



700 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1N 1K4
613.562.1160

February 17, 2026

Re: Proposed program cuts at Algonquin College

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you as an Ottawa restaurant owner, a program advisory committee (PAC) member and bursary-donner of two hospitality programs at Algonquin college, a board member of both Restaurants Canada and The Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association and graduate from Algonquin College's Hotel & Restaurant Management program. I'm writing to express serious concerns over the impact the proposed cuts at Algonquin College, specifically to the following programs in the School of Business & Hospitality:

- Bachelor of Culinary Arts & Food Science
- Hotel & Restaurant Operations Management
- Tourism – Travel
- Bartending
- Event Management

As Canada's fourth-largest employer, with more than 70,000 current job openings projected to grow to 150,000 within five years, the hospitality sector requires a consistent pipeline of skilled workers to meet ongoing labour shortages. Expanding and modernizing college hospitality and culinary programs in Ontario will strengthen the workforce attraction, provide practical career pathways for students, and help restaurants and foodservice operators remain viable employers in communities across the province. Without a strong post-secondary stream feeding the future workforce, these labour gaps will only widen.

Algonquin's proposed program closures will create a deficit of skilled Canadian professionals and those pursuing professional Culinary and Hospitality related credentials in the Ottawa/Perth region. This will magnify the already substantial pressure on restaurants to maintain operations and continue providing all the jobs that make us the fourth-largest sector employer in the country and number one source of first-time jobs.

Although rescinding the restriction on raising tuition fees is a step in the right direction, it does not address the core issue of inadequate funding Colleges receive for domestic students. As per the Financial Accountability Office [2025 MCU Spending Plan Review](#): In 2022-23, Ontario had

the lowest per full-time equivalent (FTE) domestic student provincial funding for colleges among all provinces, at \$10,910, which was \$5,093 below the national average of \$16,002. Compared to other large provinces, Ontario's per FTE domestic student colleges funding was lower than British Columbia (\$18,465), Quebec (\$17,977) and Alberta (\$17,592).

Program closures like Algonquin's are increasing at an alarming rate across Ontario, significantly diminishing the educational pathways available to Canadians interested in pursuing professional careers in the culinary and hospitality sectors. If we are to reduce reliance on international students and cultivate a domestic workforce, we require sustainable educational pathways for Ontarians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SChown'.

Sarah Chown

Managing Partner - Metropolitan Brasserie
Board Member - Restaurants Canada & Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association
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