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SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

TWELFTH INTERIM REPORT

1st Session, 42nd Parliament
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The Honourable Ted Arnott, MPP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Sir,

Your Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight has the honour to present its Report and commends it to the House.

Daryl Kramp, MPP
Chair of the Committee

Queen's Park
July 2021

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT MEMBERSHIP LIST

1st Session, 42nd Parliament

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Research Officer

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INTRODUCTION

On May 31, 2021, the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight met for the twelfth time to receive an update on emergency orders relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. These orders were originally made under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, following the onset of the pandemic, and have been continued under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* (“the *Reopening Ontario Act*”).

In accordance with the Committee’s mandate, the Solicitor General for Ontario appeared as the Premier’s designate to provide an oral report and respond to Committee questions. This document summarizes the Solicitor General’s presentation and discussion with Committee members. Further interim reports and a final report will follow.

To review the Solicitor General’s full remarks and all questions posed by Committee members, the reader is referred to the official *Hansard* transcript of the meeting.

It should be noted that this report reflects the situation in the province on May 31, 2021. As of that date, the third province-wide emergency order and associated stay-at-home order were still in effect. Both orders were set to terminate on June 2, 2021. In addition, Ontario’s 34 public health units remained in the Shutdown Zone of the province’s COVID-19 Response Framework, as set out in the *Reopening Ontario Act* and regulations.

COMMITTEE MANDATE

On July 13, 2020, the government House leader introduced a motion to appoint a Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight. Following debate, the motion carried on July 15, 2020. The Committee was appointed to receive oral reports from the Premier or his designate(s) on any extensions of emergency orders by the Lieutenant Governor in Council related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rationale for those extensions.

Under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*, the Premier, or a Minister to whom the Premier delegates the responsibility, is required to appear before and report to a standing or select committee designated by the Assembly, at least once every 30 days. This report is to address

- (a) orders that were extended during the reporting period; and
- (b) the rationale for those extensions.

Hearings consist of a report from the Premier or his designate(s), followed by questions from the Committee. The Committee is authorized to release interim reports summarizing each hearing.

The Committee's mandate is reproduced in full in Appendix A to this report.

REPORT FROM THE SOLICITOR GENERAL

Opening Remarks

Ontario's Solicitor General, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, presented to the Committee on May 31, 2021.

The Solicitor General began her update by highlighting some of the positive developments since the Committee last met on May 3. These developments included clear downward trends in COVID-19 case numbers, test positivity rates, hospitalizations, and intensive care unit occupancy. Another trend was the emergence of an inverse relationship between the number of new cases and the number of Ontarians who are being immunized on a daily basis: as more Ontarians are vaccinated, the number of new cases is declining.

Ontario's vaccine rollout also continued to make progress. At the time of the Committee's meeting in early May, more than two and a half million COVID-19 vaccines had been administered in Ontario. As of May 28, more than nine million doses had been administered. As a result, more than 65% of the province's adults, and more than 15% of youth aged 12 to 17, had received at least one dose of vaccine. Approximately 624,000 Ontarians had been fully vaccinated.

The Solicitor General also reported that an increase in vaccine supply during the month of May allowed the province to target hard-hit areas. Vaccination rates in these "hot-spot" communities, she noted, are now higher than in non-hot-spot communities. In addition, a more reliable vaccine supply meant that the province could move ahead of schedule on two fronts—anyone 18 years of age or older can now book a vaccination appointment; and the age at which a person can receive the Pfizer vaccine was lowered to 12.

Also in the month of May, mobile units began operating clinics at small and medium-sized workplaces in Toronto, York, and Peel for employees who cannot work from home. The clinics represent a new "channel" in the province's vaccine distribution network.

According to the Solicitor General, these developments meant that the province could "continue to make new daily vaccination records as we strive to reach herd immunity."

