

Petition Regarding Places of Worship

To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

WHEREAS worship is critical to the lives of many Ontarians; and

WHEREAS the gathering for worship is an essential aspect of religious faith, and

WHEREAS the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* recognizes freedom of religion as fundamental and the Supreme Court of Canada has interpreted this as including the freedom “to manifest religious belief by worship and practice”; and

WHEREAS both the federal and the Ontario provincial legislatures have recognized religion as a human right; and

WHEREAS the social, emotional and spiritual elements of worship are significant; and

WHEREAS places of worship provide many valuable social services through their members to the communities they are in; and

WHEREAS the good work of places of worship in their communities is hindered by the inability to physically gather; and

WHEREAS places of worship have been diligent in observing health and safety protocols and have not been a significant source of spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS the safety and the wellbeing of religious communities are best preserved through the cooperation of religious leaders and the Ontario government.

THEREFORE, we the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

That the Legislature recognize the importance and value of worship and to include places of worships as an essential service under the Reopening Ontario Act allowing religious communities to gather for worship.

Name (Print)	Address	Email	Signature

--	--	--	--