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## Friday July 10 COVID-19 Update

Dear neighbour,

This week has been very busy at Queen's Park. The Ontario Government rushed through two bills that so many of you raised concerns about: [Bill 175](#), legislation further enabling the privatization of home care and removing provisions of public control and accountability; and [Bill 171](#), a transit bill that runs roughshod over the planning process, residents, cities, and businesses.

They've also now proposed a new [omnibus bill](#), called the Economic Recovery Act, that somehow manages to include nothing at all that will help families, small businesses, or cities recover.

[Bill 184](#), a bill that will speed up evictions, is still going through the house. I expect it to be voted on next week. Meanwhile, the government has amended the order suspending [residential evictions](#) to allow evictions to resume as early as August 1. More on all of this below.

Please continue to write to my office and share your concerns. I deeply appreciate your input, and am especially grateful to those who share the specific impacts of government policies or proposals on your lives. Your stories help me to advocate for the changes that will truly benefit residents across University-Rosedale.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Bell".

Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)

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## Economic Recovery Act does nothing to help families, small businesses, or cities recover

On Wednesday, the Ontario Government released [the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act](#). The omnibus bill proposes to change 20 pieces of current legislation that govern the province's schools, municipalities, and justice system.

As Official Opposition Leader [Andrea Horwath explained](#), it does not include a single change to safeguard long-term care residents, improve the quality of care, or increase staff wages. This bill does not include a single dime for small and medium-sized businesses still struggling. It doesn't add even one more child care space, or increase the number of classrooms, teachers or education workers so all students can return to school safely. It doesn't include a single cent for municipalities, which are facing billions of dollars in deficits and cuts. Nor does it include anything at all to support First Nations communities, which are still struggling to keep the virus at bay and don't even have clean water, let alone equitable access to health care. And it doesn't provide the much-needed paid sick days all workers need.

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workable plan for schools. Municipalities have told us what they need to recover, and it's emergency funding.

I'm worried that Premier Ford is using COVID-19 recovery as cover to plow ahead with changes that have nothing at all to do with recovering from this pandemic.

As I continue to look into this bill in detail, I would love to hear your thoughts on it. Please email me at [JBell-QP@ndp.on.ca](mailto:JBell-QP@ndp.on.ca)

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## Cloth masks now required in all indoor public places

As of this Tuesday, masks or face coverings have been required in all indoor public places in Toronto. Wearing a mask is the simplest way that we can protect each other and help save lives. Masks should cover your nose, mouth and chin.

The Mandatory Mask or Face Covering Bylaw includes the following provisions:

- A cloth mask or face covering is required when entering a publicly accessible indoor space, such as a retail store, community centre, museum, or church, among others.
- Children under the age of two, individuals with a medical condition that makes it difficult to wear a mask, and individuals who are unable to put on or remove a mask without assistance are exempt from this bylaw. You are not required to carry proof of your exemption.
- For a full list of businesses and establishments affected, sectors excluded, and requirements for business owners, click [here](#).

Instructions on how to make a non-medical cloth mask (both sew and no-sew instructions) can be accessed from the Public Health Agency of Canada [here](#). Reusable cloth masks are also available for purchase from several local businesses including most pharmacies and some retailers.

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## MEANS FOR RESIDENTS:



You must wear a mask or face covering when in indoor public spaces



The mask should cover your nose, mouth & chin, without gaping



Follow the mask policy of the business you are visiting



Children under 2 & people unable to wear a mask for medical reasons are exempt



You do not need to bring proof of your exemption



Be kind as businesses adopt new policies to protect all of us from COVID-19

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 TORONTO Public Health

# We are demanding a plan for Ontario's schools to reopen safely and full-time

I've heard from parents across University-Rosedale who are at their wit's end over the government's failure to put out a real plan for September.

The health and safety of students and staff is the top priority, and no one should be back in school until we can be sure we're not putting kids and staff at risk. But when it is time to open schools, doing so with the government's disastrous hybrid model will only make learning, teaching, and parents' return-to-work plans a nightmare. The model laid out by the Ontario Government in a memo this week, obtained by the Globe and Mail, directs boards to create a model in which students go to school two days one week and three days the next, and spend the rest of the time learning from home.

**The NDP is calling on the Ford Government to abandon this hybrid model and instead ensure students can return to school full-time as soon as possible.** I echo my colleague, Education Critic MPP Marit Stiles, in demanding that the government stop putting all the responsibility on parents to stay home with kids indefinitely, and instead focus on getting more teachers, more education workers, and more classroom spaces lined up and ready to go, so that if we continue to see infection rates drop over the summer, we can [get all kids back in school full-time](#) in September.

[Join me](#) in demanding a clear, funded plan to support the safe reopening of Ontario's schools and child care centres. This must include:

- Paid sick leave and parental leave in any modified return;

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- Increased funding for teacher hiring, bussing, school repairs and cleaning;
- Expanded funding for childcare and schools for more, smaller classes
- Real collaboration with frontline education workers, students, parents and school boards through a COVID-19 recovery school advisory group.

