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Open Letter to President Gertler on COU Lobbying on Occupancy Limits

August 31, 2021

Dear UTFA Colleagues,

Please see below UTFA's open letter to President Gertler regarding the COU's lobbying efforts to exempt universities from indoor occupancy limits.

Sincerely,

Terezia Zorić,
UTFA President

August 31, 2021

SENT BY EMAIL

Dear President Gertler:

The Council of Ontario Universities (COU), at which you represent the University of Toronto, is lobbying the Ford government to *exempt universities* from the indoor occupancy limits that protect against overcrowding and mitigate the risk of COVID. There is no good scientific rationale for this political move.

The COU's call for "greater flexibility for capacity limits and physical distancing" amounts to the opposite of "provincial support for a safe in-person re-opening." Our members are worried, upset, and angered about being required to teach in crowded classrooms scheduled at full occupancy, greatly exceeding the province's step 3 limits (which are themselves far from stringent).

UTFA calls on you today to denounce the COU's efforts to lower health and safety protections on

university campuses by raising indoor occupancy limits, to stand with your own public health and indoor air quality scientists on what is required for a safe re-opening, and to defend the health and safety of faculty, librarians, staff, students, and the broader university community.

I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Terezia Zorić
UTFA President

c.c.
Heather Boon, Vice-Provost, Faculty & Academic Life
Kelly Hannah-Moffat, Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity and Culture
Trevor Young, Acting Vice-President & Provost

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