

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

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