



HALTON REGION

NOTICE OF MOTION

DATE: May 20, 2020

ITEM: A Call for Changes to the OCECRA

DATE OF MEETING
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TO BE CONSIDERED: Council Meeting – May 20, 2020

MOVED BY: Councillor Jeff Knoll
SECONDED BY: Mayor Rob Burton

Whereas businesses throughout Halton Region are suffering catastrophic losses of revenue during the COVID-19 public health emergency as a result of reduced demand for products and services or by being closed by order of the Province of Ontario during the pandemic resulting in losses of countless jobs and the inability of business operators to continue to pay expenses during the emergency including rent for their business premises.

Whereas Restaurants Canada, the trade organization for the foodservice industry, reports that 10% of Canadian restaurants permanently closed by the end of March and as many as 50% of those remaining are at risk of failure, in no small measure, due to the lack of ability to pay rent or secure affordable accommodation from their landlords.

Whereas the loss of many small and medium businesses will hurt and delay Canada's full economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whereas Halton Region is encouraged by the cooperation between the Federal and Provincial government to develop the Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program.

Whereas both the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business have called for a moratorium on commercial evictions.

Whereas in accordance to provisions contained within section 18(i) of the Commercial Tenancies Act, provides that a commercial landlord may repossess leased premises 15 days after the tenant fails to both (i) pay rent and (ii) remedy the failure in the interim

and many businesses are either being evicted or are at risk of imminent eviction causing uncertainty for operators and their employees.

Whereas the supports that have been provided to businesses to date and predominately focused on keeping staff employed are not sufficient in most cases to keep expenses paid, especially rent, which is often the most significant single operating expense of a business.

Whereas the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program that was announced by the Federal government on April 24, 2020, has not, to this date, been implemented and that the proposed conditions for participation in the CECRA create unreasonable barriers to participants including: requiring that commercial landlords have mortgages and the proceeds of the funding be sent directly to such mortgage holder and not the landlord; that the landlord must both agree to participate and apply for the CECRA, that the landlord must apply for each commercial unit where they own many, and that only leases with gross rents of under \$50,000 per month can qualify.

Therefore, be it resolved

That Halton Regional Council calls upon the Province of Ontario to freeze commercial evictions within the Province of Ontario for a period up to and including 30 days following the conclusion of the order declaring an emergency under s 7.0.1 (1) the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

Further that, the Halton Regional Council calls upon the Federal and Provincial governments to resolve barriers to participate in the Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (OCECRA) and launch the program immediately.

And further that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade and the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Halton area Members of Provincial Parliament and Members of Parliament as well as all Halton local municipalities, AMO and FCM.