Concluding her opening remarks, the Solicitor General noted that, earlier that day, the Legislature extended the government's powers under the *Reopening Ontario Act* to December 1, 2021—powers that would otherwise have expired on July 24. These powers, she said, are needed to prevent another wave of the pandemic as the province opens up over the coming months:

This extension will ensure public health measures which are currently in place can be adjusted as needed to deal with the impacts of COVID-19 in whatever forms they take and to support a gradual reopening of Ontario. These measures will continue to be necessary to prevent a resurgence of COVID-19 transmission when we start to reopen higher-risk settings and permit larger gatherings.

Amended Orders

As mentioned in the introduction, at the time of the Solicitor General's update, all 34 public health units remained in the Shutdown Zone of the province's COVID-19 Response Framework (the *Reopening Ontario Act* and regulations).

O. Reg. 82/20 (Rules for Areas in Stage 1) under the Act stipulates which businesses can stay open and which must stay closed, and regulates organized public events and other gatherings in the Shutdown Zone.

As outlined by the Solicitor General, amendments to O. Reg. 82/20 since the Committee last met on May 3 had the effect of easing certain restrictions in the Shutdown Zone. In particular, these amendments

- permitted additional outdoor recreation amenities, including golf courses, soccer and other sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, skate parks and splash pads to be open, and allowed marinas and boating clubs to be open with restrictions, such as the need to maintain physical distancing;
- increased gathering limits to five people for organized public events or social gatherings held outdoors; and
- expanded the list of fields or occupations for which in-person teaching instruction at post-secondary institutions and in-person examinations are permitted, subject to a maximum capacity of 50 people, physical distancing requirements, and other existing measures.

The Solicitor General also noted that O. Reg. 129/20 (Witnessing of Wills and Powers of Attorney) was revoked on May 20. The regulation was no longer needed, since its terms have been written into other permanent legislation.

Extended Orders

As of May 31, 2021, 29 emergency orders under the *Reopening Ontario Act* were still in effect, a decrease from the 36 that had been continued under the legislation when it was passed in July 2020.

The Solicitor General reported that during the previous month the orders noted below had been extended to June 19, 2021 (orders that would otherwise have expired on May 20). Orders are listed in numerical order with a brief statement of the rationale for extension.

- *O. Reg. 74/20 (Work Deployment for Certain Health Services Providers)* — This order authorizes specified health service providers within the meaning of the *Connecting Care Act, 2019*, to take reasonably necessary measures with respect to work deployment and staffing to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the outbreak of COVID-19, including redeploying staff to other health service providers, and to assist long-term care homes and retirement homes.
- *O. Reg. 76/20 (Electronic Service)* — This order allows document service in legal matters to be handled electronically instead of in person. The order is needed to continue access to justice while reducing unnecessary contact between individuals to stop the transmission of COVID-19.
- *O. Reg. 77/20 (Work Deployment Measures in Long-Term Care Homes)* — This order gives long-term care homes greater flexibility to identify staffing priorities, deal with staff shortages, and address outbreaks. It remains necessary because flexibility to recruit and reassign staff remains crucial for preventing and managing outbreaks and ensuring stability and quality in long-term care homes.
- *O. Reg. 95/20 (Streamlining Requirements for Long-Term Care Homes)* — This order provides flexibility and a reduced administrative requirement for long-term care homes so that they can respond quickly to the care and safety needs of residents.
- *O. Reg. 98/20 (Prohibition on Certain Persons Charging Unconscionable Prices for Sales of Necessary Goods)* — This order is in place so that consumers can continue to file complaints with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services about price gouging with respect to the necessary goods set out in the order, some of which remain in short supply.
- *O. Reg. 114/20 (Enforcement of Orders)* — This order ensures a person is required to identify themselves by providing their name, date of birth, and address to a police officer or other provincial offences officer if the officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe the individual has committed an offence under section 10(1) of the *Reopening Ontario Act*. Without disclosure of this identifying information, officers would be unable to effectively issue tickets under the Act.
- *O. Reg. 116/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health)* — This order allows boards of health within the meaning of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* to take any reasonably necessary measures with respect to work deployment and staffing to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the COVID-19 pandemic, including redeploying staff within different locations or between facilities of a board of health.

