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Monday, March 1 Update

Dear Friend,

This week in the legislature is set to be a big one. The Ford government is ramming through Bill 245, the Access to Justice Bill, which proposes to make it even harder for residents and the city to intervene in land-use planning and environmental decisions. I will be speaking on this bill in the coming days. The Ontario government is also making yet another big change to election laws, by doubling the maximum donation allowed to each candidate. As the party that represents big business and big developers, this will help Ford build his war chest for the coming election.

On a positive note, I welcome the news the homeless population in Toronto will be vaccinated in phase 1. Toronto's homeless population is very vulnerable to the worst effects of COVID-19, and it is easily spread as people cannot self-isolate.

Bring on the good weather. Please stay safe and contact our office if you need help.

Yours,

Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)

My newsletter for this week includes:

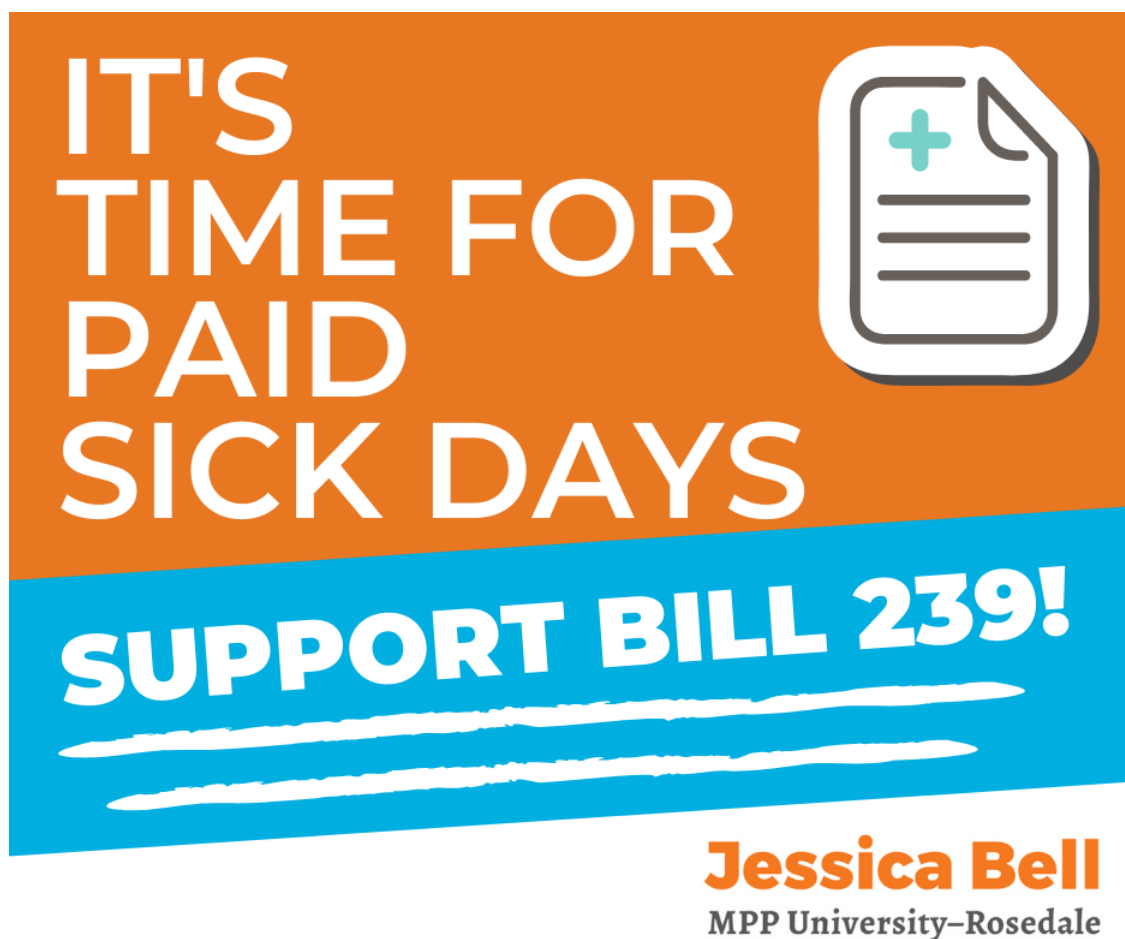
Queens Park

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- [Fighting for the right to housing](#)
- [Urgent action needed to make schools safe](#)
- [Bad changes to land use planning posed in Bill 245](#)
- [Planned changes to election laws will double max donation limits](#)
- [Provincial vaccine update and timelines](#)
- [Triage protocols must be made in consultation with people with disabilities, AODA](#)

Community

- [Pop-up COVID-19 testing at Cecil Community Centre](#)
- [March 4 is the deadline to submit comments on Dominion Foundry buildings](#)



Ford government votes against paid sick leave

[Public health officials](#), frontline health care workers, [mayors from across the province](#), small business owners, and workers all agree – paid sick days will

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losing income.

