

Douglas, Julia

From: Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Sent: November 25, 2020 3:36 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: Teng, Deborah
Subject: Webform submission: Submission of material 27136

Submitted on Wed, 11/25/2020 - 15:15

Application ID: 27136

Submitted values are:

Bill or item of business: **Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020**

Choose a topic

Do you know the bill title or business (e.g., pre-budget consultations) you'd like to speak or submit material about?

Yes

Choose an application

Which application would you like to submit?

Submit material only

Which deadline would you like to submit your written material for?

[Written Submission Deadline: 7:00 p.m. \(EST\) on Wednesday, December 2, 2020](#)

Add your information

Are you submitting material as an individual or on behalf of an organization?

I am submitting material as an individual

Full name

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Paste submission

I strongly oppose the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act set out in Schedule 6 of Bill 229 that curtail the role of Conservation Authorities in watershed planning and management.

I am also deeply concerned that these proposed changes were brought forward in a budget bill, thereby overriding my right to comment under the Environmental Bill of Rights. I request that you remove Schedule 6 in its entirety from Bill 229.

Ontario's Conservation Authorities are a unique and widely respected innovation. They provide a much-valued bridge across municipal boundaries to understand and address environmental concerns, such as flooding. Because they operate at the watershed level, they are ideally positioned to encourage science-based collaborative strategies and decision-making. Their vital role in land use planning and permitting must be retained to ensure that development does not put communities at risk from flooding and other climate change impacts through loss of wetlands, woodlands and farmland.

The changes proposed in Schedule 6 will reduce or constrain the mandate of Conservation Authorities, and are therefore contradictory to the interests of the people of Ontario who are facing enormous risks and costs as a result of climate change and ongoing biodiversity loss. The roles and responsibilities of Conservation Authorities are critical in protecting the lands, waters and wildlife which benefit businesses and communities across Ontario, and upon which our health and well-being ultimately depend.

Specifically, this bill will introduce a number of deeply troubling changes:

- It will effectively negate the vital role of conservation authorities by allowing developers to apply to override conservation authority decisions regarding building permits on flood plains and in wetlands

- It restricts the ability of conservation authorities to implement non-mandatory programs that serve local needs and interests

- It limits conservation authorities' ability to investigate illegal activity

- It removes citizen oversight from conservation authority boards by permitting only elected councillors to be appointed to them

- It undermines the important "integrated watershed" approach to resource protection and management by requiring board members to act in the interest of the municipality they represent and not in the interest of the overall watershed, an approach that the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority has said will leave Ontario with "a patchwork of programs" that puts our environment at risk.

I urge you to remove Schedule 6 in its entirety from Bill 229.