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Wednesday September 23 Update

Dear Neighbour,

COVID-19 cases are rising fast, largely in response to the decision in July to ease restrictions and move the province into stage three. The case counts are increasing at the same time as schools reopen, flu season begins, and businesses are just starting to recover from the Spring shutdown.

It is vital the provincial government release an effective second wave plan, one that is directed by public health, increases both the capacity and number of testing sites so sick people aren't waiting in line for hours for a COVID-19 test, an investment in schools and the hiring of more teachers to reduce class sizes, and the implementation of paid sick leave so people can stay at home and not expose others.

Stay safe, practice physical distancing, and wash your hands.

Yours,

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

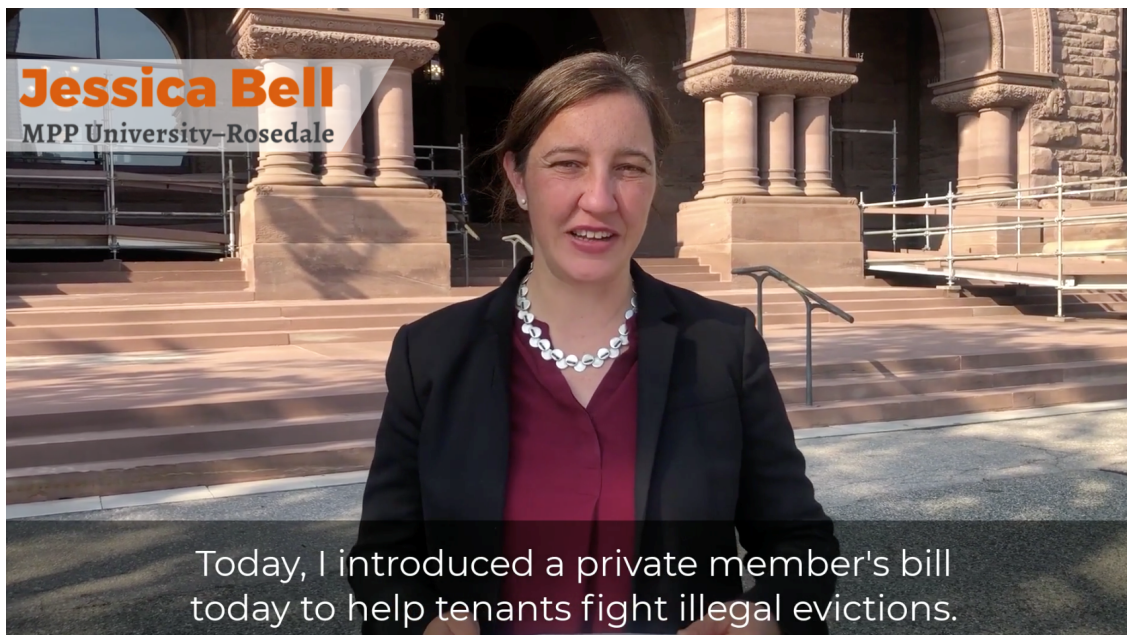
Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)

My newsletter for this week includes:

- [I introduced a bill to protect tenants from illegal evictions, including renovations](#)

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- [Ban on commercial evictions extended to October 31st](#)
- [NDP demands developers pay their fare share and help the TDSB fix schools](#)
- [Doug Ford blocks NDP motions calling for class caps of 15](#)
- [I raise your concerns about the chaotic start to the school year](#)
- [Now is the time to follow public health guidelines](#)



I introduced my bill protecting tenants from illegal evictions, including renovictions

Every week I meet residents who are hurting because our city is in the middle of an affordable housing crisis. Illegal evictions and renovictions are making the housing crisis worse.

Data from the Landlord and Tenant Board shows that between 2015 and 2019, landlords' requests for eviction hearings where the tenant has done nothing wrong rose by over 77 percent. This is because landlords use evictions to kick out long-term tenants who are protected by rent control and replace them with new tenants, charging a much higher rent. Illegal evictions like these are driving up the cost of housing for everyone.

