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THE WATCHDOG

Newsletter

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BILL 8: ONE STEP CLOSER

Will expand ombudsman oversight



On November 26, Ombudsman André Marin was one of several people to make a submission on Bill 8, the *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014*, to the Standing Committee on General Government. He spoke in support of the accountability measures in the bill, including the historic expansion of his jurisdiction to municipalities, universities and school boards, a measure that Ontario ombudsmen have been calling for since the office's inception in 1975.

[Read the submission](#)

[Watch the video](#)

[Read the full text of Bill 8](#)

NOVEMBER 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](#)

Ombudsman Ontario

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OMLET ON THE MENU

UPDATE:

The original edition of this newsletter stated the Ombudsman's OMLET Annual Report, which summarizes the Ombudsman's investigations of closed

"The Ombudsman of Ontario has been a **positive agent of change**, and should this bill pass we will bring the same level of positive change **to municipalities, universities, and school boards**." - André Marin, Submission on Bill 8



NORTHERN EXPOSURE: NWT WARMS UP TO THE IDEA OF AN OMBUDSMAN

After the Ombudsman spoke at a public meeting in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories on November 3 urging the government to establish the territory's first-ever ombudsman, members of the legislative assembly voted to put forth a motion asking government to draft legislation to do just that.

Mr. Marin, who was invited to Yellowknife by a government committee working to create an ombudsman office in the Territory, explained the role and function of an ombudsman, and discussed the benefits and cost savings of creating an office. He also answered questions from the public about how an ombudsman works hand-in-hand with parliamentarians to resolve individual issues and address systemic problems.



"It's not about playing a gotcha game with the government. It's about improving governance by being to the side, helping citizens have a voice."

-Ontario Ombudsman André Marin

[Watch the Ombudsman's presentation](#)
["N.W.T. MLAs vote in favour of creating ombudsman office"](#)
[\(CBC News North\)](#)

INVESTIGATIONS UPDATE

- [Hydro One billing practices](#): This investigation is ongoing, with almost 9,300 complaints received so far.
- [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.

municipal meetings, would be released in December - that has changed. A new date will be announced in the December edition.

The Ombudsman recently reported on closed meeting investigations in several municipalities, including:

[Elliot Lake](#)

[Welland](#)

[Whitestone](#)

[Owen Sound](#)

TALKING OVERSIGHT WITH AMCTO

Senior counsel Laura Pettigrew spoke to the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario on November 20. She updated the group on how the Ombudsman ensures municipal councils understand the closed meeting rules, and explained his process for investigating complaints about closed meetings.



WE'RE HIRING!

Do you have a critical mind? Do you want to work somewhere innovative and fast-paced? One of our Twitter followers said the job description for our Early Resolutions Officer sounded more like it belonged to Marvel's S.H.I.E.L.D. agency than a government agency. (We grant that Ombudsman and Iron Man sound pretty similar!)

[Read more about the position.](#)

» [Adults with developmental disabilities in crisis](#): As the investigation wraps up and the Ombudsman's report is being drafted, we continue to 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.



No uniform required.

STAY CONNECTED

The Ombudsman has 3,255 [Facebook fans](#) and 27,498 [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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