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REGION OF PEEL  
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Mr. Chair & Members of Peel Regional Council,

Today you are being asked to consider a motion put forward by Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie with respect to the use of a Section 22 order to mandate that retailers only sell “essential” goods and close off other non-essential portions of their retail operation and make a plan for the areas of these stores where non-essential items share space with essential items.

The Mississauga Board of Trade would like to express its concern with this motion in that it is both unworkable and logistically nearly impossible to implement.

First, the Government of Ontario should not have moved Peel Region to the “Grey Zone-Lockdown” phase which had the result of mandatory closings of many small businesses in the Region. There is little to no evidence that businesses contributed in any way to COVID19 cases and in fact have been the ones practicing effective physical distancing, proper PPE etiquette, cleaning, sanitizing and respecting public health directives.

However, as a result of this decision, retail stores that sell “essential” services are required to remain open to ensure that the public can get access to the goods and services they require during the pandemic. Some of these stores are larger multi-faceted operations who provide much needed products to the public.

Roping off sections of a large retail store also creates a safety hazard for employees. This motion essentially transforms retail clerks into enforcement officers for those customers who are not in favour of supporting this measure.

With reduced aisle capacity, there will also be a reduced need for staff and thereby forcing more people out of work, just before the holiday season.

This motion would require some of these operators to substantially overhaul their store layout, cause immense confusion to the shopping public and in some cases cause possible enforcement issues. It is simply not feasible to impose these conditions on these retail outlets.

We believe that it would be far more appropriate for Regional Council to call on the Government of Ontario to allow all retail stores to re-open with appropriate capacity limits

based upon operations and square footage and allow all retailers to serve their customers at the point of purchase.

By supporting today's motion, the Mississauga Board of Trade would simply say, "two wrongs do not make a right".

Finally, we believe that the use of Section 22 in this motion is inappropriate. Section 22 is used by Medical Officers of Health for immediate health and safety concerns and not to "level the playing field" for businesses.

The Mississauga Board of Trade is very concerned about how the Government of Ontario's system for business closings has been implemented. We have written to the Premier on several occasions advocating for the Mississauga business community and asking the Province to use a fairer and more realistic approach to the COVID19 pandemic.

Today's motion does not do that and in fact pits business against business is not in the spirit of working together for a common goal.

We can get through this pandemic together with sound public policy, focusing on the areas of real COVID19 transmission and adequately funding health and support services.

We would respectfully ask Council to vote against this motion.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D Wojcik', enclosed within a circular scribble.

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