Add your name [here](#). More about these demands [here](#) and [here](#).

I also want to highlight the crucial demand that Ford release a concrete plan to ensure that the [learning needs of students with disabilities are supported](#) when school opens this fall, as put forth by my colleague MPP Joel Harden, critic for Persons with Disabilities.

Please continue to send me your insight into how this issue is affecting you and your family specifically. This helps me to advocate for the policies that will truly support a safe and just recovery for families in University-Rosedale.

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## Evictions may begin as early as August 1

Yesterday, the Conservative Government's Attorney General, Doug Downey, amended the Ontario Superior Court [Order](#) suspending residential evictions. It now reads that evictions are suspended "until the end of the calendar month in which the state of emergency is terminated..." **This means that if the government ends the state of emergency in July, evictions could resume as early as August 1.**

This of course coincides with the Ford Government's push to pass Bill 184, a bill that will make evictions easier, especially for those tenants who followed the government's urging to make a repayment plan with their landlord. Right now, this disastrous bill is still going through the house and I expect it to be voted on next week.

**That means that it is more important than ever that we [act now to stop Bill 184](#).**

Join me in speaking out about this Bill [here](#).

**ACT NOW!**

# Stop Ford's Eviction Bill

Let's keep up the pressure to make sure Bill 184 doesn't become law!

[www.jessicabellmpp.ca/Bill184](http://www.jessicabellmpp.ca/Bill184)

## Bill 175 passes, advocacy for seniors must continue

Thank you to the hundreds of constituents who have reached out to my office to share your concerns about Bill 175, the Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act 2020. This legislation further enables the privatization of home care and removes the existing provisions of public control and accountability.

I was deeply disappointed that this Bill was passed in the legislature yesterday. This has only strengthened my resolve to keep advocating for seniors.

I support my colleague, Kitchener Centre NDP MPP Laura Mae Lindo, who tabled a private member's bill to **establish a first-ever Senior's Advocate for Ontario, to act as an independent voice for seniors and family members who act as caregivers.**

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AC requirements in long-term care since at least 2006, and the NDP has been bringing the matter to Ford's attention specifically since 2018. **Yesterday we called on Ford to [pass legislation immediately](#) to require air conditioning in all long-term care residents' rooms.**

I will also continue to push for **an independent inquiry into long-term care**. [Click here](#) to add your name to amplify this demand.

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## Forcing migrant workers to continue working after testing positive for COVID-19 is unacceptable

Half of Ontario's newly reported COVID-19 cases are among Windsor-Essex farm workers. Already, three migrant workers have died from contracting COVID-19 in Ontario. Forcing migrant workers to work with COVID-19 risks additional outbreaks in this already hard-hit and marginalized community. It is also inhumane.

This is why I supported University-Rosedale resident Dr. Persaud's call for [an immediate reversal of the Ford government's policy](#) allowing asymptomatic COVID-19 patients to continue working. This policy puts migrant agricultural workers at a disproportionate risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Migrant workers have insufficient access to hygiene and personal protective equipment and have limited workplace protections in a system that has failed to hold employers accountable. Instead of empowering migrant workers to safely self-isolate and provide paid sick days, this policy exploits migrant labour.

The Ontario NDP is calling on Premier Ford to formally [reverse the decision](#) to force asymptomatic migrant workers to work when they should be isolated and to step up with plans to ensure migrant workers get sick pay, pandemic pay and adequate accommodation so they can safely isolate when they need to. We must also support farm operators to meet their labour demands while the migrant workers are paid and protected.

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## Virtual Town Hall

July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
6:30-8pm

Hosted by:



Member of Provincial  
Parliament  
Jessica Bell



Toronto City  
Councillor  
Mike Layton



Millennial Womxn in  
Policy Founder  
Anjum Sultana

Moderated by Emmay Mah  
Executive Director, Toronto Environmental Alliance

# Join the University-Rosedale virtual townhall on a green and just recovery this Monday

I've heard from so many University-Rosedale residents who recognize the direction we were headed prior to COVID-19 was unsustainable and inequitable, and who demand a change of course through our recovery.

**This Monday, July 13 from 6:30-8:00 pm** I am excited to join panelists City Councillor Mike Layton and Anjum Sultana, Founder of Millennial Women in Policy, for a discussion moderated by Emmay Mah, Executive Director of Toronto Environmental Alliance about what a green and just recovery could look like for University-Rosedale. The event is co-hosted by Green 11, University of Toronto Student Union (UTSU) and For Our Kids.

[To join the conversation register on Eventbrite here.](#) You are encouraged to submit questions for panelists in the space provided on the registration form.

