



Jenna Peace
Durham College Student's Inc.
2000 Simcoe St. N.
Oshawa, ON, L1G 0C5

Bill Holmes
General Manager
Durham Region Transit

September 17, 2020

Dear Mr. Holmes,

Thank you for taking the time to get back to me. I understand that the decision has been made by all our respective institutions to suspend the pass, however many Durham College students have reached out since the announcement expressing great disappointment and frustration. I must continue to advocate on behalf of Durham College students in regards to affordable transportation. Further, our students are active participants in the Durham Regional workforce beyond the hours of instruction at Durham College, our students require affordable transit for their employment beyond school hours. Durham College students are vital frontline workers for the economic recovery of the Durham Region. How can we ask students to work in frontline jobs, stay in school, and not extend an existing program to them?

I see you have highlighted that 40 percent of students who would benefit from the age range of the current youth bus pass rate where you must be under the age of 19. As you are aware, it still leaves the 60 percent majority of students without an affordable transit option. I will not be able to let the larger half of our students struggle this year. We all, myself included, are burdened by many other things during these unprecedented times. The DRT can extend the 19 and under student pass to all full-time students for one year to support us during this crisis.

Several other transit providers, such as Grand River Transit in Waterloo, and the London Transit Commission, have offered students a monthly discounted pass available from September to December, even as they have suspended the UPASS. This pass works out to be similar to the under secondary student pass in price.

It is in the economic interest of the Durham Region that a low-cost transit option is available for all full-time students from September to December.

Sincerely,

Jenna Peace
Executive Chairperson
Durham College Students Inc.

Cc: President of Durham College, Don Lovisa
President of Ontario Tech Student Union, Tiffany Best
Durham Regional Council
Chief Administrative Officer, Elaine Baxter-Trahair