



Friday, January 14, 2022

Hon. Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Bldg Rm 281, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

I am writing to you as an opposition leader, on behalf of the nearly 15 million people who call Ontario home.

We are a resilient bunch, as you would surely know after two years of this pandemic. But for all the strength we have as a province, there is only so much inaction we can take.

In March 2020, the world was blindsided by COVID-19. Nobody, myself included, could blame you for a situation that got out of hand quickly. We supported your efforts to get us through the first wave and made positive recommendations whenever we could.

But we aren't in the first wave anymore, nor the second, third or fourth. Premier, we are in the fifth wave, still repeating the same mistakes made more than a year ago.

We still haven't repealed the anti-nurse, wage-capping Bill 124, that has been driving nurses and other healthcare professionals out of the field in droves. There still aren't adequate mental health supports for those working on the frontlines in hospitals and nursing homes. Ontario workers still don't have access to ten days of paid sick leave. Ontario has no plan for keeping nurses and personal support workers in their field. We need a Health Human Resources Strategy urgently or the crisis in healthcare will only continue to get worse.

It is unacceptable that nearly two years into a public health crisis, you haven't been able to build enough hospital staffing capacity to withstand, not the first or second, but the fifth wave of this pandemic. Hospitals declaring "Code Orange" - a disaster that threatens to overwhelm them - this far into the crisis is shameful.

Your inaction has also caused schools and businesses to close for longer than in any other jurisdiction in North America. It has taken an immense toll on the mental health and

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livelihoods of kids, parents, healthcare workers, small business owners, and all Ontarians left wondering when this revolving chaos will come to an end.

This week my opposition colleagues and I held a summit with a group of leaders from the healthcare sector, where we discussed how to end the crisis in our hospitals. We would be happy to set up a time with you to go over our recommendations and how we can work together to help tackle COVID. These are recommendations coming from a large group of organizations with expertise in health, who only want Ontario to succeed in the fight against COVID-19.

We just want the chaos to end, and for Ontario to have a healthcare system able to withstand threats like COVID-19.

Sincerely,

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

Steven Del Duca
Leader
Ontario Liberal Party