



March 12, 2020

Hon. Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier,

Thank you for taking the time to brief the opposition parties yesterday in regard to COVID-19 and protective measures being considered by your government. I strongly agree with you that on this issue, partisanship must be put aside and all parties in the legislature should be working together along with public health experts to ensure that everything is being done to keep Ontarians safe as we work to contain the further spread of this virus.

Strong action and containment of COVID-19 will strengthen Ontario's economy and protect our citizens. Given the strong action taken by the Federal government, Ontario should do everything in its power to contain COVID-19.

It's in the spirit of collaboration that I offer four recommendations to your government that can and should be implemented immediately in order to combat the spread of COVID-19 in Ontario.

**Waive Sick Notes for Employees**

Using emergency legislation, please amend the Employment Standards Act to re-instate, at least temporarily, the prohibition on employers requiring employees to produce sick notes for short term absences. As you know many doctors charge for sick notes which may result in sick employees choosing to go to work instead of staying home as recommended by public health experts.

**Re-instate Paid Sick Days, At Least Temporarily**

Using emergency legislation, amend the Employment Standards Act to provide workers with paid sick leave, at least temporarily. The federal government has made helpful changes to EI to respond to the crisis, Ontario should follow suit by re-instating paid sick leave.

**Create a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Task Force**

As recommended already by the Ontario Medical Association, the Ministry of Health should consider creating a task force to advise on appropriate distribution and use of PPE based on evidence and internally recognized best practices. The Task Force should include public health experts and representatives of the Ontario Medical Association, nursing organizations and representatives of other frontline health workers.



**Establish a Social Distancing Action Plan**

Direct the Ministry of Health's COVID - 19 "Command Table" to develop a social distancing action plan. Ontario needs to be ready to react rapidly should community spread become a reality. Measures such as mandatory school closure, enhanced border controls and prohibitions on large gatherings should be considered through the lens of the precautionary principle of public health which asserts that the burden of proof for potentially harmful actions by industry or government rests on the assurance of safety and that when there are threats of serious damage, scientific uncertainty must be resolved in favor of prevention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven Del Duca'.

Steven Del Duca