

Email correspondence between MP Scott Reid and constituent, position taken on Hillier

Dear

Thank you for your email, in which you ask, "What Scott's position is regarding the behavior of our Member of Provincial Parliament and your office mate Randy Hillier as it relates to COVID 19 protocols?"

Now let me turn to your question with regard to my views on Randy Hillier's views. The answer is this: There are a number of points regarding the Covid pandemic where Randy and I disagree. For example, he doesn't think masks help to reduce the spread of the virus, and I disagree. (In fact, I was the first MP to wear a mask in the House of Commons, back in the spring of 2020, when our health authorities were telling us that wearing masks did not reduce the spread. This official advice seemed to fly in the face of the facts, and so I started wearing a mask anyway.)

In May 2020, I also, at my own expense, arranged for 10,000 masks to be shipped to some indigenous reserves in northern Saskatchewan. (As you may recall, in May last year, PM Trudeau and Dr Tam suddenly reversed themselves, announced that mask-wearing was essential to safety. What followed was a shortage of masks in some of the parts of the country that needed them the most.)

I also disagree with Randy about vaccines, and I was very glad and relieved to get my own first dose of Astra Zeneca at the end of April 2021. I have devoted a considerable amount of time in one-on-one conversations, trying to convince vaccine-hesitant individuals to sign themselves up.

However, on the subject of the efficacy of lockdowns, like Randy, I have serious concerns. I don't believe that kind of blunt tool is effective to stop or slow the spread of the virus, given what we now know about it. Stay-at-home orders seemed reasonable (at least to some degree) in the early stages of the pandemic, a year ago, when we knew very little about the ways in which Covid is transmitted.

By contrast, given the present state of our knowledge, and the fact that protective equipment such as masks and face shields have become readily available, the stay-at-home orders issued in 2021 are grotesque and disproportionate impositions on our freedoms. In my view, the present stay-at-home order infringes on a host of Charter-guaranteed rights, including:

- freedom of assembly and association;
- freedom of speech and (when applied to prevent people from demonstrating against public policies---such as lockdowns); and
- freedom of religion (when used to prevent people from gathering in the manner dictated by their faith, be they Christians, Muslims, Jews, or any other religion).

Section 1 of the Charter of Rights creates a formula under which governments are permitted to restrict the freedoms guaranteed in the Charter---including freedom of assembly and association, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion---if the restrictions are sufficiently tight, and are justified under the circumstances. Section 1 reads as follows:

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

The Ontario government makes the claim that its stay-at-home orders, including the prohibitions on attending church services, may be regarded as "reasonable limits prescribed by law [which] can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." I disagree with the government's assessment---and clearly, Randy does as well.

You also ask: "I would also like to ask why you have refrained from making any public comments about Hillier...?"

The answer is this: I have also refrained from making public comments about:

- Doug Ford's response to the pandemic, which---speaking frankly---has been disjointed, confused, and seems to be driven as much by what he thinks the latest polls indicate is likely to be popular;
- The response of the World Health Organization which---in my view---has been unduly deferential to the PRC regime's manipulation of the information at the start of the pandemic. The WHO has also been the chief proponent of the now-discredited droplet theory of COVID spread (which is why it rejected the use of masks, which reduce aerosol spread);
- The mess that the Trump administration made of its COVID response;
- Many aspects of the Trudeau government's handling of COVID at the federal level, some of which have been so inept that they would be comical, if they were not resulting in the deaths of Canadian citizens and the prolongation of this disastrous epidemic by several months.

Why have I been quiet on all of these matters? Because it makes sense to focus on the matters where I think I can make a difference, and where people might actually listen to what I say and change their actions in ways that would improve their

health outcomes. Take a look at my Twitter feed and my Facebook, and you'll see that early in the pandemic I was actively promoting mask-wearing. In April this year, I made a point of posting a selfie of myself being vaccinated. In publicizing these actions, I have been trying to provide gentle encouragement to many vaccine-hesitant individuals, some of whom (in this riding, at any rate) are very respectful of Randy Hillier's views. It is my view that this was, and is, more likely to make a difference than picking a public fight with my MPP (or Premier Ford, or the other people and agencies noted above) was likely to do.

I hope that you find the foregoing to be fulsome responses to your questions. You indicated that you would be passing along my email, so I'll ask that you pass on the entire thing, rather than portions of my responses to you.

Sincerely,

Scott Reid, MP

Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston

-----Original Message-----

From: <>

Sent: May 28, 2021 12:32 PM

To: Reid, Scott - M.P. <scott.reid@parl.gc.ca>

Subject: Randy Hillier

Name:

Email:

Subject: Randy Hillier

Phone:

I am writing to ask what Scott's position is regarding the behavior of our Member of Provincial Parliament and your office mate Randy Hillier as it relates to COVID 19 protocols? We, the constituents have heard nothing from you on this matter and many think its high time we did. Please advise me as to whether or not you support the on the ongoing COVID protocols and what your position is regarding Hillier. I am part of a couple of groups who oppose Hillier's irresponsible behavior and will forward your response onto these groups. I would also like to ask why you have refrained from making any public comments about Hillier whose actions are regarded by the majority of society as irresponsible and dangerous. Thanks for your time and I look forward to your response.