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April 27, 2020

Hon. Doug Ford, M.P.P.
Premier of Ontario
Premier's Office - Room 281
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

I'm writing to you because Toronto's transit system is facing disruptive service cuts and layoffs unless your government steps up to provide and fight for immediate emergency financial support.

As announced on April 23, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) is being pushed past its financial breaking point and facing a steep \$90 million drop in monthly revenue because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The TTC is now planning to temporarily lay off 1,200 of its essential workers, including 1,000 Amalgamated Transit (ATU) Union Local 113 members.

A lack of urgency to shore up municipal finances and provide emergency financial support has brought us to the brink. As the President of ATU Local 113 representing 12,000 TTC workers, I can assure you that this is a serious problem for Toronto's public transit system.

Make no mistake – the announced layoffs mean service cuts for Torontonians. These cuts have consequences for essential, low-income workers who depend on the TTC to get to work at hospitals, nursing homes, grocery stores and pharmacies. Service cuts will go against physical distancing and lead to overcrowding on many routes, which increases risk for spreading COVID-19 to those who are most vulnerable in our city. These cuts could also mean a transit system unprepared to handle the surge of regular riders once it's safe for everyone to go back to work.

The livelihood of our dedicated public transit workers is hanging in the balance.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have been working tirelessly and putting themselves in harm's way to keep Toronto moving. As of today, 25 of our members have tested positive for COVID-19 and hundreds more are protecting others by self-isolating because of it.

For weeks during the pandemic, TTC workers, including operators, maintenance, clerical, cleaning and other support staff asked for – but were denied – the right to wear basic protective masks to protect themselves and others against COVID-19. In the face of the risks, they kept working. It took our union's persistent demands for the TTC to finally allow the choice for workers to wear PPE on the job. It took

even longer for the TTC to finally supply basic PPE to workers during this pandemic.

Your provincial government announced a temporary pandemic pay of \$4/hour on top of regular wages for frontline workers. Public transit workers, who are providing a frontline service during the coronavirus crisis, are excluded from your program. Healthcare and other essential workers deserve pandemic pay; however, we cannot forget about public transit workers. Instead of receiving pandemic pay for their dedicated service during the crisis, over a 1,000 TTC workers will soon receive pink slips. Some of these workers might have gotten sick on the job and are now being laid off on top of that. I know you'll agree this is unfair.

If this all sounds like bad news, it's because it is. Without your immediate support, these service cuts and layoffs will put the transit system of Canada's largest city at risk.

You can stop this today this by working with the federal government to provide emergency funding to prevent these layoffs and keep the TTC's buses, streetcars, Wheel-trans vehicles and subways running for essential workers who need it most.

Please act now before it's too late.

I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Yours sincerely,



Carlos Santos
President, ATU Local 113

CS:rc

cc: Hon. Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation
Hon. Kinga Surma, Associate Minister of Transportation
Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho, Minister of Seniors and Accessibility

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown, MPP for Beaches – East York
Ms. Marit Stiles, MPP for Davenport
Mr. Michael Coteau, MPP for Don Valley East
Vincent Ke, MPP for Don Valley North
Kathleen Wynne, MPP for Don Valley West
Martin Robin, MPP for Eglinton – Lawrence
Christine Hogarth, MPP for Etobicoke Lakeshore
Tom Rakocevic, MPP for Humber River – Black Creek
Bhutila Karpoche, MPP for Parkdale – High Park
Aris Babikian, MPP for Scarborough – Agincourt
Mitzie Hunter, MPP for Scarborough – Guildwood
Vijay Thanigasalam, MPP for Scarborough – Rouge Park
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Chris Glover, MPP for Spadina – Fort York
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