

Douglas, Julia

From: Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Sent: November 25, 2020 3:32 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: Teng, Deborah
Subject: Webform submission: Submission of material 27126

Submitted on Wed, 11/25/2020 - 15:16

Application ID: 27126

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

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

Ms. Rose Sirois

Contact phone number

[548-888-4926](tel:548-888-4926)

Email address

siroisrose@gmail.com

Paste submission

I am writing in regards to the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and Planning Act included in the pending budget Bill 229. The bill contains provisions in Schedule 6 that will gut the purpose, goals, and power of Ontario's Conservation Authorities. These watershed-based planning and protection bodies employ scientists, collect long-term research data and carry out the protection of our water, wildlife and safety. Established in 1946, the authorities are a key instrument to halting flooding and protecting and restoring

wetlands, forests and watersheds across the portion of Ontario where 85 percent of the province's residents live.

Schedule 6, if implemented, will:

- Allow the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, his staff or a municipal government, to issue permits to allow for the destruction of wetlands and forests and to override protections from flooding, therefore stripping the power of Conservation Authorities to protect these important features in their communities, and making Ontarians much more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This new power could be used to push forward the MZO used to advance the destruction of the Duffins Creek provincially significant coastal wetland in Pickering over the clear objections of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Town of Ajax, the Chiefs of Ontario, and residents.
- Legally prohibit Conservation Authority Board members from prioritizing the watershed management and protection goals of the authorities, and instead require them to think first of the narrower interests of the municipality they come from. This turns 75 years of planning on a watershed basis on its head, at a time when we need to plan more from a whole ecosystem perspective to protect society from climate change.
- Remove Conservation Authorities' ability to directly comment on the impacts of proposed developments to municipal governments. This will set integrated watershed management back decades.
- Remove the ability of Conservation Authorities to purchase, at fair market value, land that is at risk from development or flooding. This ability is what allowed the creation of large valley parkland complexes in Toronto after hurricane Hazel. Removing this ability gravely inhibits Ontario's capabilities to adapt to climate change.
- Prohibit Conservation Authorities from appealing a municipal planning decision to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) or becoming a party to an appeal before LPAT. Conservation Authority expertise would have to be requested through an agreement with the municipality, or by the Minister.
- Enable land developers to force fast-tracking of approvals and afford them increased rights to appeal decisions they do not like.

In total, these changes would allow for the accelerated destruction of wetlands, forests, and wildlife habitats that offer Ontarians access to nature and help protect us from the growing effects of climate change.

I am asking you to work to secure the removal of Schedule 6 from Bill 229 before its passage.

Thank you for your consideration of my appeal. Sincerely, Rose Sirois