

Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

March 29, 2022

Dear Premier,

In an effort to address the intersecting affordability and climate crises impacting this province, the Ontario Greens are proposing a 50 per cent discount on all public transit fares, including GO Transit and Ontario Northland services, for the next three months. Reallocating a small portion of the money earmarked for expensive highways could easily cover this immediate relief program.

Gas prices in Ontario are soaring at over \$1.70 per litre and experts predict they will continue to rise. We must take action to support Ontarians, but subsidizing gas prices is not the sustainable answer.

This simple but effective proposal will help many Ontarians offset record-high gas prices and the impact those prices are having on every aspect of their lives. Other jurisdictions have already taken the step to make life more affordable for their citizens. This is a sensible policy and one that people can benefit from almost immediately.

Halving transit fares is an immediate measure you could take that would also complement our shared interest in making transit, electric vehicles, and electric bikes more affordable and accessible.

Given the decline in transit ridership levels, as a result of the pandemic, a temporary reduction in transit fares will increase demand in an effort to begin to bring ridership up to pre-pandemic levels.

We are aware of the changes that have been announced such as free transfers between GO Transit and GTA agencies. While we applaud these initiatives, we believe that, given the cost of living and rising fuel prices, there is a unique opportunity to do substantially more to help people and municipalities.

For seniors, students, single parent families, people on ODSP, and many millennials, a 50 per cent discount in transit costs could mean anywhere from an extra \$20 a week to \$100 a month.

When you live on minimum wage, that can be a small fortune. It can literally mean the difference between health and heartbreak, between getting to work or not.

Increasing transit ridership will also help municipalities deal with the negative budget implications of declining transit ridership.

I hope you consider our request and see it as a sensible way to make life more affordable for the people who work hard to make our economic engine run every day – they are no less important than the leather interior or the power sunroof. We are all part of the same province.

Sincerely,



Mike Schreiner

Leader, Green Party of Ontario