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- *O. Reg. 118/20 (Work Deployment Measures in Retirement Homes)* — This order allows flexibility for retirement home operators to recruit and reassign staff. It remains crucial for helping to prevent and manage outbreaks and to ensure stability and quality in resident care.
 - *O. Reg. 121/20 (Service Agencies Providing Services and Support to Adults with Developmental Disabilities and Service Providers Providing Intervenor Services)* — This order allows developmental service agencies and intervener service providers to continue to have the authority and flexibility they need to redeploy staff to support critical services for vulnerable individuals. Staffing flexibility measures continue to be needed so deployment services agencies can alleviate staffing pressure while responding to challenges posed by COVID-19.
 - *O. Reg. 132/20 (Use of Force and Firearms in Policing Services)* — This order allows chiefs of police to authorize certain members of a police service to perform duties involving use of force and to carry a firearm if the member has successfully completed the required training within the previous 24 months of this authorization, instead of the annual training required under the *Police Services Act*.
 - *O. Reg. 141/20 (Temporary Health or Residential Facilities)* — This order exempts the construction or conversion of a building from certain requirements of the *Building Code Act, 1992*, the *Planning Act*, and the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, where the building will be used as a temporary health or residential facility for the purpose of responding to the emergency or for health care or sleeping accommodation by or on behalf of health service providers, governments, and municipalities. There is a continued need for this provision to enable the province to respond to COVID-19 care, surgical backlog, and residential space needs.
 - *O. Reg. 145/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Service Agencies Providing Violence Against Women Residential Services and Crisis Line Services)* — This order enables residential violence against women and anti-human trafficking service providers, as well as crisis lines under the violence against women support service program, to continue to have the authority and flexibility they need to redeploy staff to support critical services for survivors of violence against women and victims of human trafficking.
 - *O. Reg. 146/20 (Limiting Work to a Single Long-Term Care Home)* — This order addresses ongoing staffing challenges in the long-term care sector and allows employees who have been fully immunized against COVID-19 to work in another long-term care home, retirement home, or other health service provider location.
 - *O. Reg. 154/20 (Work Deployment Measures for District Social Services Administrative Boards)* — This order provides district social services administration boards flexibility to address staffing shortages and ensure personnel are being deployed to critical areas to respond to COVID-19.
 - *O. Reg. 156/20 (Deployment of Employees of Service Provider Organizations)* — This order authorizes a local health integration network (LHIN) to request that a contracted service provider organization provide health care and related social services in a setting identified by the LHIN and authorizes the LHIN to fund the services. The need for the order is based on ongoing staffing issues at long-term care homes and retirement homes.

