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## CHAMBER ASKS PROVINCE TO ENGAGE WITH BUSINESSES FIRST

**Penticton** – Penticton and Wine Country Chamber of Commerce

On Jan. 18, the provincial government announced that fitness centres can reopen January 20 if certain conditions are met while existing restrictions for gatherings, sports, events, bars and banquet facilities will remain the same until at least February 16.

“The dedication shown by our healthcare workers who continue to care for us in our time of need is to be applauded. We as a chamber will continue to support the protection of our communities in British Columbia. However, this last wave of omicron has left some industries wondering why they were targeted with closure restrictions. As a result, we ask that the province provide more clarity around new orders if or when new restrictions are implemented.” said Jonathan McGraw President of Penticton Chamber of Commerce.

The Penticton & Wine Country is urging the government to provide data and information that supports current restrictions on business closure and limitations. More important, the Chamber wants the government to initiate a process that actively engages with businesses and finds a way for them to remain operating while ensuring public health and safety rather than imposing restrictions on data that is not transparent. All businesses need to plan for their future. Not knowing from week to week if the business can remain open, do they need to staff up and will there be enough revenue to pay the staff and rent are tough questions for businesses owners and play a huge factor on their health and wellness.

“As we enter our third year of restrictions, some small businesses in the service industry are stretched to their credit limit, if they have any credit available to them at all. The survival of these businesses is an important part of our recovery. We need these businesses not just for our economic recovery, but also our mental recovery.” said McGraw

The Penticton and Wine Country Chamber of Commerce will be sharing their concerns with Dan Ashton, Penticton MLA, with the intent of finding solutions.

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The Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic, trusted and respected business authority that drives economic and social growth and improvement on behalf of, and in support of our members and the community.