JUL 18 2007

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
Mayor, City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for your letter dated May 23, 2007 to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care regarding Hamilton City Council's approval of a motion to develop a by-law requiring mandatory food safety certification for commercial food-handlers.

We are in agreement with the importance of food handler training of food handlers in order to reduce the risk of food borne illness. Ensuring that food handlers are educated about food safety is a key component of any food safety system. In this regard, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) has an existing Food Handler Training Protocol that provides the minimum requirements for the provision of a food safety training program.

In addition, the MOHLTC is currently undertaking a review of the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines which set out the minimum requirements for fundamental programs and the important role of the boards of health in providing and/or ensuring relevant programs and services. It is anticipated that the boards of health shall ensure that food handlers in food premises have access to food safety training consistent with the revised Food Handler Training Protocol which will provide uniform, minimum requirements for a food safety training program.

Yours truly,

George Fasut, MD, MHSc, FRCPC, FACP
Chief Medical Officer of Health (A)