NDP releases Save Main Street: A Plan for Jobs and Financial Security for Working People

YORK SOUTH—WESTON — Working folks need financial stability to make it through the second wave of COVID-19, and drive the recovery. That's why Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Official Opposition NDP, and Catherine Fife, critic for Economic Growth and Job Creation, released a new plan Friday to Save Main Street.

"The COVID-19 pandemic revealed how many workers are just a paycheque or so away from their pantries going bare, rent or mortgage going unpaid, or having to crack open their retirement savings just to get by," said Horwath.

"It's clear that working people need more good jobs, and more financial security to get through the second wave of COVID-19. We also know that everyday working folks — especially women — need that economic stability to be the engine for the recovery. We need to have a powerful plan in place to lift them up."

Ontario's Financial Accountability Officer revealed this month that the Ford government is sitting on $6.7 billion which was earmarked for pandemic supports — most of which is federal money transferred to the province. Horwath and Fife say part of that money can help businesses keep people on the payroll and out of a desperate situation.

“It’s about choices,” said Fife. “Doug Ford chooses to spend on big businesses, while cutting and shortchanging the things working folks, families and small- and medium-sized enterprises rely on.

“By investing in working people, we can make sure Ontarians don’t just stay afloat through the second wave, but come out of this pandemic healthier and more prosperous, and ready to power the economy forward.”

The NDP released a Save Main Street plan in April, and has now updated and expanded to fit changing conditions for small businesses and workers.

The NDP’s plan includes a ban on all commercial evictions, a 75 per cent commercial rent subsidy, sick days for all, a fund to help businesses with safe-reopening costs or remote-work set-up costs, more non-profit and public child care spaces for working parents, an end to insurance gouging and insurance denials, and more.

Background

Keeping workers on the payroll

- A ban on all evictions, lockouts or eviction threats by commercial landlords, in place until the pandemic ends
- A utility payment freeze for small and medium-sized businesses
- A stand-alone emergency 75 per cent commercial rent subsidy, up to $10,000 per month
- A fund for businesses that face historic barriers

Keeping workers safe

- A safe re-opening and remote-work set up fund for small and medium-sized businesses

- A Made In Ontario paid sick days plan for all

Building the she-covery

- Cap class sizes and school bus capacity to keep kids safe, and moms working
- Create more, safer non-profit and public child care spaces
- Create a dedicated re-training fund and Office to Advance Women Apprenticeship

Stopping insurance gouging

- Institute an auto-insurance grace period for taxis and car-sharing drivers
- Stop insurance gouging, stop insurance corporations from denying coverage based on COVID-19, stop insurance companies from denying business interruption claims
- Mandate commercial vehicle insurance rebates.

Keeping restaurant jobs afloat

- Limit food delivery fees

Quote

Laurie Raymond, Owner of Creative Children's Dance Centre

"I am doing everything I can to safely re-open my dance studio as we welcome kids back, from cleaning frequently to ensuring lots of physical distancing. Understandably, a lot of folks just don't feel comfortable returning just yet, and enrollment is way down. As a small business owner, I'm worried about staying afloat without more help, as I face more costs and have much less money coming in. This also leaves me worried for my staff of women, some of whom are moms, who are counting on being able to keep working to make ends meet."