



LYTTON PARK RESIDENTS' ORGANIZATION INC.
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November 29, 2020

Minister Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance, minister.fin@ontario.ca

MPP Amarjot Sandhu, Chair, amarjot.sandhu@pc.ola.org

Julia Douglas, Committee Clerk, comm-financeaffairs@ola.org

Standing Committee on Finance & Economic Affairs

99 Wellesley Street West Room 1405, Whitney Block Queen's Park

Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Dear Minister Phillips and Members of the Standing Committee on Finance & Economic Affairs:

**Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020
Schedule 6 Conservation Authorities Act**

Please remove Schedule 6 from Bill 229.

In 1946, the PC government legislated the Conservation Authorities Act to address concerns from agricultural, naturalist and sports groups who complained that much of Ontario's renewable natural resources were suffering from poor land, water and forestry practices during the 1930s and 1940s. The combined impacts of drought and deforestation led to extensive soil loss and flooding. After Hurricane Hazel, the PC government strengthened the Act to enable Conservation Authorities to acquire lands for recreation and conservation and regulate them for community safety.

Bill 229's provisions will drastically weaken the Conservation Authorities Act and Conservation Authorities' vital land-use planning role essential for delivering flood mitigation and drinking-water protection. Conservation Authorities support broader environmental protections including land conservation and areas of importance for protecting water resources, biodiversity conservation, water-quality protection and ecological restoration.

It is especially concerning that these proposed changes were included in a budget bill, thereby over-riding residents' rights to comment under the Environmental Bill of Rights.

Ontario's unique and widely respected Conservation Authorities provide a crucial linkage spanning municipal boundaries to recognize and address environmental concerns like flooding. Operating at the watershed level, they are ideally positioned to encourage science-based collaborative strategies and decision-making. Their vital land-use planning and permitting role must be retained to ensure that development does not put communities at risk from flooding and other climate change impacts through wetland, woodland and farmland loss.

The Lytton Park Residents' Organization ("LPRO") is an incorporated non-profit association, representing member households from Lawrence Avenue West to Roselawn and Briar Hill Avenues, Yonge Street to Saguenay and Proudfoot Avenue.

www.lyttonparkro.ca

The Conservation Authority model helps to protect Ontario from climate change impacts. Their role in flood mapping, hazard assessment and monitoring, is critical to protecting life and property. Conservation Authorities must have the necessary regulatory power, appropriate staffing, and adequate funding to intervene in planning decisions and development applications.

The Bill's proposed changes to Conservation Authorities contradict the critical goal of building Ontario's climate resilience. These amendments will undermine Ontario's watershed planning and implementation of an ecosystem-based approach. The roles and responsibilities of Conservation Authorities are critical in protecting the lands, waters and wildlife which benefit Ontario's businesses and communities and upon which our health and our well-being ultimately depend.

In particular, the Province must ensure that the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority has the financing and the authority needed to protect the many ravines traversing the City of Toronto. These ravines, besides providing a treasured natural respite from our built-up cityscape, protect our lands from flooding and provide habitat for our flora and fauna.

Sincerely,

Harold Smith, Director
Lytton Park Residents' Organization

Maureen Kapral, Vice-President
Lytton Park Residents' Organization

- c. Premier Doug Ford, premier@ontario.ca
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Minister John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, john.yakabuski@pc.ola.org
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