



**Brian
Masse**
MP Windsor West

**NEWS
RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 8, 2020

MASSE REQUESTS GOVERNMENT ACTION TO PROTECT ALL HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Words of praise must be matched with meaningful measures

(Windsor)- Today, Brian Masse M.P. (Windsor West), NDP Innovation, Science, Economic Development and Auto Critic wrote to the Prime Minister requesting further action to protect health care workers on both sides of the border.

“Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing you today regarding health care professionals who work in Canada as well those who cross the border daily to work at facilities in areas of the United States during this public health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation has become more complicated and challenging since my communications to your office outlining potential issues on March 17 and March 27.

Healthcare workers are on the frontlines fighting for all of us during this outbreak. They are also our last line of defence against the virus and must be protected from negative impacts and supported to ameliorate the additional demands placed on them during this extraordinary time.

In my earlier letter, I requested the government consider additional measures including supports and potential options such as heightened and expansive daily screening for returning workers and aid for designated housing away from their homes. As all public health experts have stated it is important to focus on risk minimization to lower the exposure of people to the virus. This is the only way to truly address the situation since there is no vaccine.

As you know the circumstances have changed significantly since March 27. Local public health authorities have issued recommendations that health workers only work at one facility. Furthermore, local hospitals have secured hotel rooms for their healthcare workers to stay at to protect their families from exposure to COVID19. Individual healthcare workers have chosen to segregate themselves from their families to protect them from virus exposure by temporarily staying in motorhomes and recreational vehicles.

Unfortunately, the situation has deteriorated as expected. In the Windsor region approximately one third of the COVID19 cases involve healthcare workers including a segment that works in the United States. Detroit and the State of Michigan have become an epicenter of the outbreak. As of today, over 2200 health care workers at just two Detroit area health systems, Beaumont Health and Henry Ford Health systems, have tested positive for COVID19.

I am aware that Canadian Border Services has started supplying cross border health care workers with a kit that includes a mask, a letter, and an orange placard for their vehicles.

Ottawa Office: Rm. 1000 Valour Building, House of Commons, Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

t (613) 996-1541 f (613) 992-5397 e-mail: brian.masse@parl.gc.ca

Community Office: 1398 Ouellette Avenue, Suite #2 Windsor ON N8X 1J8

t (519) 255-1631 f (519)255-7913 www.brianmasse.ca



**Brian
Masse**
MP Windsor West

**NEWS
RELEASE**

Although these are some of the types of assistance I have called for in my earlier interventions, more needs to be done.

All health care workers, those who work in Canada and those who cross the border to work the United States, should not have bear additional costs while engaging in this fight to protect all of us.

Therefore, I am writing to request that:

- *Accommodations being provided to health care workers to protect their families from exposure should be paid for by the federal government.*
- *Lost income for those Canadian health care workers who were mandated to choose only one facility to work at, on either side of the border, must be replaced by the federal government.*
- *Job and contract protections must be extended to those same health care workers so that the positions they held before the crisis are there when it is over.*
- *Actions to ensure that personal protective equipment (PPE) is available to all healthcare workers must be reinforced vigilantly.*
- *The government needs to institute the long-term availability of mental health services for those, especially among health care workers, who experience trauma and difficulties during and after this crisis.*
- *Health Canada should create a special anonymous communications portal for health care workers to submit inquiries, concerns and suggestions which would be available online, by telephone and by mail.*

This crisis is one of the most significant and challenging situations a government can face. This public health emergency requires all levels of government to work together and to engage in extraordinary endeavours to protect all Canadians. Praising the bravery, work ethic, struggles and importance of health care professionals during this fight without specific tools and measures for them and their families needs to become more than just words. It is time to demonstrate the meaning of those statements by establishing tangible supports for all health care workers. I appreciate your time and attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

*Brian Masse MP
Windsor West
NDP Innovation, Science and Economic Development Critic”*

-30-

For More Information: Mohummed Peer 519-982-8816