Dear [Candidate],

Whether through neighbourhood shops or larger multi-location banners, retail is the largest private employer in Manitoba.

* Over 66,000 Manitobans work in retail at over 4,700 locations – retail means local community jobs.
* 64% of retailers in Manitoba are small businesses with fewer than 10 employees; supporting retail means supporting small business and your community.
* Retail generates over $20 billion in annual sales in Manitoba alone.

Government policies affect the competitiveness of Manitoba retailers. As the industry goes through an important transformation with the growth of online shopping, Manitoba retailers want to continue to contribute to the growth of jobs and our economy. To do this, we need your party's support, including addressing these issues as outlined by Retail Council of Canada:

* **Payroll Tax Rates**: Manitoba’s “Payroll Tax” has a negative effect on those looking to grow, create jobs or pay their employees more. Most provinces have eliminated or are actively lowering this job killing tax scheme, while in Manitoba there hasn’t even been an adjustment for inflation since 2008, effectively decreasing the exception threshold and obligating more small businesses. Its time to reduce the pain.
* **Predictable Minimum Wage:** Manitoba has established a predictable model for calculating annual minimum wage adjustments based on Manitoba’s Consumer Price Index that should be maintained. Dramatic and rapid increases, such as in Alberta have shown to harm opportunities for those with the least experience, especially youth.
* **Remove Retail Restrictions:** Manitoba has the most restrictive retail holiday and Sunday hour rules in the country, having created complex rules and exemptions that create winners and losers within competing sectors. In a consumer centric world of online convenience and evolving cultural diversity, it’s time to reconsider why the Manitoba is disadvantaging brick and mortar retailers.
* **Develop Retail Sector Strategy**. Today, Alberta retail contributes $20 billion to the economy. Retailers are facing significant cumulative costs and competitive pressures. In the modern age of retail, there is no certainty of continued success as national, online and offshore channels threaten “brick-and-mortar” stores in Manitoba.

When I vote, I will be thinking about these issues.

Retail jobs and economic success must be at the heart of the September 2019 election. I invite you to support these issues as each of them have a significant impact on Manitoba’s economy and its communities.

For more information, I invite you to visit [VoteRetail.ca](https://www.retailcouncil.org/election/manitoba-election/), tweet your support with #RetailMatters, or contact John Graham, Director, Government Relations (the Prairies) at jgraham@retailcouncil.org.

Sincerely,

[your name]