

November 29, 2020

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
99 Wellesley Street West
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
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Attn: Amarjot Sandhu, MPP, Chair: amarjot.sandhu@pc.ola.org
Julia Douglas, Clerk: comm-financeaffairs@ola.org

CC: Hon. Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance: rod.phillipsco@pc.ola.org
Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario: doug.fordco@pc.ola.org

Re: Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. I would like to request that Schedule 6 (changes to the Conservation Authorities Act) and Schedule 8 (changes to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994) be withdrawn in their entirety from Bill 229.

The Conservation Authorities Act was amended in 1956 in response to the loss of lives and homes during Hurricane Hazel. I am concerned that if Schedule 6 becomes law, Ontarians will be in the position of those who haven't learned from history being forced to repeat it. I want Conservation Authorities to continue to be able to influence and comment on proposed construction developments. This is a safeguard to prevent harm to people and property.

When I read about the proposed development of the provincially significant Lower Duffins Creek, I thought about the sort of problems that the Conservation Authorities Act was designed to protect us from. Living in Etobicoke near the Mimico Creek, I have observed firsthand the dangers of poor urban planning and watershed management.

Etobicoke had a storm system on July 8, 2013 that stalled over the city, causing heavy rain throughout the day. The Mimico Creek overflowed and the homes and street on Thompson Avenue were flooded. The house at the south west corner of Royal York and Thompson had to be demolished as a result of the damage. Senior citizens had to be carried out of the flood water from their homes. The homes along Thompson Avenue would likely not have been allowed to be built so close to the Mimico if they had been built after Hurricane Hazel and the 1956 Conservation Act Amendments.

Severe weather conditions are rare, but they do happen. Our Urban Planning should prepare for these infrequent but eventual situations. To quote Ontario's Special Advisor on Flooding, Doug McNeil has stated, "the development of the modern floodplain policy in Ontario, the watershed approach, the Conservation Authority model and the flood standards have been

extremely effective at reducing flood risks.” The input that a proposed development could receive from a Conservation Authority cannot be disregarded as “red tape” that gets in the way of development projects.

Thompson Avenue July 8, 2013



Humbervale Boulevard when the Mimico Creek crested into parkland, July 8, 2013



Added to this is my concern that Schedule 6 will result in the development of Lower Duffins Creek and other provincially significant wetlands that shelter endangered species and their habitat. We should be retaining our wetlands and endangered species, not destroying them. My right to comment under the Environmental Bill of Rights on these type of development proposals should not be denied by these changes to the law.

Regarding Schedule 8 of Bill 229, I disagree with the permanent exemption for authorized logging operations from prohibitions against killing endangered species and/or destroying critical habitat.

I understand that the current Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994, applies to two thirds of Ontario's land base. This is home to our species at risk and their remaining habitat. Schedule 8 effectively allows logging companies to disregard The Endangered Species Act.

I want to protect the remaining plants and animals native to Ontario. I believe that this is in the interests of the people of Ontario, for current and future generations. From what I am reading about the opposition to Schedule 6 and 8 of Bill 229, I am not alone in being very concerned and upset about these proposed changes to existing laws of protection.

Please remove Schedule 6 and 8, entirely, from the budget Bill 229.

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