- *O. Reg. 157/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Municipalities)* — In response to requests from municipalities, this order was issued to provide flexibility to redeploy staff to ensure front-line services continue to be delivered in critical areas of need. The continuity of service delivery at the municipal level is crucial to the health and safety of Ontario's communities and efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- *O. Reg. 158/20 (Limiting Work to a Single Retirement Home)* — This order requires retirement home employees to work in only one retirement home, long-term care home, or other health care setting, and allows fully immunized employees to work in more than one location in response to ongoing staffing challenges in retirement homes. Limiting work to a single retirement home remains crucial for non-immunized staff to help prevent and contain infection spread.
- *O. Reg. 163/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Mental Health and Addictions Agencies)* — This order authorizes mental health and addiction agencies to take any reasonably necessary measure with respect to work deployment and staffing to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the spread of COVID-19 to maintain health human resources flexibility.
- *O. Reg. 177/20 (Congregate Care Settings)* — The order has been extended so that staff movement across multiple employers in developmental intervenor services, violence against women, and anti-human trafficking sectors will continue to be limited. This infection prevention measure protects staff and vulnerable clients.
- *O. Reg. 192/20 (Certain Persons Enabled to Issue Medical Certificates of Death)* — This order allows registered nurses appointed as coroner investigators to complete medical certificates of death instead of a physician or a nurse practitioner. The order continues to give physicians and nurse practitioners more time to focus on patient care during the pandemic.
- *O. Reg. 193/20 (Hospital Credentialing Processes)* — This order allows hospitals to maintain flexible health human resources during the pandemic by allowing them to quickly appoint, reappoint, and grant privileges to physicians and other professional staff to prevent and alleviate COVID-19 outbreaks as they occur. Hospitals may do this despite any applicable professional credentialing processes.
- *O. Reg. 195/20 (Treatment of Temporary COVID-19 Related Payments to Employees)* — The order ensures that any temporary COVID-related payments received by employees in relation to work performed while the order is in effect are excluded from the maximum increases in compensation set out in the *Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act*. This includes the temporary wage enhancements for personal support workers and direct support workers currently in place until June 30.
- *O. Reg. 210/20 (Management of Long-Term Care Homes in Outbreak)* — This order enables the Director under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act* to order the placement of interim management to effectively protect residents from COVID-19. Maintaining the management order allows the director to swiftly take appropriate actions to reduce or alleviate harm to residents and staff in homes that are in outbreak.

- *O. Reg. 240/20 (Management of Retirement Homes in Outbreak)* — This order ensures measures are in place to allow the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority to act quickly in case of outbreak should an operator be unable or unwilling to manage operations of the home. It remains crucial to ensure retirement homes are following appropriate COVID-19 measures that protect resident and staff safety.
- *O. Reg. 345/20 (Patios)* — This order helps municipalities quickly pass or make changes to temporary-use bylaws that allow restaurants and bars to create or extend patios to facilitate appropriate distancing and maintain public health measures.
- *O. Reg. 363/20 (Stages of Reopening)* — Given the continued risk of COVID-19, the order remains necessary to retain the ability to return to the system of reopening. On the basis of current evidence and experience, Ontario will require some level of public health and workplace measures through at least the summer and into the fall of 2021.

Concluding Remarks

The Solicitor General concluded her formal presentation with a reminder that COVID-19 variants of concern—both existing and emerging—are unpredictable and continue to pose a risk to public health for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, she said, “there is much to be optimistic about.” In particular, the Roadmap to Reopen announced on May 20, and scheduled to take effect in mid-June, will allow the province to lift public health measures safely and cautiously. Based on key public health data, the Roadmap “represents a path out of the pandemic and will encourage Ontarians to get vaccinated and continue to follow public health advice.”

DISCUSSION

The Committee’s session with the Solicitor General concluded with questions from Committee members. This discussion is summarized below.

- *Vaccine Rollout (Hotspots)* — **Question:** Could the Solicitor General comment on the extent to which the two-week focus on hot spots was successful in reducing case numbers and increasing vaccination rates?
Solicitor General’s Response: The short answer is that the hot-spot-targeted approach has worked incredibly well. In York Region, 73.7% of residents have received their first dose. In Toronto, 68.2% of residents have received their first dose. Peel is at 72.4%. Province-wide, we now stand at 65%. The efforts of individual public health units and hospitals should also be noted. For example, in the City of Toronto they went to apartments and asked people who wanted to receive the vaccine to simply sit outside. This proved to be a very effective way of delivering vaccines to people where they live.