In December, the Ontario NDP tabled Bill 239, the [Stay Home If You Are Sick Act](#), which lays out exactly how we can ensure anyone who has fallen ill can stay home without the fear of lost wages. **Today, the Ford government voted against Bill 239.**

The Ontario NDP is not done fighting. We need to do everything we can to keep the momentum going. That's why on **March 9**, I am organizing a phone bank to demand Premier Ford, the Minister of Labour Monte McNaughton and the Minister of Health Christine Elliott bring Ontarians paid sick days now! To get involved, send an email to jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca or [click here](#).

Want to learn more about paid sick days and why they're so important? Watch [my interview with Deena Ladd](#), the executive director of Workers' Action Centre.



Renters need more protection from above guideline rent increases

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landlords for Above Guideline Increases (AGI's) to rent increased by 250 % in the past six years and more than 84% of AGI applications are made by corporate landlords. The Ford government's rent freeze for 2021 [does not include AGI's](#).

AGI's issued by corporate landlords make living in our city even more unaffordable. Right now, tenants at 103 Avenue Rd are fighting an 11.3 % rent increase. Many are lower-income renters, seniors and families who have lost income during COVID-19. A rent hike like this will force tenants out of their homes to try and find another affordable unit in Canada's most unaffordable city. Last week, [I asked the Premier his plan for protecting renters](#) from the above guideline rent hikes like this.

Please sign [my colleague MPP Suze Morrison's petition](#) calling for the Ford government to pass the [MPP Suze Morrison's bill to require landlords to set aside 10% of collected rent for a maintenance fund](#) which must be emptied before an application for an AGI can be made.

Fighting for the right to housing

I have heard from many community members about the city's injunction against [Khaleel Seivwright](#), the carpenter who has been helping to build temporary tiny shelters. I share those concerns and believe the real problem is the failure of governments to provide safe housing to those who need it.

I have been working closely with my colleagues to keep the housing crisis our city is facing on the agenda at Queen's Park. Last week we forced a vote on our bill to bring in a [real ban on evictions](#) and to keep it in place until a year after the pandemic ends. We also voted on my colleague MPP Sara Singh and MPP Faisal Hassan's bill calling for all laws and policies in Ontario to be guided by the [principle that housing is a human right](#). Conservatives defeated both of these bills.

We will continue to use all the tools at our disposal to force the provincial government to live up to its responsibility to keep people housed.

Urgent action needed to make schools safe

The more contagious variants are here, and school-based COVID-19 cases are on the rise again. In the few weeks since kids have returned to in-person

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We need urgent action and investment — because children, teachers and education workers' safety is important, and because no one in this province can afford for us to let a third wave get started.

That's why the Ontario NDP moved for unanimous consent to pass our motion calling for stronger supports to keep schools from closing, including a cap on class sizes and a more comprehensive testing system. Despite promises to test up to 50,000 students and staff a week, the ministry reported just 3,706 tests completed since late January. The Ford government blocked our motion, but we will continue to fight for stronger action to protect students, school staff, and their families.

Bad changes to land use planning posed in Bill 245

Last week, the Ford government introduced Bill 245, the [Accelerating Access to Justice Act, 2021](#). Bill 245 is a large omnibus bill that includes changes to the appointment process for judges, the creation of a new megatribunal to deal with land use planning decisions, and the removal of appeal rights from various environmental statutes.

Right now, I am concerned by [Schedule 6](#), which merges the five tribunals within the current Ontario Land Tribunals into a single megatribunal. A major function of a tribunal is to provide access to adjudicators with specialized expertise. As it stands, Bill 245 does not require an adjudicator who is hearing an environmental matter to have any environmental qualifications. If passed, schedule 6 has the potential to undermine due process and fast-track development, limit public consultation and participation in land use planning, and further gut environmental protection.

Bill 245 is currently at second reading, which means we are debating this bill in the legislature and can raise concerns directly with the Ford government. If you have any thoughts you would like to share with our team, please let us know via email jbell-qp@ndp.on.ca. If you are interested in speaking at the committee, you can do so by [registering here](#).

[Details on schedule 6 can be found here.](#)

Planned changes to election laws will double max donation limits

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the legal maximum political donation limit from \$1650 to \$3300, tightening advertising rules for third parties, extending the public subsidy for political parties until 2024, and allowing independent MPPs to fundraise before the writ drops.

Doubling the maximum contribution limit increases the influence of wealthy insiders and lobbyists at the expense of most people who do not have \$3300 to spare for a political donation. I believe that big money has no place in politics. We cannot return to the era of cash-for-access fundraising. I am opposed to this move.

Provincial vaccine update and timelines

With more vaccine shipments arriving to Canada, including the new [AstraZeneca vaccine which has now been approved by Health Canada](#), the Ford government released additional details on their vaccine distribution plan.

Beginning March 15, seniors over the age of 80 will be able to register for vaccinations, using an online portal and phone line. We will provide details on that as they become available.

