

Douglas, Julia

From: Christopher Baines <christopher.a.baines@gmail.com>
Sent: November 30, 2020 2:42 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Subject: Bill 229 and Schedule 6

Dear Committee Members:

It has been very rare that I voice my opposition to legislation but I feel compelled to express my profound opposition to Schedule 6 as contained in Bill 229 currently under discussion with your committee. I should point out that I have been a member of various planning committees and committees of adjustment for two municipalities over the past 15 years or so.

I have spent 30 years working in the land trust "business" saving land for the species and for future generations. I have seen the vital work that Conservation Authorities in Ontario have done - particularly around watershed preservation. It would seem that many in this government have forgotten Hurricane Hazel in 1952 and damage and death that resulted. It resulted in the formation of the first CA in the form of MTRCA. We need more involvement of CA's in Ontario to protect and advocate for watersheds to ensure these sorts of climate events - much more likely with climate change - don't happen more often and in a greater number of communities. I don't think this government appreciates or understands the critical role CA's play in preventing such "acts of nature" overwhelming our municipal infrastructures in the future. If anything CA's power and scope should be strengthened to deal with a new climate-changing world as a result of global warming.

Specifically this bill as currently written will:

- a) Changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* will allow the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry to take over and decide a development permit application in place of a conservation authority. This will strip out the "science-based" decision making process and allow the politicizing of the permitting process which could allow development that may be considered unsafe or damaging to the natural environment.
- b) Prevent CA's from the ability to independently appeal land use planning decisions affecting harmful situations to our floodplains. This could end up putting more people and infrastructure at risk.
- c) This Bill will allow two new avenues of appeal to permit applications and set out legislated timelines which will result in a more complicated, lengthy and costly process.
- d) Particularly galling is the plan to direct board members to act only on behalf of the municipality they represent rather than act on behalf of the watershed and its residents.

I urge members of this committee to reject these proposed changes included (quite slyly I might add) within Bill 229 on CA's. These changes will gut the CA's when they should actually be strengthened.

Yours truly,

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