

October 15, 2020

Honourable Doug Ford, Office of the Premier  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

sent via e-mail: [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

**RE: LONG-TERM CARE STAFFING CRISIS**

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Dear Premier Ford;

I am writing once again, in follow-up to my letter of September 4, 2020 regarding the long-term care staffing crisis and the pending tragedy as COVID-19 cases continue to rise.

We appreciate that you arranged for our team to meet with Minister Fullerton on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unfortunately, the meeting took place literally hours after government announcements were made for the sector, negating any possibility of input or consultation on the solutions required for the sector.

At the meeting on October 2<sup>nd</sup> Unifor raised the dispute currently in the courts between the unions and the for-profit employers. For-profit employers are arguing that they do not have a responsibility to maintain a pay equity plan reached in 1994 and completed in 2005.

Proxy pay equity allowed these workers to compare their wages with similarly valuable positions in external workplaces that had already achieved pay equity. In the case of the 1994 plan these similar positions were in Municipal Homes for the Aged.

Today the gap between what nursing home workers earn and what municipal home workers earn has grown significantly.

Last week, we were disappointed that the employers were supported by the Attorney General as an intervener in the Ontario Court of Appeals. Granting pay equity to these mostly women workers would go a long way in stabilizing the long-term care workforce, including addressing the ongoing PSW shortage.

While Unifor appreciates the temporary wage enhancements announced for PSW's, we believe that the decision is short-sighted and will be ineffective.

All LTC workers, and in fact many workers in other high-risk sectors should have been included, as they were in the initial Pandemic Pay that ended in August. The LTC sector requires permanent solutions that address the pre-pandemic crisis.

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, the Time to Care Act, Bill 13, will go to 2<sup>nd</sup> reading in the Ontario legislature. The Bill would ensure a minimum daily average of 4 hours of hands on care per resident in every long-term care home in the province.

This Bill aligns with the recommendations of many experts, including your advisory group who studied the severe staffing shortage in LTC and released their report on July 30, 2020. We urge you to support Bill 13 and make sure that long-term care workers really do have time to care.

Our union remains committed to meet and discuss these issues further. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



**JERRY DIAS**  
**NATIONAL PRESIDENT**

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cc: Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health  
Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care  
Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance  
Naureen Rizvi, Unifor Ontario Regional Director  
Katha Fortier, Unifor Assistant to the National President  
Andy Savela, Unifor Director of Health Care