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April 30, 2020

Premier Doug Ford
Ontario Legislature
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Premier Ford,

We are writing to you as representatives of the Toronto-Danforth riding in Toronto. We are representatives of a community with very active business improvement areas and many prosperous small businesses. Our small businesses include among others hospitality, retail and the technical and administrative support to the film, music and arts sectors.

Tomorrow is May 1st and many, probably most, of our small businesses will be unable to pay rent. Not only is this clear but it is also clear that the current Federal/Provincial CECRA program for small businesses will not work for most. Businesses have told us that their landlords are not willing to apply in many cases. Others have said that many landlords are not willing to put in their share of the cost. Many of our small businesses are finding that the program was structured to protect landlords to whom the money was directed, not to protect the small businesses.

In addition, because there is no moratorium on evictions, tenants have no leverage in negotiations with landlords.

For all these reasons we fear that starting May 1st we will lose and continue to lose many small businesses on our main streets and elsewhere. This will be a disaster which will harm our local economy and, replicated elsewhere, will damage business across Ontario.

You have always been clear that promoting small business was key to making Ontario a good place to live. Your slogan of "Open for Business" reflects your values. Yet, right now, small businesses are facing disaster and need your help.

As you did with residential tenancies, our businesses need you to declare that a moratorium on evictions will come into effect immediately and you need to present legislation to the legislature immediately to make that law. That moratorium needs to be in place for at least 4 months retroactive to April 1st.

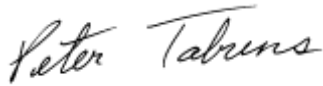
You also need to put in place for three months substantial rent subsidies for commercial lease holders providing up to 75% of their rents capped at \$10,000 per month so that they can pay their rents and so small landlords who depend on their rental income can survive.

Small businesses also need you to help by putting a freeze on utility payments during this period.

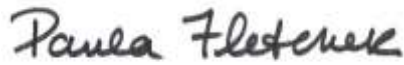
Failure to act will mean that we will face main streets full of boarded up shops. It will mean the destruction of years of efforts by hard working small business people and their employees. In quite a few cases where business people have provided personal loan guarantees it can mean personal financial ruin. In total it will be a massive set back to the economy of our community and this province.

Please act today.

Sincerely,



Peter Tabuns
Member of Provincial Parliament
Toronto-Danforth



Paula Fletcher
City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth