Dear [Candidate],

Whether through neighbourhood shops or larger multi-location banners, retail is the largest private employer in Alberta – larger then oil, mining and agriculture combined.

* Over 263,000 Albertans work in retail at over 17,540 locations – retail means local community jobs.
* 64% of retailers in Alberta are small businesses with fewer than 10 employees; supporting retail means supporting small business and your community.
* Retail generates over $80.3 billion in annual sales in Alberta alone.

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

* **Stabilize Minimum Wage**. Minimum wage in Alberta has increased an unprecedented 47% over the past four years, costing Albertans jobs, higher prices and lost opportunities – especially for Alberta’s youth who face high unemployment rates.
* **Balance Labour Laws**. There have been significant and costly changes to labour rules that must be reviewed and rebalanced. For example, mandatory secret ballots were eliminated, exposing workers to peer pressure by their colleagues and intimidation by union organizers and resulting in the highest number of new union certifications in Alberta in over a decade.
* **Consult Employers**. In 2017, employment and labour regulations underwent significant legislative changes that directly impacted all retail employers in Alberta. These disruptive and often costly amendments were passed with only 36 days of public consultation. Employers’ opinions matter, and there must be a commitment to genuine stakeholder consultation.
* **Develop Retail Sector Strategy**. Today, Alberta retail contributes $80 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 Alberta.

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

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

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

Sincerely,

[your name]