



## Oakville MPP Stephen Crawford on the Economic Impact of COVID-19

As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to evolve globally, Ontario is taking further action to ensure the province's health care system is positioned to continue to safeguard the health and well-being of Ontarians, and monitoring the economic impact. Based on the advice of Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, and the experts at the province's Command Table, we have been taking decisive steps to contain the virus and continue to protect the public.

A few days ago, Ontario's Minister of Finance met with Canada's Minister of Finance to discuss the economic impact of COVID-19. Amidst this global uncertainty, we are working collaboratively to ensure that Ontario and Canada continue to remain economically stable. We are creating a \$100 million contingency fund as an initial response to COVID-19, and we are taking action to ensure readiness for a range of outbreak scenarios. Furthermore, Ontario is expanding testing capacity and establishing dedicated assessment centres to ease pressures on hospitals. Our government continues to monitor the situation closely as we learn more about the impact COVID-19, geopolitical risks, and commodity price fluctuations will have on our economy. While it is still too early to know the full impacts, our government will ensure the necessary resources are available to respond as needed.

As a measure of prudence, the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries has convened a series of advisory groups with leading sector stakeholders in Ontario's \$74-billion heritage, sport, tourism and culture industries to ensure the government is provided with the most up-to-date information on economic impacts. By working in partnership with professional and amateur sports organizations, airlines, hotels, restaurateurs, film and television producers, as well as other tourism and cultural attractions, the government will be supported with real-time information that includes attendance records, revenue and labour impacts. This information will help inform any action that may be required to protect Ontario jobs and support impacted businesses.

We are also speaking regularly with our agencies and attractions to proactively initiate the latest health, safety, and cleanliness protocols to protect the public and staff members. These touchpoints provide an opportunity to share best practices and collectively monitor and update impacts to the sector. Our chief concern is the health and safety of all residents, visitors, and staff across the province. I would like to thank all employers, community partners and frontline workers who are actively working to address this challenge and keep everyone safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

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