

May 7, 2020



Letter sent to all Members of Parliament for Toronto

Thank you for your continued attention to fighting the health crisis while providing basic protection for many working people and our communities across Canada. We also send our gratitude to the members of the federal public service who have worked so hard to create and deliver a range of essential programs and services under unprecedented circumstances. At the federal level, you are moving in the right direction, demonstrating a positive mix of collaboration and leadership.

We write today on behalf of our Labour Council's 150-plus affiliated unions and locals and our 220,000 members to support the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' call for federal government action to protect vital municipal services.

FCM recommends immediately delivering at least \$10 billion in targeted emergency operating funding to all local governments as direct allocations, and delivering additional emergency operating funding to individual local governments facing unique financial pressures.

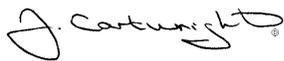
In addition to requiring basic supports needed by all municipalities, Toronto faces special pressures as Canada's largest city. The Toronto Transit Commission is losing \$23 million a week and has not receiving any additional funding from the federal or provincial government. There are also huge fiscal pressures as a result of expanding Toronto's shelter system to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As we know, this system supports homeless and hard-to-house people from across the GTA, not just Toronto. While Toronto has received funding from federal and provincial governments to offset some additional shelter costs, unfunded pressures still exist. These are just some examples of exceptional pressures Toronto faces.

Emergency funding is needed now to prevent municipalities having to cut essential services to remain solvent. This includes Toronto's ambitious Transform TO plans that address the climate emergency and accelerate efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Finally, in our letter of April 15, 2020, we talked of three urgent priorities at the federal level. First, banks and other financial institutions must be forced to lower their credit card interest rates well below the 10.9 per cent that most are offering. We have not seen action on this yet. Second, we thank you for implementing a number of supplemental income supports for most of those who had fallen through the cracks, including seasonal workers and students. We know there are still some gaps and we look forward to those being filled. Third, we continue to call on you to expand paid sick leave for federally-regulated workers.

The Toronto & York Region Labour Council calls on each of you to continue your leadership and ensure our society is more equal – not less – coming out of COVID-19. We urge you to show utmost care for workers and communities, maintain social solidarity with the goal that no one is left behind, and recognize that Canadians start from different places. We will be in touch again to provide further advice regarding next steps.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. Cartwright" with a registered trademark symbol.

John Cartwright
President

c.c Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
Andrew Scheer, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada
Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada
Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada

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