This week, I introduced my new bill, [Protecting Renters from Illegal Evictions Act](#). If passed, my bill will protect tenants by:

- Increasing government enforcement of eviction laws

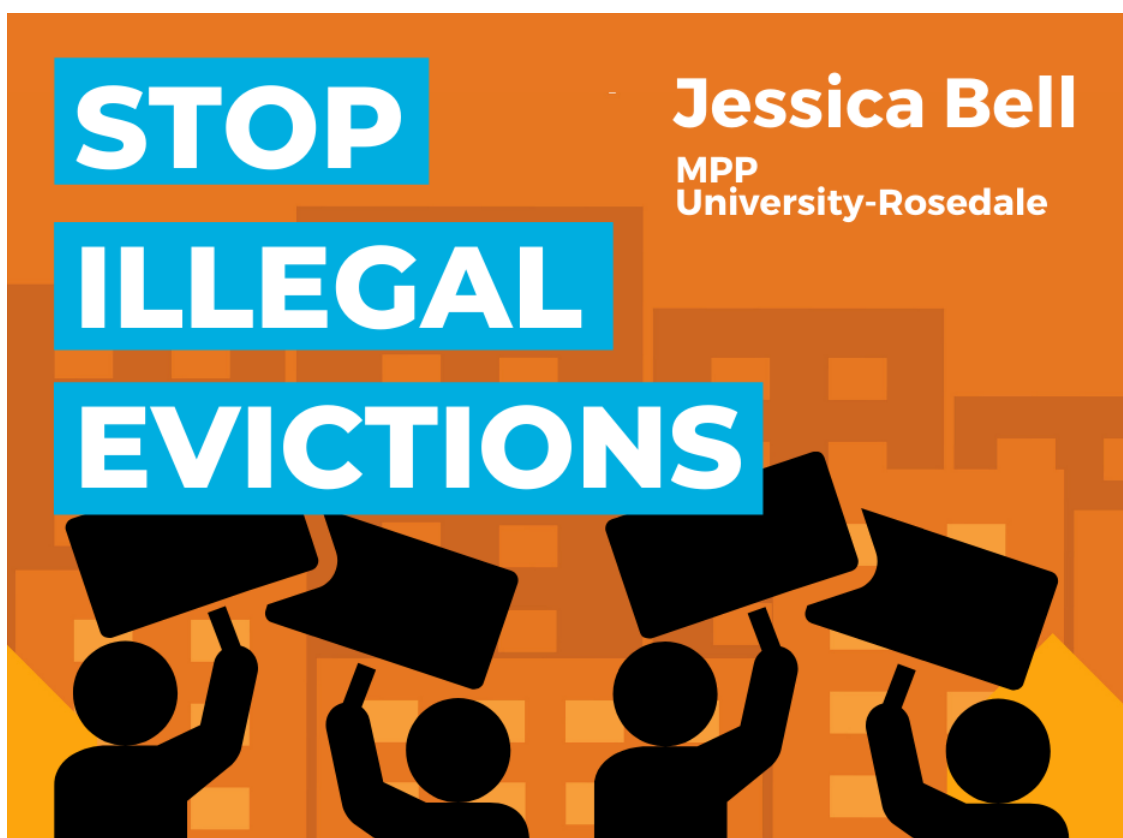
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• Bringing in real fines for landlords who illegally evict

- Providing access to legal representation for tenants who are facing a no-fault eviction, and the
- Creation of a registry of landlords who evict tenants due to no fault of their own.

The stress of fighting a no-fault eviction forces many tenants out of their homes without a fair fight or fair compensation. Once evicted, renters are often pushed out of their communities because of sky high rents. This puts tenants at risk of dislocation, housing unaffordability, mental health stress and homelessness.

[ACT NOW: Support MPP Jessica Bell's bill cracking down on illegal evictions](#)



[JESSICABELLMPP.CA/STOPILEGALEVICTIONS](https://jessicabellmpp.ca/stoPILEGALEVICTIONS)

Ford's rent freeze legislation is a good start, but Bill 204 could do more to protect renters

On September 17th, Doug Ford introduced [Bill 204](#), which looks to temporarily freeze annual rent increases from Jan. 1, 2021 to Dec. 31, 2021.

