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Hon. Sylvia Jones  
Solicitor General  
Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
Queen's Park

April 21, 2020

Dear Minister Jones,

I am following up on my April 9 request to the Premier to consider a revision to the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act that would re-classify community gardens as an essential service that can be open rather than as a recreational activity that must be closed.

While I support the restriction of all non-essential activities, I believe it was a mistake to close community gardens, which are an essential food source for families and food banks.

Over 10,000 Ontarians have signed my petition to reopen community gardens with physical distancing guidelines that will keep everyone safe. A growing list of community groups are also asking for a reversal of your decision and have suggested public health measures for community gardens to adopt.

There are also requests from the municipal level, including from the Ottawa Board of Health, while Kingston City Council is considering a motion to request permission to reopen community gardens.

Minister, I urge your government to work with public health departments on an immediate plan to reopen community gardens with physical distancing guidelines.

We can keep Ontarians safe, while allowing essential local food production to continue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Schreiner".

Mike Schreiner  
MPP, Guelph