

I am in daily communication with federal Parliamentary Secretaries and Ministers, as well as taking part in daily technical briefings with ministry officials and have been bringing forward the concerns of constituents. There is a flood of concerns and we are actively working on plugging gaps in the federal relief package. If you have specific concerns and ideas please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I have been self-isolating and working from home since returning from Ottawa on March 13th. I can be reached directly at the email address below.

I have been receiving a lot of worried calls and emails from our local business community. Many companies have been ordered to shut down or scale back service and many companies have had serious cuts to business activity and have had no choice but to lay-off employees and close.

Small, local businesses are the engine of the Canadian economy and we are going to have a serious problem rebuilding our economy after this crisis if they do not get the support they need and we lose small businesses en masse.

I have been actively advocating at the federal level for a better relief package for small businesses including increasing the wage subsidy to 80%, providing help with rent and overhead costs and providing credit relief. I have a conference call scheduled with the Minister of Small Business and the Parliamentary Secretary on Thursday. I have had similar calls to discuss the response for homeless people, seniors, people with disabilities and other vulnerable constituents.

An article published by *Corporate Knights*, provides a number of solid solutions for how to help small businesses survive. These solutions are federal, provincial and municipal and I would like to share some of these ideas with you for your consideration. Some of these ideas require financial support for municipalities from the federal government – something I am also advocating for and will work with you on.

Here's a summary of some of these solutions:

**1. Suspend commercial rent payments up to \$10K.** This will cover most local small businesses. To enable this, reduce the expenses of commercial landlords by shifting principal payments on mortgages to the end of the amortization period and come up with an equitable way to share the temporary burden of the interest on mortgage debt between landlords, banks and the federal government.\* To be very clear, this is not a call for landlords to suffer the weight of this burden. It's a call for the burden to be shared fairly by everyone in the property value chain: tenants (business owners), landlords, banks and government. If we do nothing it falls entirely on tenants.

**2. Eliminate water, gas and electricity bills.** These are under Provincial and Municipal jurisdictions — this will need to be a coordinated effort across all levels of government.

**3. Delay collection of sales tax.** Businesses collect sales tax and then periodically remit this to Provincial governments. If Provinces allowed businesses to temporarily hang on to that money,

it would act like an instant zero-interest debt without the complexity and stress of taking out a new loan. Many provinces have an employer health tax which can provide similar instant liquidity to businesses.

**4. Delay property tax.** Most landlords pass property taxes on to tenants either directly or indirectly. The federal government could loan money to municipalities to allow these taxes to be significantly delayed, and make the waiving of rent easier.

**5. Work with credit card providers to waive interest and delay payments on corporate cards up to \$25K.** Many businesses will be getting through this period by maxing out their credit cards.

Please let me know if you would like to take a united front on some of these approaches.

If you have any specific concerns or ideas that you would like to share with me please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Please stay healthy, stay safe, and stay home!

All the best,  
Paul Manly



**Paul Manly**

Member of Parliament for Nanaimo-Ladysmith | Député de Nanaimo-Ladysmith  
*Constituency Office:* Suite 103 495 Dunsmuir St. Nanaimo BC V9R 6B9 | t: 250-734-6400  
*Hill Office:* Room 313, Confederation Bldg. Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6 | t: 613-992-5243  
[paul.manly@parl.gc.ca](mailto:paul.manly@parl.gc.ca)