



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pettapiece highlights shortage of critical protective supplies, asks community to help

(Perth–Wellington) – The COVID-19 pandemic has left many healthcare providers and first responders scrambling to secure personal protective equipment (PPE).

Perth–Wellington MPP Randy Pettapiece says he has heard from local hospitals, long-term care homes, emergency response personnel, physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals.

“People are understandably concerned,” he said. “Some organizations tell me they now have adequate supplies, but others say they have only about a week’s worth on hand.”

On March 23 Pettapiece wrote to Christine Elliott, Ontario’s Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, to express support for local frontline workers. He urged the government to spare no expense to find the PPE we need.

Strained global supply chains are a big part of the problem, Pettapiece explained, with jurisdictions around the world suddenly competing for limited quantities of equipment.

Nevertheless, the province recently announced it secured 12 million more gloves; 1 million more N95 respirators; and nearly 6 million more surgical masks. The federal government has also promised to provide Ontario with 500,000 N95 respirators; 1 million masks; 750,000 gowns; 500,000 gloves; 750,000 face shields; and 20,000 units of hand sanitizer. Supplies are expected to be delivered at various times over the coming days and weeks.

“These are reassuring developments,” Pettapiece said. “Officials in the Ministry of Health are working very hard to do even more, because the government understands this is urgent.”

Pettapiece is also encouraging local organizations to help: “Across our riding, we are seeing people stepping up to meet the need,” he said. “I continue to urge other sectors—people who may already have such supplies on hand—to do their part. I hope they will consider donating their supplies.”

Last week the County of Perth and the City of Stratford launched a joint initiative calling for local donations of masks, gloves, gowns and sanitizer. In Wellington County, hospitals are seeking masks, goggles, gowns and face shields.

Pettapiece is encouraging all hospitals, health care providers, long-term care homes, and emergency response organizations to keep him informed of their supply status.

“I will continue speaking up for those who need supplies, right across our riding,” Pettapiece said. “To do that, it’s always helpful to know where the need is greatest.”

To bolster the province’s procurement efforts, the government has launched *Ontario Together*—a website to help businesses work with the government to meet the challenges of COVID-19. This initiative will remove barriers allowing Ontario’s manufacturing sector to redeploy capacity towards the production of essential equipment like ventilators, masks and swabs.

Companies can submit proposals for the government to procure required goods and services and share creative solutions quickly. Interested organizations should go to ontario.ca/ontariotogether. Participating organizations are also asked to inform Pettapiece’s office that they have applied.

Pettapiece’s email address is randy.pettapiececo@pc.ola.org. His toll-free phone number is 1-800-461-9701.

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