## Toronto's heat warning continues

The City of Toronto has opened emergency cooling centres which offer an air-conditioned place to rest indoors and receive a cool drink. Infection prevention and control measures will be in place. The closest Emergency Cooling Centres to University-Rosedale are:

- Wallace Emerson Community Centre (1260 Dufferin St). Open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during a heat warning.

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• Parkdale Library (1800 Queen Street West) Open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during a heat warning.

More information on cool spaces with a map of locations can be found [here](#), including wading and swimming pools that are currently open.

Toronto Public Health continues to advise residents to stay home, when possible, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19; however, people who are at higher risk for COVID-19 (e.g., persons who are more than 70 years of age), or who are required to self-isolate due to COVID-19 (e.g., symptoms, high risk exposure), may visit an Emergency Cooling Centre if necessary to beat the heat while taking the following precautions:

- When traveling to an Emergency Cooling Centre:
  - Wear a [non-medical mask or face covering](#) at all times
  - Avoid use of public transportation, taxis or ride-shares if possible
  - Practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
  - Practice [physical distancing](#)
- When arriving at an Emergency Cooling Centre, inform a staff member prior to entering of your COVID-19 or self-isolation status during the screening process.

## TIPS TO BEAT THE HEAT

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Know the symptoms & call 911.

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Drink lots of water to stay hydrated, even when you don't feel thirsty                       |  |  | Seek shade & practise physical distancing when outdoors                         |
| Plan outdoor exercise (e.g. run, walk, bike) during cooler parts of the day                  |  |  | Never leave children or pets inside a parked car                                |
| Call or video chat family, friends & neighbours to check in, especially seniors living alone |  |  | Consult with your doctor/pharmacist on medications that increase your heat risk |

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# Bill 171, the transit bill, passed on Tuesday

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While the government has said this bill will speed up transit construction, it does utterly nothing to address the two main reasons why transit is delayed: changing transit plans at the last minute and failure to fund transit.

In truth, Premier Ford is a master at delaying transit. He cancelled the ready-to-go relief line plan, and has cut funding to transit capital funding by 40 per cent.

We introduced 33 amendments to turn this bill into a model for transit construction and planning. Those amendments would have required a community benefits agreement, a fair expropriations process, the development of a residents' bill of rights during construction, a fair EA process, compensation for businesses harmed by transit construction. Premier Ford voted down every one.

We will continue to advocate for the Ontario Government to build transit right in the GTHA, and that means planning, funding and building transit projects that most benefit the region, and engaging in timely construction that respects people, municipalities, and businesses.

More on Bill 171 and the amendments I proposed [here](#).

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## Toronto needs funding from the provincial and federal governments

This week Toronto Mayor John Tory warned residents that the city will [begin implementing a host of devastating service cuts](#) unless the federal and provincial governments provide cash-strapped municipalities with a major bailout package. Despite Premier Ford's claims to the contrary, Ontario has [the responsibility and the capacity to support municipalities direly in need of emergency operating funding](#). I will keep calling for more funding for municipalities.

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## Free online health and safety training available

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mandatory certifications while observing physical distancing. Up to 100,000 job seekers will be able to take training through Employment Ontario across 10 different courses, including infection control, ladder safety, and preventing workplace violence and harassment. Contact an Employment Ontario [service provider](#) to enrol.

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## New bill addresses health impacts of climate crisis

We cannot bury our heads in the sand and refuse to recognize how the climate crisis will harm our health. That's why I support my colleagues MPP Peter Tabuns, Ontario NDP Climate Crisis critic, and MPP Bhutila Karpoche, Ontario NDP critic for Mental Health and Addictions, as they [table an important bill](#) requiring the government to ensure Ontario is prepared to address ongoing and future health impacts of the climate crisis.

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## Ontario courts to resume in-person sittings

Starting this week, Ontario's courts are beginning the gradual resumption of in-person sittings with enhanced health and safety precautions. To start, 149 courtrooms in both the Superior and Ontario Courts of Justice are reopening in 44 locations. Additional courtrooms will reopen in September, with the remainder to open by November 1, 2020. Face coverings will be required in all Ontario courts.

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## Today's COVID kindness feature

Thank you to the amazing artists, organizers, and the Kensington Market community for making this powerful and beautiful street mural happen on Augusta between Baldwin and Nassau. The 16 letters that were painted allowed 16 separate artists of colour to share a vision for justice and peace in solidarity with the global protest taking place at this moment in time. Artists donated their time and resources to support the continued fight against anti-Black racism in our city, and secured support from other donors and partners. Black Lives Matter!

Drone video showing the details and full scale of the mural [here](#).

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**Note that this email and all previous COVID-19 updates are available at: [www.jessicabellmpp.ca/coronavirus](http://www.jessicabellmpp.ca/coronavirus)**

As always, if you require urgent assistance from my office, please contact my team at 416-535-7206 or email us at [jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca)



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