the business world as well many tenants have to provide personal guarantees for which DO get called.

The business sector needs the GNWT to step up and be shown the support that they so desperately deserve. Ignoring such an urgent call to action is unacceptable at this or any time. Social programs, sports teams, community events, etc. would not exist in this territory if it was not for our dedicated business community through the North.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Renée Comeau".

Renée Comeau  
Executive Director  
NWT Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jenni Bruce".

Jenni Bruce  
President  
NWT Chamber of Commerce

*Cc'd: Hon Caroline Wawzonek, NWT Minister of Finance;*