- *Vaccine Rollout (Hot Spots)* — **Question:** Will the hardest hit areas of the province be given priority during the “second dose” phase of the vaccine rollout? If not, why not? **Solicitor General’s Response:** It should be stressed that the allocation of additional vaccines to hot spots was always intended to be a two-week program. That program achieved its objective: hot-spot communities now have higher vaccination rates than non-hot-spot areas. Peel Region, for example, now has a vaccination rate of 72%. As we move into the second dose phase of the rollout more than 2,700 pharmacies are offering Moderna, Pfizer or, in some cases, second doses of AstraZeneca. As supply increases and becomes more reliable, communities across the province will have access to vaccines through the pharmacy program. In addition, the province continues to support community-based, faith-based, and employer-based clinics that are bringing vaccines to hot-spot workplaces and neighbourhoods.
- *Vaccine Rollout (AstraZeneca)* — **Question:** Is there a specific plan to ensure that people have access to a second dose of AstraZeneca? **Solicitor General’s Response:** Those who received AstraZeneca as a first dose should be assured that, when they become eligible, they will receive a second dose of the same vaccine. It should also be noted that Health Canada extended the expiry date for the current supply of AstraZeneca from May 31 to July 1. In addition, a limited number of pharmacies, primarily in Toronto, Kingston, and Windsor-Essex, are now offering a second dose of this vaccine.
- *Vaccine Rollout (Second Doses)* — **Question:** Could the Solicitor General outline the process for arranging a second dose, particularly for those who are over 80 and ready to book today? **Solicitor General’s Response:** First, those individuals 80 years of age or older who booked through the Ontario portal would have received a second dose date at the time of booking their first dose. After 28 days they can reschedule their second dose, if they so choose, through the portal; however, in light of new channels that have opened up since January and February, some individuals may wish to get their second dose through their primary care physician or a local pharmacy.
- *Vaccine Rollout (Vulnerable Populations)* — **Question:** What is the government doing to ensure that house-bound seniors and other vulnerable populations, as well as those who do not have access to the technology necessary to book appointments, are able to get a vaccine? Is the government providing public health units with additional resources for this purpose? **Solicitor General’s Response:** We discuss these issues, including best practices, during twice-weekly calls with public health units. As noted earlier, the City of Toronto’s program, whereby residents “put a chair outside their apartment and the vaccine comes to them,” has been successful at reaching people where they live. We also recognize that individuals who have a developmental or other disability may not be comfortable going to a mass vaccination clinic, so we have been working with public health units, primary care practitioners, and pharmacies to make sure that there are many ways to get a vaccination. With respect to resources, whenever we expand eligibility to receive a vaccine, public health units are asked whether they need additional assistance from the province.

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- *Vaccine Rollout (Remote Communities)* — **Question:** Operation Remote Immunity, a mission to ensure that remote and fly-in communities received vaccine, was an important feature of Ontario's original vaccine campaign. Could the Solicitor General provide details on the next phase of this program? **Solicitor General's Response:** In January of this year we made a decision to protect communities that are most at risk, including remote and fly-in communities. Among other things, these communities are often at risk because of flooding in the spring, so we wanted to make sure that they had the vaccine as soon as possible. A small amount of vaccine was therefore set aside for this purpose. Operation Remote Immunity 2.0 will continue this model by offering the Pfizer vaccine to 12-to-17-year-old adolescents, and to any individuals in those communities who, for whatever reason, including vaccine hesitancy, did not participate at the time of the first offering. It should be noted that the program's success is due in large part to the partnership with Dr. Homer Tien and the Ornge air ambulance staff.
 - *Communications* — **Question:** When the government decided that individuals 18 years of age or older would be eligible for vaccinations, hospitals and other health care providers were "left scrambling" because they only learned of the decision through the news media. Could the Solicitor General comment on its communications practices? **Solicitor General's Response:** We meet at least twice a week with all of the province's 34 public health units, as well as the hospitals that are administering vaccines. We sometimes ask that information remain embargoed until a formal announcement has been made. When it is released, the details go directly to public health units, doctors' offices, and hospitals.
 - *Schools* — **Question:** Some public health experts say it is safe to reopen schools; others say it is not. Meanwhile, parents are confused. Can the Solicitor General clarify whether schools will reopen before the end of the school year? Will the province establish a school task force? **Solicitor General's Response:** Earlier today the Premier said that he expects to have more information on reopening schools in the next day or two. It should be stressed, however, that any decision will reflect extensive consultations involving the Premier, the Minister of Education, public health units, boards of education, schools, teachers, and parents, as well as pediatricians and those working in the field of mental health.
 - *Support for Small Businesses* — **Question:** Will the government be offering a third round of the Ontario Small Business Support Grant? **Solicitor General's Response:** We recognize the great challenges small businesses have faced during the pandemic, and that they have had to change the way they approach business, whether through online or curbside delivery. Twice, through this "main street grant," the government has assisted small businesses who wanted to operate online and have a stronger web presence. *(The time for questioning expired at this point in the Solicitor General's response.)*

