

Rika Vander Laan
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November 29, 2020

Chair,
Committee for Hearings on Schedule 6 of Bill 229
Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Dear Madam/Sir:

I am writing to express my deep concerns about Schedule 6 included in Bill 229 and request that it be removed from Bill 229.

The inclusion of Schedule 6 strips the Conservation Authorities of their authority and their ability to make decisions based on science and creates huge new powers for the Minister and the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal to allow developers to push through their projects. Schedule 6 takes away control over the protection of our precious wetlands, forests, wildlife habitat, and natural spaces from Conservation Authorities.

Further, requiring that the board of a Conservation Authority be made up of elected municipal counsellors does not provide the expertise and long range view that are critical to decisions about our environment.

I fail to understand why Schedule 6 is included in this bill. It appears that by burying this schedule in a budget bill, the government is avoiding public consultation that is ordinarily required on laws that impact the environment.

I believe it is important for Conservation Authorities to remain effective in being a vital line of defense for the natural spaces that mitigate flood risk, allow us to escape into nature and provide essential habitat for many species of wildlife, including endangered species. If we lose these spaces, we can't get them back.

Please remove Schedule 6 from Bill 229.

Respectfully,

Rika Vander Laan