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## **Condemning the Ford Government and Calling for the Resignation of Doug Ford**

We, the members of CUPE Local 3902, condemn the government of Doug Ford and his Ontario PC party, their incompetence, and the violence and irreparable harm they have wrought on the people of this province. We echo mounting calls for Doug Ford to resign. As of April 21st, 2021, at least 7789 people have died from COVID-19 in Ontario, and Doug Ford is responsible for every single one of those lost lives. Ford and the PC party have decimated public services, undercut the ability for unions to advocate for safe working conditions, and advanced austerity politics that attacked the most vulnerable among us, even prior to their deadly mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon taking office in 2018, one of Doug Ford's first priorities was to gut public healthcare, cutting \$330 million in funding to the provincial healthcare system, including setting hospital funding below the rate of inflation, and reducing the research budget by \$53 million. Healthcare workers, like over 280,000 other public workers in Ontario, are subject to Ford's anti labour law, Bill 124, which caps pay increases at 1%. There is a direct line from these austerity policies to every single preventable death that we have suffered since.

Doug Ford has attacked the rights of workers at every turn, resulting in unsafe and deadly work environments. Ford cancelled the scheduled minimum wage increase to \$15/hr, condemning the most precarious workers in this province to poverty wages. Immediately after taking office in 2018, Ford stripped workers of their two guaranteed paid sick days, and the PC party to this day has refused to reinstate them, and has repeatedly voted down attempts to add more -- forcing vulnerable and sick workers into crowded workplaces.

The PC's 2021 budget included over \$1 billion in cuts to education. When Ford took office, he aimed to cut nearly 3,500 teaching jobs, cancelled \$100 million for public school maintenance and repair, and removed Indigenous and LGBTQ topics from the public curriculum. When teachers in the province protested this attack on children and youth, he mocked them. When educators warned the PC party that over-crowded classrooms would be a disaster, they were ignored. Now, as the government's own data has shown that cases are spiking in school-age children, Ford and his education minister Stephen Lecce have refused to admit that crowded classrooms are a source of spread.

It is now month 14 of the COVID-19 pandemic. With ICUs overflowing, doctors are preparing to use triage protocols to determine which patients can be saved and which will die. How has Ford responded? He has individualized the issue, blaming exhausted and poor workers for his own policy failures. When Ford ordered police across the province to enforce a so-called "stay at home order" that exempted large workplaces that are driving the spread of the virus, it was a slap in the face to 15 million residents of Ontario who have been suffering under his incompetence. This police order licensed cops to reinstate racist carding measures, attacking BIPOC and the most vulnerable members of our society -- the same essential workers who Ford has refused time and again to prioritize in vaccine rollout, in labour protections, in education, in protection from evictions, and in healthcare.

Under Doug Ford's premiership, Ontarians have suffered immeasurably. Working Ontarians have become poorer and more vulnerable, while corporations, developers, and billionaires have profited off of our backs. This was not an accident. Doug Ford and his

government built this Ontario for the rich while working Ontarians fall ill, get evicted, become homeless, or die. For the safety and wellbeing of Ontario, we call on Doug Ford to resign.

In solidarity,

The Flying Squad, Stewards' Council, and Membership  
C.U.P.E. 3902