

TORONTO FINANCIAL DISTRICT BIA
100 King St. W., Suite 5700
Toronto, ON, M5X 1C7
T: 416.849.3856
TorontoFinancialDistrict.com



**TORONTO FINANCIAL DISTRICT BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA
SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF SOCIAL POLICY
RE: *BILL 171 BUILDING TRANSIT FASTER ACT (2020)***

TORONTO FINANCIAL DISTRICT BIA
100 King St. W., Suite 5700
Toronto, ON, M5X 1C7
T: 416.849.3856
TorontoFinancialDistrict.com



Procedural Services Branch

99 Wellesley Street West
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Submission to the Standing Committee on Social Policy
Re: *Bill 171, Building Transit Faster Act (2020)*

The Toronto Financial District BIA is writing to express its support for the expedited completion of the Ontario Line. The measures outlined in *Bill 171, Building Transit Faster Act (2020)* are reasonable given the urgent need for increased transit capacity in the region's largest business district. According to the Minister, streamlining processes could take years of construction timelines, which is a laudable goal for an overdue project like the Ontario Line.

Businesses in the Financial District employ more than 200,000 people from across the region. A few months ago, before COVID-19 restrictions were imposed, about 80 per cent of those people took transit to get to work. At that time, The Yonge subway line (Line 1) was already over capacity at peak hours. In the medium-term, physical distancing requirements are expected to further strain transit capacity. In the long term, the development of new office space in the financial core will add to transit demand. Relief to over-crowding on Line 1 is the number one transit priority in the region.

If the Ontario Line is not prioritized, the economic competitiveness of the GTA will not keep pace with the demands of a global market for investment, jobs and talent. It is our hope that all levels of government can support a single, effective and unified transit vision for the region and in doing so deliver the Ontario Line faster and more efficiently.

We would note that the bill gives the Province significant leverage to determine the compensation offered to municipalities and their agencies, which include Business Improvement Areas. In February of 2020 Minister Mulroney indicated her intent to "to respect property rights...negotiate in good faith and treat people fairly." We are encouraged by this statement and look forward to seeing it fulfilled if the bill is passed.

We also recognize that major infrastructure projects are often disruptive even when they are necessary. While we expect disruption, we hope the powers contained in this bill will be used a collaborative way to minimize the impacts of construction and in our case particularly to limit impacts on road congestion for commuters in areas with significant capital construction planned for future years.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Humes".

Grant Humes
Executive Director