

**Proposed Correspondence from the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Recovery
Respecting Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance
Role in the Economic Recovery**

To

Hamilton's Economic Recovery Task Force comprises multi-sectoral leadership across our community's diverse economy. The Task Force is responsible for guiding Hamilton's economic recovery in the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic by formulating an aggressive, action-driven plan to ensure a long-term, sustainable and equitable economic recovery.

We are writing to you to express our concerns and recommendations to improve the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program.

We have reviewed the ability of local business owners to sustain operations and pay rent during this economic downturn. Although CECRA is meant to assist business owners by providing subsidized commercial rent, businesses have reported a number of obstacles preventing their participation.

1. The eligibility requirement of 75% revenue loss is too high for businesses, despite their immediate need for rent assistance.
2. Commercial tenants are uncomfortable with the need to share their highly sensitive financial information with landlords in order to access the subsidy.
3. Some landlords are not taking advantage of the program, despite tenants meeting the eligibility requirements, due in part to the complexity of the agreements and the efforts required for each tenant.

To ensure this program meets the goal of preventing business closures, we recommend implementing the following guidelines to meet the needs of landlords and tenants:

1. Lower the eligibility requirement to _____ % revenue loss
2. Allow tenants to apply for access to limit the onus on landlords and to prevent the disclosure of tenants' private business information.
3. Extend program funding to at least the end of 2020.

With these adjustments in place, the existing CECRA initiative will better pave the way to economic recovery in Hamilton and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]