

May 21, 2020



**LETTER SENT TO:**

**Mayors, Regional Councillors,  
Councillors of York Region  
Towns and Cities**

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on every Canadian. In this time of uncertainty, governments at all levels have responded to protect residents and to mitigate the impact and spread of the current pandemic. Thank you for your continued attention to fighting the health crisis while also alleviating some of the many stresses of working people and communities in York Region.

We are writing today on behalf of our Labour Council's affiliated unions and our 220,000 members to bring to your attention the eight priorities outlined in Labour Council's ***Response to Covid-19 and Beyond***, which is attached to this letter.

Our Labour Council recognizes the crucial role for municipal governments in the economic recovery post Covid-19. We are supporting the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' call for the federal government to provide at least \$10 billion in targeted emergency operating funding to all local governments. The crucial services delivered by municipalities and regional governments cannot be another victim of this pandemic.

Amidst global uncertainty, weak consumer demand, and high levels of indebtedness, business investment will not by itself lead the engine of recovery. Only strong public investment can lead the recovery, lifting incomes and economic activity that will in turn stimulate business investment. This investment should prioritize social infrastructure, including investments in acute health and long-term care, home care, early childhood education and care and recreation centres, and arts and cultural installations.

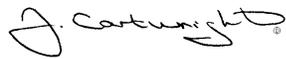
We also call on local governments to expand and renew the stock of affordable housing as this crisis is exacerbating the problem of hidden poverty within York Region, increasing the number of low-income, homeless and precariously-housed populations, including those who are survivors of domestic violence. Our Labour Council has been and will continue to actively call on the federal and provincial governments to provide additional supports to municipalities for housing as well as transit. We ask that you also actively call on the Province to increase funding to public health, rather than carry through the cuts announced last year.

We thank you for providing supports for many residents who have fallen through the cracks during this difficult time. As many municipal governments are grappling with loss of revenue and increase in expenditures, it is easy to focus on budget lines rather than people.

Our Labour Council believes no municipal worker should be involuntarily laid off during this time, as this step risks the loss of skilled employees and further impacts on families and communities. Workers should be safely re-deployed if possible, so that no one should suffer a loss in income (and face even more uncertainty) during this time.

We call on you to continue your leadership and ensure that 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Cartwright". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small registered trademark symbol (®) at the end.

John Cartwright  
President

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