The rent freeze will include buildings first occupied after Nov. 15, 2018, which

While Ford's new bill is welcome news for most tenants, the legislation includes some worrying loopholes that could put tenants at risk, including allowing for above-guideline rent increases (AGIs). AGI's are often used by landlords to download the cost of building repairs and maintenance onto tenants.

These are the changes we are advocating for in the bill:

- a ban on AGI's in 2021
- legislation that fully implements rent control, including vacancy control on all rental units
- a moratorium on evictions during the pandemic, and
- a rent relief program.

[Support the Ontario NDP's demand for rent subsidies here.](#)



Ban on commercial evictions extended to October 31st

Along with providing rent freeze legislation, Bill 204 also extends the ban on some commercial evictions to October 31. Unfortunately, the ban only offers protection for small businesses that are eligible for Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA), which applies only to those with a 70 percent drop in revenue.

Small businesses in our riding, from Bloor to Davisville, are still on a knife-edge, with many on the brink of shutting their doors forever. We need to do more for struggling businesses who don't qualify for the federal rent protection program.

[Read the Ontario NDP's Save Main Street plan here.](#)

I encourage you to share your feedback on our Save Main Street plan and the Ontario Government's Bill 204 at jbell-co@ndp.on.ca so we can raise your concerns in the legislature

NDP demands developers pay their fare share and help the TDSB fix schools

[A new report from the Broadbent Institute](#) and advocacy groups [Progress Toronto](#) and [Fix Our Schools](#) revealed that Toronto District Public School Board (TDSB) is short hundreds of millions of dollars because developers have not been required to pay Education Development Charges (EDC's) for over 20 years. Meanwhile, the Toronto Catholic District School Board has collected and invested EDC revenue of over \$204 million over the last 20 years. The reason for this discrepancy is because the province prohibits the TDSB from collecting its fair share of revenue from developers.

I, along with my colleagues, am calling on the Ontario government to allow the TDSB to collect EDC's from developers so the board can make necessary improvements to our school infrastructure, such as improving ventilation, working washrooms and touchless faucets - all improvements that are critical to keeping kids and teachers safe during a pandemic.

TDSB schools need \$15.9 billion in repairs, as a result of years of inaction by Liberal and Conservative governments. Enough is enough. It is time to fix our schools.

[More on the NDP's statement here.](#)

Doug Ford blocks NDP motion calling for class caps of 15

Despite rising numbers of COVID-19 infections and well over 100 schools reporting cases of the virus, Ford's conservatives unanimously blocked an NDP motion calling for class sizes to be capped at 15.

This came on the same day that Doug Ford announced it is no longer safe to have gatherings of more than 10 people indoors. This government is still forcing classrooms to be packed with 30 kids or more.

Many experts have recommended small class sizes and physical distancing at school, [including a report by SickKids which calls for classes to be capped at no more than 15 students](#). Ontario's classes, however, are exceptionally large,

[See which schools and day cares are reporting cases of COVID-19 here.](#)

[More on the Ontario NDP's motion here.](#)



I raise your concerns about the chaotic start to the school year

I want to thank all the teachers, students and parents who have made it through the first week of school. Congratulations. **We are doing our best in such tough circumstances.**

I am hearing reports from parents and teachers about large class sizes, the elimination of math, science, music and art programs in some schools, as well as cuts to special education. I am also hearing concerning reports about shortages in PPE and confusion about cleaning protocol and screening protocol.

