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Anti-Doug Ford demonstration held in downtown Orangeville opposing provincial decisions

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Demonstrators gathered on Saturday, March 28, to protest a long list of grievances with the provincial government.

Protestors critical of decisions made by Premier Doug Ford began assembling outside local MPP Sylvia Jones' office, near the Broadway and First Street intersection, just before noon. United by a common desire for accountability and transparency from the province, protestors held up signs and chanted against the Ford government.

Protestors said they were present to address several issues, such as recent cuts to OSAP and education, shortcomings in health care, and what they view as undemocratic behaviour by Ford and his cabinet.

The one unifying element among all these groups present was a collective frustration with Ford and a sense that their concerns were being ignored in Queen's Park. The collective of protestors decided to pool their efforts into one, larger movement to hopefully increase their visibility.

Among the protestors was Shannon Lee, a local resident who said she was there to protest against the Doug Ford government.

She said, "We're fighting for health care, we're fighting for the environment, we're fighting for social services for people with autism. We're fighting the privatization of our water systems, which is terrifying, and we're fighting corruption."

The protest encompassed a diverse array of causes, such as opposition to Highway 413 and seniors opposing Ford's proposed changes to Freedom of Information requests that would make cabinet ministers' records secret.

The protest also highlighted some causes that hit close to home for Dufferin-Caledon residents.

The Caledon Community Road Safety Advocacy Group joined the demonstration to spotlight the local crisis of illegal truck yards and unsafe trucking practices in Caledon, and the government's inaction in addressing it. Director Carmela Palkowski represented the organization at the protest.

?Illegal truck yards are probably one of the biggest problems in Caledon,? she said. ?They take over farms, they're in residential areas like right across the street, so they're coming into oncoming one lane traffic, causing environmental damage, leaking diesel fuel into the grass, and so much more.?

?The government, they promised a legislation piece. We're waiting. There's no information. There's no indication that it's coming,? Palowski added.

The group said that they seek to hold provincial and municipal leaders accountable for years of inaction, push for real enforcement and legislation, and humanize the issue. Joining forces with other groups and individuals in the amalgamated protest was one way to amplify their voice.

With dozens of causes, demonstrators have brought together a chorus of causes into a unified voice, pointed squarely at Doug Ford and his cabinet.

The protest was just one of many held across the province over the weekend, with dozens being organized in Ontario cities and

towns.

Attendees said they plan to continue building momentum and pressure every month until they are acknowledged by the provincial government and their concerns are addressed.