

December 7, 2020

Hon. Stephen Clark, MPP
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

[sent via email] minister.mah@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Clark,

I am writing on behalf of the Council of the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) in support of our self-regulating mandate to protect the public interest.

As you are aware the OAA is the regulator of the province's architecture profession. The *Architects Act* and its Regulations, along with other regulatory tools such as the Building and Fire Codes, help protect the health and safety of Ontarians within the built environment.

The deaths that have occurred this year in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic within our province's long-term care facilities is nothing less than a tragedy. We support the government's initiatives to address this matter and urge that it be done swiftly. Our Council and other members of the architecture profession have been involved in much discussion regarding the design of long-term care facilities as well as other congregate living spaces since the pandemic began. We agree that change is required.

On June 1, we wrote to the Minister of Long-Term Care, Merrilee Fullerton, with an offer to contribute to the work of the independent commission. We continue to stand ready to assist, now and into the future as recommendations are developed based on the work of the commission.

We acknowledge that there are many factors that have contributed to this crisis and that the work of the commission is focussed on a broad range of issues. At this point, however, we feel it is of paramount importance to bring to your attention, as the Minister responsible for the Ontario Building Code, the lack of building related infection control measures.

It is our position that this matter should be addressed immediately through code changes that would clearly articulate required safety measures to control the spread of infection. At the very least, infection control should be specifically identified as a life safety issue in all congregate built spaces.

The OAA would be pleased to work directly with Ministry officials to formulate appropriate code changes and in doing so assemble a group of architects who have considerable experience and expertise in health care facility programming and design. We look forward to your early response.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Kurtin, Architect
OAA, FRAIC
President

cc: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier
The Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care
Members of the Long-Term Care COVID 19 Commission