

INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROVINCE-WIDE PETITION

WHAT IS THE PETITION FOR?

On Co-op is asking for **your** help to encourage the province to implement various policy initiatives that would benefit all co-ops and credit unions. The petition requests that government “create an environment that encourages the development of co-operatives, allowing them to compete on equal footing with other forms of business enterprise.”

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED

Please help us to achieve this goal...it will only take a few minutes of your time. Here are the simple steps to take in order to participate:

1. **Print** off a hard copy (or several copies as required) of the Petition on the next page.
2. Clearly print your **name and address and sign** your name in the spaces provided.
3. **Collect** as many signatures as possible, by asking all the other staff at your organization to sign it.
4. **Distribute** the petition to your contacts and networks as much as possible: post it to your organizational website and any other social media you may use; include it in your electronic newsletters; bring it to your board and committee meetings; place copies near your cash registers and at all your branches/locations and ask your members to sign it; take copies with you to your meetings, events and conferences you attend, and so on.
5. Once the petition(s) is as full as possible, make a copy for yourself and **send the original version to On Co-op** in the mail, to the address listed at the bottom of this page.

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

- **For signing the petition...**
Almost anyone can show their support and sign the petition. You do *not* have to be a member of On Co-op, or of a co-operative or credit union. You should be a resident of Ontario. You do *not* have to be of majority age (i.e., over 18).
- **For getting the petition tabled...**
A petition can only be tabled if it has original, authentic signatures on it. Only one signature per page is required for tabling, but MPPs are more likely to table it if it has many.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Our goal is to collect as many signatures as possible, **so as to best represent the sector’s support for a partnership with government.**

CONTACT INFORMATION

To learn more about the Petition, visit www.ontario.coop/government. If you have any questions, you can contact Audrey Aczel, Public Affairs Manager at On Co-op, at 1.888.745.5521 x. 24, or by e-mail at aaczel@ontario.coop.

**Please Return to: Ontario Co-operative Association (On Co-op)
450 Speedvale Avenue West, Suite 101 Guelph, ON N1H 7Y6**

PETITION –

TO The Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

WHEREAS more than 1 in every 10 Ontarians is a member of a co-operative and co-ops have over \$30 billion dollars in assets, thereby contributing significantly to Ontario’s economy.

WHEREAS co-operatives are owned and operated by their members and organized to meet a common need that often cannot be met through a conventional business model.

WHEREAS co-operative entrepreneurs have been creating and retaining jobs; with more than 16,000 people employed in Ontario’s co-op sector – 76% of whom are full-time employees. Ontarians can find for profit and non-profit co-ops delivering products and services in the agricultural, housing, food, financial, service, youth, worker, aboriginal and community sectors.

WHEREAS co-operatives are an economically viable business model outlasting conventional businesses by 24% in the first five and ten years of operation; yet there is still limited public awareness of how co-operatives are established and operate.

WHEREAS co-operatives enhance the social and economic well-being of people and communities through their reinvestment of revenues into their communities and fostering local economic development

WHEREAS co-operatives face many barriers in terms of regulation, lack of capital investment mechanisms and are at a significant competitive disadvantage compared to other business enterprises, and government plays a critical role in addressing many of the challenges being faced by the co-operative sector.

WHEREAS the United Nations has designated 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives, urging all governments to create a supportive environment for the development of co-operatives.

WHEREAS co-operatives in many other provinces already have successful partnerships to deliver key public policy initiatives with government, that have resulted in thriving co-op sectors and many social and economic benefits for those provinces; and the Legislature has endorsed in principle the investigation and establishment of a Co-operatives Secretariat by their unanimous support of Resolution # 33 on December 14, 2006.

WE the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

Create an environment that encourages the development of co-operatives; allowing them to compete on an equal footing with other forms of business enterprise through initiatives such as:

- **updating the regulatory environment to allow co-ops to be more competitive and eliminating red tape**
- **taking advantage of tax incentives and other financial measures to encourage investment in co-ops**
- **establishing a provincial Co-operatives Secretariat to work closely with government, to create jobs and foster local economic development.**

Name (printed)	Address (printed)	Signature

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