I am contacting you today as a concerned member of your constituency and on behalf of the 95,000+ Ontarians that are involved in baseball across the province and the hundreds of thousands of others involved in other outdoor team sports.

The Baseball Ontario community was grateful in July 2020 to be able to get back on the field under the government’s reopening plan. In 2020, any amount of “normal” activity was welcomed and appreciated. However, one year later, we are all feeling the pressure and fatigue inflicted on all of us because of COVID-19, and people are looking for more than simply getting back on the field. With one year of learning and demonstrated safe experience, I believe baseball, and other outdoor team sports, can safely deliver meaningful programs and competition in 2021.

Baseball Ontario has proactively developed and implemented comprehensive Return to Sport Protocols, which resulted in no baseball outbreaks in 2020. By its very nature, baseball is one of the safest of team sports in a COVID world: (1) we are an outdoor sport; and (2) +90% of the time the players and coaches are naturally socially distanced beyond 2 metres.

I am writing to you because pursuant to the COVID-19 Regulations issued by the government organized team sports in Orange/Yellow/Green Zones are limited to "leagues" of a maximum of 50 players. This same limit applies to both indoor and outdoor team sports, despite outdoor team sports being safer. Further, this approach has not been taken with respect to any other recreational activity. With baseball roster sizes of 12 players (at the younger ages) and 25 players (at the older ages), this 50-player limit simply does not allow for meaningful competition despite it being safe to do so.

I would ask for your help in getting this rule be changed to increase the size of the limit and/or to provide clear guidance on how and when one "league" can be dissolved and a new one formed. Sport is vital to the physical and mental health of Ontarians, particularly the youth. Action needs to be taken.

The proposed changes requested would only apply in Orange/Yellow/Green Zones as those are the only zones where team sport competition is permitted.  I am not requesting that competition be permitted in the Shutdown, Grey or Red Zones or where a Stay at Home Order is in force.

Thank you for your help.