

March 21, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin P. J. Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
Langevin Block
80 Wellington Street
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

Canada's chief public health officer, Dr. Theresa Tam, said this week that it is not enough merely to flatten the curve in the number of COVID-19 cases across the country – we must crush it. We agree. While millions of Canadians have heeded the advice of health authorities to practice social distancing and take other necessary precautions, many others continue to go about their daily lives with few if any changes in behaviour.

We know from international experience what this will mean: the number of infected Canadians will continue to spiral upward. The country's healthcare system will be overwhelmed. Thousands of Canadians who might otherwise be spared from the disease will die.

Governments have it in their power to reduce the death toll – but only if they act aggressively, with speed and scale. In times of crisis, unambiguous communication and a united front are vital. We urge you and the leaders of the provinces and territories to speak clearly and with one voice. Beginning immediately, all Canadians should be told, not asked or advised, to stay at home unless their jobs are essential or they must leave the home to purchase food and other necessities.

Prime Minister, every day we delay will cost lives. Health experts around the world are telling us that a lockdown of even a few weeks can buy enough time to contain the spread of the virus. They are telling us that it is far better to overreact than to underestimate the scale of the required response. The sooner we act, the easier it will be to repair the economic damage and put Canadians back to work.

We applaud the steps your government and others across the country have taken to address the health emergency and provide financial support to individuals, families and businesses. But on all fronts, much more is required. The employers we represent will support you in taking the strongest possible action to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Justin Trudeau', written in a cursive style.