

27 March 2026

Mr Andrew Barr, MLA
Chief Minister

Mr Chris Steel, MLA
Treasurer, Minister for Planning and Development & Minister of Transport

Ms Tara Cheyne, MLA
Attorney-General and Minister for City and Government Services

Mr Michael Pettersson, MLA
Minister for Business

Ms Suzanne Orr, MLA
Minister for Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Dear Ministers

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE CURRENT FUEL CRISIS - CALL FOR PAUSE IN REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

We are writing, on behalf of our respective peak body organisations, and the broader Canberra Business Community, to express our concerns about the impacts of the current fuel crisis on the economy, and to seek your support in pausing Government changes which drive cost for business.

These are unprecedented times, and the impacts of the crisis are already being felt through the community. Members are reporting to us that that they:

- are facing sharp and significant price increases from their suppliers;
- are now expecting significant delays in the delivery of some goods;
- are taking steps to reduce their travel within the ACT and interstate; and
- are introducing price increases to their customers.

At the same time, business is already fragile given the state of the economy overall. We have already seen a reduction in private sector capital investment in the ACT, and many firms are reporting to us that are deeply challenged.

Our assessment is that we are facing a significant economic crisis, which will only aggravate the fragile position of many firms. We are concerned that the situation could get substantially worse before it gets better, and we are asking you to act.

We appreciate that the ACT Government does not control the price of fuel, but you do have significant levers to mitigate the impacts of an economic crisis. Many in the business sector are concerned about the increasing costs of compliance, and its impact on cashflow and viability.

In the short to medium-term, Government support for the business sector may

be required. As an immediate priority, we ask you to do what you can to help businesses forego additional costs. Respectfully, the ACT Government has a number of initiatives in play that will make things worse for the business sector across the board. We request that you implement an immediate minimum 12 month pause on the introduction of::

- extensions to the Portable Long Service leave scheme;
- developer licensing;
- early adoption of changes to the national construction code.

We believe that pausing the implementation of these initiatives will give businesses some breathing space, and help them manage cashflow and costs during these unprecedented turbulent and challenging times.

At the same time, we encourage you to continue taking steps to reduce the regulatory burden and minimise costs across the economy.

Additionally, we note that the current situation creates a real risk to the ongoing retention of workers - and in particular apprentices and trainees are at risk. We think it is necessary for Government to provide support for employers to retain their apprentices and trainees.

We request a meeting to discuss these points further.

Yours sincerely

Greg Harford
Chief Executive
Canberra Business Chamber



Anna Neelagama
Chief Executive
Master Builders Association ACT



Ashlee Berry
Executive Director, ACT & Capital Region
Property Council of Australia



David Marshall
Chair
Canberra Region Tourism Leaders' Forum



Craig Shannon
Chief Executive
Clubs ACT