Over the weekend, the City of Toronto began [vaccinating those experiencing homelessness](#), which is now part of the City's Phase One priority plan. This comes after the devastating news that Ontario's homeless are more than 10 times likely to require intensive care for COVID-19, and roughly five times more likely to die. Right now, more than 20 shelters in Toronto are fighting COVID-19 outbreaks.

Triage protocols must be made in consultation with people with disabilities, AODA

As Ontario continues to prepare for hospitals to fill beyond capacity, the Ford government issued a triage protocol deciding who will get life-saving ventilator support, and who will not.

You can read the [full protocol here](#).

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance (AODA), as well as the Ontario NDP, are concerned some people, including those living with disabilities, could be denied care. AODA, along with other advocacy groups, are urging the Ford government to take steps to hold an open, accessible, and inclusive public consultation process on how critical care triage decisions will be

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AODA is a disability consumer advocacy group that works to support the full and effective implementation of accessibility standards in Ontario. To learn more about AODA and how you can join the alliance, [click here.](#)

免费投放COVID-19测试

Cecil Community Centre 58 Cecil Street



时间：3月1日，15日和29日，星期一



无需预约

时间：下午12点到下午6:30

“如果您有COVID-19症状或认为您可能需要检查，我们鼓励您进行检查”



OHIP不是必需的，但是请带上ID或带有您名字的东西



PARKDALE
QUEEN WEST
Community
Health Centre



Toronto General
Toronto Western
Princess Margaret
Toronto Rehab
Michener Institute

Toronto Community Housing



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Cecil Community Centre 58 Cecil Street



When: Mondays, March 1st, 15th and 29th

No Appointment Needed



Time: 12 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.



"If you have COVID-19 symptoms or think you may need a test, you are encouraged to get tested"



OHIP is not required, but please bring ID or something with your name on it.



Cecil Community Centre 58 Cecil Street



Cuándo: lunes, 1, 15 y 29 de marzo

No se necesita cita



Hora: 12 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.



Todos son bienvenidos



No se requiere OHIP, pero traiga una identificación si es posible



Pop-up COVID-19 testing at Cecil Community Centre

Throughout March on Monday's, Cecil Community Centre located 58 Cecil Community Centre will be open for pop-up COVID-19 testing. No appointment is needed.

When: Mondays, March 1st, 15th, and 29th

Time: 12 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms or think you may need a test, you are encouraged to get tested.

OHIP is not required, but please bring ID or something with your name on it.

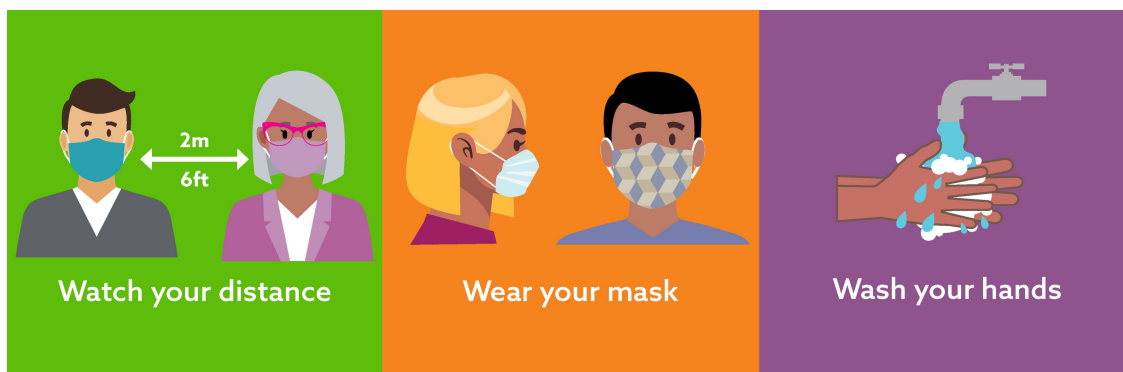
March 4 is the deadline to submit comments on the Dominion Foundry buildings

After public backlash, an [Ontario judge temporarily stopped the province](#) from demolishing the Dominion Foundry buildings. The judge found the province was in contravention of the Heritage Act, and in breach of Ontario's obligations to the City of Toronto.

The Ford government has now initiated a consultation process to hear from the community about the fate of the Dominion Foundry Building. The deadline to submit comments is March 4. You can write to the province by [using this link](#).

3 STEPS FOR SELF-PROTECTION

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



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.

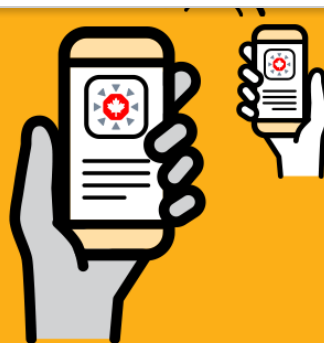
The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed:

- 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
- Stay home if you are feeling unwell

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.

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**Protect your
community.
Download the
COVID Alert app.**



Health
Canada Santé
Canada

Canada

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 jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca



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