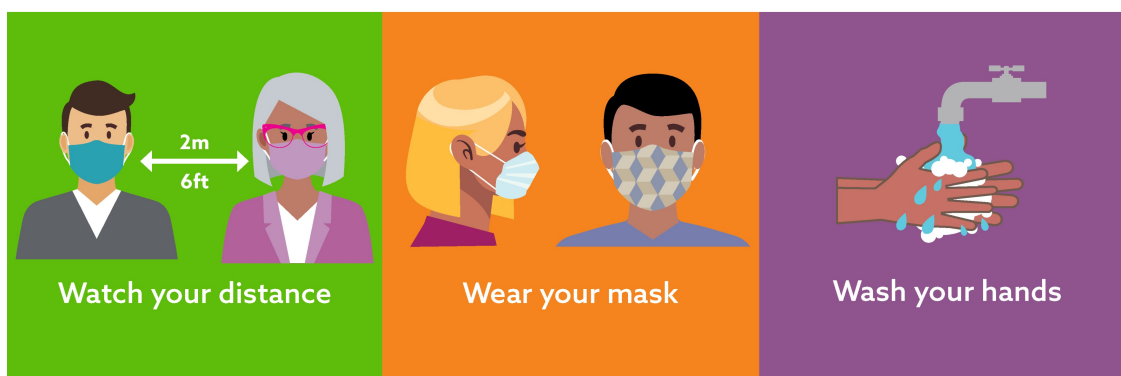
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[survey is still open](#), and I encourage you to share what you are seeing so I can raise these issues with the Minister of Education, the Premier and public health units.

For additional information on school announcements, I encourage you to follow the announcements made by [TDSB Trustee Chris Moise](#) and [TCDSB Trustee, Norm Di Pasquale](#).

3 STEPS FOR SELF-PROTECTION

We all have a role to play to reduce COVID-19 spread & keep our city safer:



[TORONTO.CA/COVID19](https://toronto.ca/covid19)

 **TORONTO** Public Health

Now is the time to follow public health guidelines

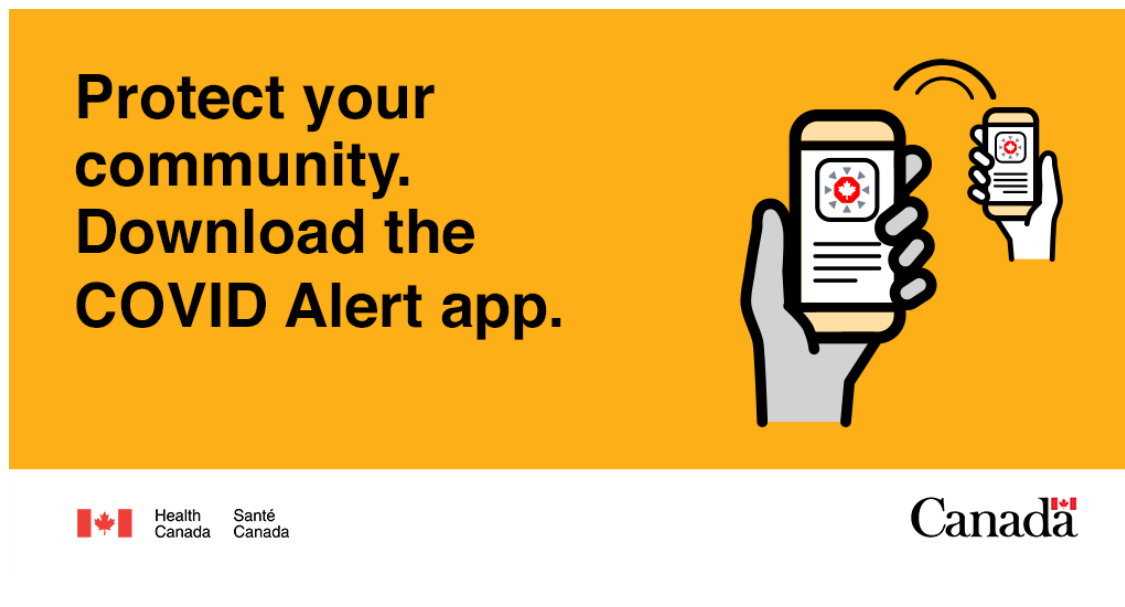
As COVID-19 cases climb in Ontario, please consider these reminders from Toronto Public Health to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed:

- Limit non-essential trips out of your home and follow [travel advice](#)
- Keep [two metres \(six feet\) distance](#) from others
- [Wear a mask or face covering](#) in indoor public spaces and when you can't keep physical distance
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based (70-90 per cent) hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

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Download the [COVID Alert app](#) so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19. I have downloaded the app and I encourage you to do the same.



Note that this email and all previous COVID-19 updates are available at: 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 jbell-co@ndp.on.ca



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