

Queen's Park Office
Main Legislative Building, Unit 451
Toronto, ON M7A 1A8

416 325.4664
mschreiner@ola.org



Mike Schreiner, MPP
Guelph

Guelph Constituency Office
173 Woolwich Unit 102
Guelph, ON N1H 3V4

519.836.4190
mschreiner-co@ola.org

Hon. Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

July 29, 2020

Dear Premier:

On June 19, I wrote to you requesting urgent changes to the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program (CECRA). The program is woefully underutilized and failing to help most small businesses due to fatal design flaws.

I asked you to work with federal counterparts to reform the program by: 1) Allowing tenants to apply directly rather than being dependent on landlords; 2) Lowering the eligibility threshold to a 20% drop in revenue; and 3) Extending the rental assistance period by three months.

To date I have not received a reply.

New data shows that the program has dispersed just 10% of allocated funding, meaning that the vast majority of Ontario's \$241 million financial commitment remains unspent.

With tens of thousands of Ontario small businesses on the brink of eviction, CECRA is an abject failure.

It is highly irresponsible to withhold desperately needed COVID-19 rent relief funds at a time when one-third of small businesses say this is exactly what they need. There will be no economic recovery if we fail to help businesses keep the lights on.

I respectfully ask once again that CECRA be urgently fixed to provide relief directly to tenants.

If the changes to CECRA cannot be made in cooperation with the federal government, then I urge you to act on the Canadian Federation of Independent Business's call to withdraw Ontario's contribution and provide direct rent relief to small businesses.

I also call on your government to recall the Legislature in August to pass a bill to extend the commercial eviction ban until the end of the year. It makes no sense to allow the ban to expire at the end of August when CECRA is not working.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Schreiner".

Mike Schreiner, MPP for Guelph

CC: Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance