

Statement from Mayor Walter Sendzik on anti-lockdown protest

April 10, 2021 – The anti-lockdown protest that took place in St. Catharines today does not represent the spirit or character of the majority of people in our community who have been working hard to push back against COVID-19 for the last 13 months.

While I believe in free speech, we are under Stay-At-Home orders due to the severity of the third wave that has a dangerous grip on our community. The actions of those protesting today put our community at greater risk and further cause harm to our abilities to control the transmission of COVID-19.

With our hospitals postponing surgeries, the number of patients under the age of 60 at hospitals with COVID quickly climbing and the number of people in ICU needing critical care due to COVID, now is not the time to act in a reckless way that puts you, your family and others in the community at greater risk.

Today, the Niagara Regional Police did their job in controlling the situation. There have been many comments about the lack of enforcement, but NRP officers were focused on crowd control and keeping the peace. I am confident that the NRP will be working with by-law enforcement to enforce regulations that were clearly broken today, in a timely manner.

Finally, I am deeply troubled to see one of my colleagues from regional council - Mayor of West Lincoln Dave Bylsma - speak at the protest today in St. Catharines. The fact that he blatantly broke the provincial government's Stay At Home Order is a serious breach of his elected position, and I trust that NRP and Public Health will act accordingly.

Don't allow today's protests to deter all those people who are working hard to eradicate COVID-19 from our community. With the vaccine rollout ramping up quickly and so many people doing their part, we are getting very close to putting COVID in the rearview mirror - now is not time to let up.

Stay home, stay safe and get your vaccination when it's your time.

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