



Auckland Chamber of Commerce submission to Auckland Council on Easter Trading

Introduction

The Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on whether or not Auckland Council should:

- Retain the status quo – where only shops currently able to trade on Easter Sunday will continue to be able to do so
OR
- Propose a policy to allow more shops, in either all or parts of Auckland to trade on Easter Sunday from 2018.

The Auckland Chamber has been Auckland's voice of business since its establishment in 1856 with a Charter dedicated to the development of international, national and regional trade through:

- Freedom of enterprise for those who by their individual and corporate talents contribute real economic, social and cultural wealth to the community.
- The development of a market economy in which there is minimal interference from central and local government.
- The strengthening of Auckland's place as New Zealand's pre-eminent commercial, industrial and communications centre.

While many of our members are SMEs, our membership includes most of the largest corporations and utility companies operating in Auckland (New Zealand).

As the engine room of the Auckland (and one third of the New Zealand) economy, our members provide employment, pay wages, produce goods and services, and determine the depth of the tax base. If business is flourishing, everyone benefits; if business is in recession or constrained in other ways, peoples' standards of living suffer. For businesses to flourish, they require an environment that is supportive, and a culture that encourages, rewards and celebrates success.

Submission

Under the current Easter Sunday trading law some shops are allowed to open, while others are not. This situation has arisen over many years and some eleven changes to Easter trading legislation since 1990, and each time the situation has been made more confusing and contradictory. Briefly, dairies can open but not supermarkets; shopping malls cannot open, certain services and shops in Parnell Road can.

Due to a recent law change Auckland Council can now decide whether or not to allow more shops to open on Easter Sunday. It is an opportunity for Council to put in place a level playing field in respect of Auckland's shop trading hours.

Recommendation - Consistent with our Charter advocating 'freedom of enterprise' and 'minimal interference from local government,' the Chamber strongly recommends that Auckland Council adopt a policy giving all Auckland shops the freedom to decide for themselves whether or not to trade on Easter Sunday.

The issue is about freedom of choice, equality and the right of people – shop owners and staff, regular customers and tourists – to decide for themselves what they want to do on Easter Sunday.

If someone wants to work or shop over Easter – as at any other time – then it should be their decision.

In conclusion

Our recommendation that Council adopt a policy allowing all Auckland shops freedom to trade on Easter Sunday is put forward in the positive spirit of continuous improvement to the City's governance.

We look forward to their adoption to enable all Auckland shops to decide whether or not to trade on Easter Sunday from 2018.

Michael Barnett
Chief Executive

7 June 2017