

Ms. Sylvia Jones, MPP
180 Broadway 3rd Floor, Suite A
Orangeville, ON, L9W 1K3

Cc: Dr. Nicola Mercer of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

March 1, 2021

Dear Ms. Jones;

Let us begin by congratulating both the province and the health unit in leading us through these unprecedented times. We understand the many difficult decisions that you must face on a daily basis. We are proud to live in one of the safest jurisdictions in North America and one of the safest regions in the Province of Ontario.

Our ongoing focus however is to be the voice of business in Dufferin County. We feel that the interest of those businesses has not been served in the recent decision to leave our health region in the red restrict designation rather than the orange control designation of the provinces colour coded reopening framework. This decision has a huge impact on many of our businesses but in particular those in the restaurant and gym industries.

We supported the decision when we became the first area to undergo a mask order despite the extra costs it incurred to many of our members. We also understood the sacrifices we were making to protect the most vulnerable in our communities during earlier lockdowns.

The paradigm has changed though since the time those decisions were made and we in the business community are now looking for the payback from those sacrifices.

The most vulnerable in our communities have been protected by vaccines. Protections in the name of PPE and advanced cleaning that were not available early in the pandemic are now in place to protect both our customers and our staff. Stay at home orders in the worst hit parts of the province remain in effect to prevent those in those regions from travelling to our area.

You may recall as well that when the initial-coloured framework came out the initial benchmark for orange for the 7 day moving average of confirmed cases was 100 not the far more conservative 40.

We would call on you to consider all of the indicators when considering your decision and not simply case numbers. Many of those, in particular our hospitalization and ICU numbers point to a region in far better shape than red. It is clear as well that the pandemic remains a far greater issue in urban areas



Dufferin Board of Trade

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and we would urge you to consider splitting off rural areas such as Dufferin (and Wellington) to allow them to reopen at a more appropriate zone.

Thank-you for taking the time to consider our request. Our members are suffering, and we urge you to provide them with a predictable framework when making your decisions. Allowing lesser restrictions even for a short time would have a great impact on their bottom lines and may allow them simply to survive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Skorski".

Liz Skorski,
Chair – Dufferin Board of Trade