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September 19, 2024

Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau
Minister of National Revenue
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Madam Minister,

I write to you today as the National President of the Union of Taxation Employees (UTE), representing over 36,000 members working at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), and as a concerned Canadian citizen and taxpayer, regarding the ongoing situation occurring in the Contact Centres across the country.

The agency inability to staff more permanent positions in this type of employment, along with stressful and highly monitored work environment compared to other positions within the CRA, places our members working in Contact Centres in precarious employment situations.

As if this was not enough, the Agency decided in May 2024 to let go more than 2,000 Contact Centre agents. As a result, and as we predicted, taxpayers have been waiting on average more than three (3) hours since the beginning of the summer to get answers to their questions. That if they do not lose patience and simply drop the call.

This is in direct contradiction with the statement made in the latest budget tabled last spring by the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, which claims that the government is providing sufficient funding to the CRA to not only maintain the level of service offered to Canadians by its Contact Centres but to improve the service.

The wait times in the CRA Contact Centres are simply not acceptable. I am sure that you are aware of this situation and that you share this view.

Our union has noticed that the Agency has rehired a few hundred employees in its Contact Centres over the last weeks to answer a request made by the Taxpayers' Ombudsperson to offer extended hours of service to give taxpayers equal access across the country.

This is good news. However, this is far from being enough to address the long delays faced by taxpayers when calling the Agency.

Madam Minister, I am asking you to order the CRA to rehire a lot more agents to really improve the situation both for individual taxpayers and businesses and also for our hard-working members that are dealing with very difficult working conditions.

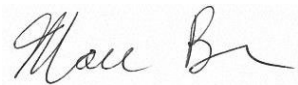
We demand more consideration and respect for your employees, our members, working in the CRA Contact Centres.

The excellent work of our members is the cornerstone of service to Canadians and their ability to comply with Canadian tax regulations. I am confident that you share my concerns and will take the necessary measures to restore public confidence in the CRA's ability to respond promptly to the requests of Canadian taxpayers.

I will make myself available to discuss tangible solutions with you.

The Agency's ability to meet its commitments to Canadian individual taxpayers and businesses depends on proper funding. Our members have demonstrated in the past that they can rise to the occasion. It is high time that the CRA gives us the capability to do so, permanently.

Please accept, Madam Minister, the expression of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Brière". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marc" being more prominent than the last name "Brière".

Marc Brière
National President
Union of Taxation Employees