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May 7, 2020

Honorable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Re: **Pandemic Pay**

Dear Premier Ford,

Thank you for your exceptional leadership and for your support of Ontario healthcare workers during this difficult period through the pandemic.

I am the President of the Ontario Association of Pathologists (OAP). The OAP is the oldest pathology organization in the country. It was founded in 1937 following a conference convened by Harold Kirby, Deputy Minister of Health "to see what could be done about approving pathologists for Tissue Diagnosis".

Pathologists are MD scientists who study the causes and effects of diseases and laboratory samples of body tissue for diagnostic or forensic purposes. The OAP's goal is to represent the interests of patients, the public, Medical Laboratory Professionals (Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT's) & Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLA's)) and pathologists by fostering excellence in the practice of pathology and laboratory medicine in Ontario. The OAP has been proactive in developing key planning documents for government and healthcare agency administrators on various aspects of medical and laboratory practice.

Medical Laboratory Professionals are often under-recognized as their work is not visible; they work in laboratories, behind the scenes though their contributions are paramount. Medical laboratory science professionals generate accurate laboratory data that are needed to aid in detecting cancer, heart attacks, diabetes, infectious mononucleosis, **and identification of bacteria or viruses that cause infections**. In addition, they monitor testing quality and consult with other members of the healthcare team. These frontline healthcare professionals have been working 24/7, during this crisis, in the collection and testing of COVID-19 samples to ensure a rapid response of results. They are frontline in the validation, collection and analyzing of specimens from already-identified COVID-19-positive patients. Many laboratories were not staffed

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appropriately prior to the pandemic which has lead to MLT's and MLA's now working more shifts to meet the growing demand for testing.

**MLT's and MLA's are not currently included in the Pandemic Pay for frontline workers. However, they are truly frontline workers and deserve the recognition. Without their rapid adoption of testing and tireless efforts, we would NOT be able to identify and treat COVID-19 patients.**

The Laboratory often stays in the shadow of clinical discipline, but we are the **pillars of clinical medicine.**

This is the time to recognize the role of Medical Laboratory Professionals in the fight against COVID-19. **Please re-consider Pandemic Pay document and include MLT's and MLA's.**

We look forward for your reply,

Many thanks,

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