



Rethinking Regulation

A Presentation to City Council on the Nuisance By-Law

Prepared by the St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce

April 28h, 2008

Good Evening Mayor McMullan, City Councillors, and members of city staff. My name is Steve Cook, and I am the President of the Board of Directors of the St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce and VP of Operations at Credit Bureau Services Canada. I would first like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on the issue of the recently introduced nuisance by law and our concerns with portions of the by law.

As the voice of business, the St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce is committed to ensuring that there is a vibrant business and investment environment in St. Catharines and Niagara through fairness and smart regulation. It is also our responsibility as a member driven organization representing over 1050 businesses and 27,000 employees to provide input on areas that we see to have an adverse effect on the business community.

St. Catharines must work towards being the lead in jurisdictions of its size in efforts to reduce regulatory burdens on businesses in all sectors. Harmonization of City By-laws is critical in order to facilitate greater ease in doing business in St. Catharines

The Chamber is concerned by the introduction of a section in the Nuisance By-law introduced in the fall. The section speaks to the issue of garage doors and prohibits property owners serving alcohol that have garage doors or large doors from opening these doors after 11pm. This, the Chamber feels is Excessively Punitive, given that the Noise By Law has an entire section and 5 sub sections that deal specifically with operations unique to licensed premises in the City.

The Chamber seeks fairness for all its members and the business community at large, this duplication and excessively punitive clause within the Nuisance - By law does not allow licensed establishments in the downtown to carry out their business operations in an environment that is conducive to their success.

With efficiencies in government as an important Chamber principle we believe that enforcement of existing by-laws rather than duplication and over regulation are what will provide business growth in St. Catharines.

Other communities, such as London, Kingston and Guelph, which have similar demographics to St. Catharines, do not have such duplication of their regulations on business. It is important that St. Catharines view its competitiveness in comparison with other jurisdictions with similar characteristics.

Again, thank you for providing us with this opportunity to make this presentation. We seek to provide an even regulatory playing field to ensure the success of business in all sectors in Niagara.