

**August 12, 2021**

**The Hon. Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park Toronto ON M7A 1A1**

**Via Email: [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)**

Dear Premier,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) which represents Toronto's 85 Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) made up of 90,000 businesses.

As you know, BIAs primarily represent main street small business owners who create jobs, support our economy, and define the neighbourhoods that we call home. They are your local butcher, favourite record shop and nail salon. They are the faces of small business in Toronto.

Few could deny that small businesses bore the brunt of prolonged restrictions and lockdowns. And through it all, they have demonstrated unimaginable grit, soldiering on and making immense sacrifices to do their part to help fight COVID-19 understanding that at the time, our best and only tools to make gains, were social distancing and lockdowns.

Today, due to the impressive work of your government, we have high vaccination rates, and our hospitals are better equipped to manage cases. Additionally, we are privileged because vaccines are not the only tool in our arsenal.

Last week, we received the Toronto Region Board of Trade's '*COVID Safe Pass*' policy proposal and the BIA members voted in favour of supporting this tool. While we have heard your concerns in the media, on behalf of the TABIA members I urge you to reconsider the COVID Safe Pass as we believe it is a fair and equitable solution to keep our business community open and safe while respecting concerns about privacy and providing a safe alternative to vaccination through regular testing.

As you can imagine, our members are greatly concerned about how to keep their employees and customers safe and, like you, we hope that everyone will get vaccinated, but we can't rely on hope – we need a solution and, with a fourth wave looming, we need that solution as soon as possible.

That's why we believe the COVID Safe Pass, which provides an anonymized alternative method of verifying COVID safety through a recent test, is a tool that provides a simple, effective, and importantly, humane interim strategy to help our economy to stay open while we wait for vaccination rates to increase.

Premier, I can't stress how important it is to provide the small businesses of Toronto with this critical tool to stay open and avoid a fourth wave.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Kiru', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

John Kiru  
Executive Director, TABIA