- *What happens after June 2, 2021?* — **Question:** What happens after the province-wide emergency and stay-at-home orders expire on June 2? What will be the effect of extending the government's powers under the *Reopening Ontario Act* to December 2021? **Solicitor General's Response:** The most noticeable change on June 2 will be the removal of the stay-at-home order; restrictions on businesses and public gatherings, however, will stay in place until there is consistent improvement in public health indicators such as test positivity rates, hospitalizations, intensive care unit occupancy, and vaccination rates. At that point, the Roadmap to Reopen will take effect. Extending the government's powers under the *Reopening Ontario Act* allows us to put protections in place and amend them. As we see the numbers go down, we can loosen some of those restrictions. It is important to note that many of the emergency orders under the Act were originally made at the request of municipalities, long-term care homes, and hospitals that need the ability to respond quickly to staffing challenges as outbreaks occur.
- *Travel Restrictions After June 2* — **Question:** Could the Solicitor General explain why some restrictions, including those on travel into Ontario from other provinces, will continue after the province-wide emergency and stay-at-home orders expire on June 2? **Solicitor General's Response:** Ontario has no control over air travel or international land borders; these are the purview of the federal government. We continue to call on Ottawa to limit international travel because we know that is how the COVID-19 variants that are affecting our positivity rates are coming into Ontario. In the meantime, Ontario will continue to exercise its jurisdiction over inter-provincial travel to reduce the risk from other provinces.
- *Provincial Correctional Facilities (Ottawa)* — **Question:** The Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre is currently experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak. Vaccination rates at the centre are reportedly below 40%, due, in part, to vaccine hesitancy. What is the province's plan to address vaccine hesitancy at provincial correctional facilities? **Solicitor General's Response:** Congregate living settings of any sort are a concern. Accordingly, the province has implemented a number of safety measures at its correctional facilities. Specifically with respect to "vaccine confidence," the province has produced brochures and videos in hundreds of languages to inform inmates about the importance of getting a vaccine; as well, medical staff at these facilities continue to perform an educational role. Under a partnership with the Criminal Lawyers' Association, lawyers are going into institutions to talk to their clients about vaccine confidence, and more generally to share as much information as possible so that inmates can make an informed decision. In addition, we are conducting a survey of inmates that asks, "Do you intend to get the vaccine? If not, why not," so that we have a better understanding of the confidence issue.
- *Provincial Correctional Facilities (Monteith)* — **Question:** The Monteith Correctional Complex in the Porcupine Health Unit is also experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19. Could the Solicitor General indicate the number of cases at this facility, as well as how this outbreak is affecting the broader community? Is the Ministry considering further actions to limit spread between the inmate population and staff at this facility? What is the status of the rapid testing pilot program for corrections facilities? **Solicitor General's Response:** The Ministry does not have case numbers for this specific facility; however, it should be noted that we offer, in all of our institutions, the ability to

receive the vaccine for both staff and inmates. In addition, a new pathway will allow corrections health staff to offer vaccines to incoming inmates if they have not already received one. With respect to protective measures, many are already in place, including PPE and temperature checks. Contact between the community and the corrections system has been reduced through the use of laptops and cell phones, which allows probation and parole checks to be done remotely. The Ministry is also considering new measures, based on recent consultations with corrections officers, probation and parole officers, and individuals working in the community. The Ministry will undertake to provide an update on the status of the rapid testing pilot program.

