

To: Erica Stanford
National Party MP for East Coast Bays

Via E-mail

8th February 2023,

Dear Erica,

Following a conversation with Vanushi Walters last Friday, I thought it may be of some assistance to document the needs of business in response to the recent flooding in Auckland and other areas of New Zealand.

As a general overview, businesses have suffered varying degrees of disruption with many unable to operate at all and others only able to operate at severely reduced capacity. Following their ongoing, well documented challenges as a result of the pandemic, this latest catastrophe has once more resulted in a substantial loss of income for businesses, many of whom are again, despite their loss of income, faced with the prospect of having to pay staff who are unable to work.

Businesses, some of whom may not have sufficient insurance, are also having to arrange repairs to plant and equipment and fixtures and fittings, whilst also having to replace damaged stock, in many cases all at considerable cost.

Consideration also needs to be given to those people who may have suffered a double 'whammy' if they have been flooded out of their home from where they also run their business.

Given the severity of the situation business would benefit from:

1) Financial Support:

- a. A wage subsidy scheme similar to that introduced during COVID.
- b. A business loan scheme similar to that introduced during COVID.
- c. Deferral / re-structuring of tax payments and ACC Levies.

2) A Swift Response Effectively Communicated:

- a. Whatever support is to be made available needs to be delivered quickly.
- b. Communication needs to be clear and simple, ensuring that it reaches the people who need it (Business Associations would be an ideal conduit to utilise, as any information can be quickly shared with members via a variety of platforms).

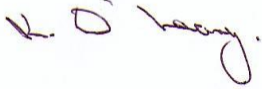
3) A Simple Process To Access The Support:

- a. Whilst accountability is obviously very important, the application process needs to be as simple and short as possible to enable the already stressed applicants to access the support in the shortest possible time.
- b. The harsh reality that business is facing can not be exacerbated by red tape or too many hoops to jump through – the qualification criteria for any support need to be relevant and achievable for those in need of that support.

On behalf of our members, I am writing to ask you to lobby the Government to urgently consider what can be done to ease this latest burden for business, which threatens the very existence of many businesses. I have provided some suggestions and would ask that you lobby the decision makers in Government to take urgent action to help mitigate the effects on businesses of the devastating flooding.

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "K. O'Leary".

Kevin O'Leary (General Manager)