



THE WATCHDOG

Newsletter

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Ombudsman clears London council dinner "meeting"

Ontario Ombudsman André Marin's latest report, [Turning Tables](#), concluded that a June gathering of 12 London, Ont. city council members in the City Hall cafeteria was not an illegal meeting under the *Municipal Act*.

The Ombudsman's Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team investigated complaints from two councillors that the gathering, during the break between two meetings on June 24, 2014, violated the open meeting requirements of the Act (also known as the Sunshine Law).



"Councillors are entitled to socialize. They may also engage in individual discussions relating to council business," the Ombudsman found. However, he warned that "the Sunshine Law was not intended as a tool to serve the oblique purposes of those involved in municipal politics," and that it must be "respected" as a mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability of local government.

SEPTEMBER 2014

The Ombudsman investigates public complaints about Ontario government agencies. His office oversees more than 500 provincial ministries, agencies, tribunals, boards, commissions and Crown corporations.

[FILE A COMPLAINT ONLINE](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, October 4: Visit our office's booth at the Scarborough-Agincourt Health and Government Services Information Fair, Bridlewood Mall (2900 Warden Ave.) - 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

➤ [Read the full report](#)

BILL 8: WHERE DO YOUR LOCAL REPS STAND ON OMBUDSMAN OVERSIGHT?

As the October 27 municipal and school board elections approach, Bill 8 - the *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act* - is a hot topic. Among other things, it will expand the Ombudsman's oversight to municipalities and school boards. Many municipal and school board candidates have pledged support for Ombudsman oversight. Catch up on some of the [Twitter discussion here](#), and [recent media coverage here](#):

- [Why transparency matters](#) (Hamilton Spectator)
- [Legislation would give Andre Marin scrutiny over municipalities](#) (Toronto Sun)
- [Give Marin power to probe councils](#) (Toronto Sun)
- [More teeth for Ontario's watchdog](#) (Welland Tribune)
- [Ontario ombudsman ready to probe MUSH sector](#) (Barrie Advance)

GUANGDONG DELEGATION VISIT

A delegation of civil servants from Guangdong Province, China, visited the Ombudsman's office on September 23, arranged through the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs. Senior Counsel Wendy Ray (centre), explained the Ombudsman's role, and how the office handles public complaints and systemic investigations.



INVESTIGATIONS UPDATE

- [Monitoring of unlicensed daycares](#): The Ombudsman's final report on this investigation is in the final stages of production and will be released later this fall.
- [Hydro One billing practices](#): This investigation is ongoing, with the individual complaint tally now over 8,800 since the investigation was



Sunday, October 5: Our "Ombudsman Watchdogs" staff team participates in the Run for the Cure to raise awareness and fight breast cancer, University of Toronto, 10 a.m. [Learn about our team and why we run every year.](#)



TOP 25 PEOPLE IN THE CAPITAL

Ontario Ombudsman André Marin has been named one of Ottawa Life magazine's [Top 25 People in the Capital](#).

"The government accepts a majority of recommendations prompted by investigations made by Marin," Ottawa Life says. "With over 20,000 complaints coming into his office every year, Marin clearly also has the trust of Ontario people."

[Read the full piece](#)

announced on Feb. 4.

- › [Ontario direction to police on de-escalation](#): Fact-gathering in this investigation is nearing completion, after which the Ombudsman's report and recommendations will be drafted.
- › [Adults with developmental disabilities in crisis](#): As the investigation wraps up and the Ombudsman's report is being crafted, we continue resolve individual cases and take complaints - more than 1,200 to date.

Anyone who has information relevant to our ongoing investigations can contact our office at 1-800-263-1830, file an online complaint or email: info@ombudsman.on.ca.



STAY CONNECTED

The Ombudsman has 3,155 [Facebook fans](#) and 26,056 [Twitter followers](#)! Please continue to reach out to us on social media, or drop us a line at thewatchdog@ombudsman.on.ca.

Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario | Bureau de l'Ombudsman de l'Ontario
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