- *International Borders* — **Question:** Other countries are experiencing a resurgence of the pandemic due to the spread of new variants of concern. We also know from the federal COVID-19 Testing and Screening Expert Advisory Panel that previous border measures were insufficient to prevent the importation of the B117 variant of concern, now the dominant strain in Ontario and British Columbia. Could the Solicitor General describe the impact these variants are having on Ontario's plan to reopen, and outline the measures the province is taking to address this issue? **Solicitor General's Response:** The arrival of new variants and their impact on the province's reopening plan is very concerning. We need look no further than the United Kingdom, which reportedly may have to delay its June 21st opening because variants are spreading. The experience in the UK speaks exactly to why the Minister of Health and I have been urging the federal government to do more. In particular, Ottawa needs to implement tighter and more consistent restrictions on people entering Canada, whether they arrive by air, land, or water.
- *Reopening* — **Question:** Comparisons are being made with other jurisdictions, including other provinces and US states, which appear to be reopening faster than Ontario. Could the Solicitor General explain the rationale for our "go slow" approach? **Solicitor General's Response:** If there is one thing we have heard consistently from business leaders and others during the pandemic, it is, "Please stop the opening and closing, opening and closing." Accordingly, we have adopted a careful approach to make sure that variants stay under control. Under the reopening plan, we will need to see a consistent improvement in indicators such as positivity rates, hospitalizations, ICU capacity, and vaccination rates. At the same time, we will continue to monitor other jurisdictions to learn from their experiences.

**APPENDIX A:
TERMS OF REFERENCE***

That a Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight be appointed to receive oral reports from the Premier or his designate(s) on any extensions of emergency orders by the Lieutenant Governor in Council related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rationale for those extensions; and

That the Committee shall have a membership of up to eleven Members, comprised as follows:

- Up to seven members of the Government party
- Up to three members of the Official Opposition
- Up to one Independent Member; and

That the House Leaders of each of the Recognized Parties shall indicate in writing to the Clerk of the House, their Party's membership on the Committee; and

That the Government House Leader, in consultation with the Independent Members, shall indicate in writing to the Clerk of the House, the Independent Member on the Committee; and

That the deadline for indicating Committee Membership with the Clerk of the House shall be Thursday, August 20, 2020; and

That the Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair as follows:

- Up to 30 minutes for the Premier or his designate(s) to make an opening statement
- Up to 60 minutes for Members of the recognized Parties to pose questions to the Premier or his designate(s) in 3 rounds of 10 minutes for each Party
- Up to 10 minutes for the Independent Member to pose questions to the Premier or his designate(s) in 2 rounds of 5 minutes each
- Report writing in closed session; and

That the Clerk of the Committee shall convene the first meeting of the Committee no later than Thursday, August 27, 2020 to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, but no Sub-committee shall be appointed; and

That for business conducted under this order of reference, the provisions of Standing Orders 38 (b), (c), and (d) and 134 (c) and (d) shall be suspended.

That the Committee is authorized to present interim reports summarizing each hearing to the House, or deposit interim reports with the Clerk if the Legislature is not in session; and

That the Committee's final report shall be a compilation of all interim reports; and

That the Committee shall be dissolved 30 days following the Government House Leader indicating in writing to the Speaker that the Committee is no longer required; and

That the Committee's final report shall be tabled in the House, or deposited with the Clerk if the Legislature is not in session, before the Committee is dissolved; and

That if the Committee fails to meet this deadline the cumulative interim reports shall be deemed to be the Committee's final report and deemed to be tabled on the date that the Committee is dissolved; and

That an Order shall be placed on the *Orders and Notices Paper* for discussion of the Final Report of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight following its presentation to the House.

**Votes and Proceedings, July 15, 2020, 42nd Parliament, 1st Session*