

Comments to Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs Re: Bill 229

Schedule 6 of the subject Bill does not relate to fiscal or economic policies, the focus of your Committee, and needs to be removed from the Bill.

Many concerns are raised by the proposed Schedule 6 related to conservation authority (CA) boards and programs and CA autonomy in planning and permitting, amongst other matters. I have outlined such concerns to the various Ministers and opposition critics.

More importantly, Schedule 6 disregards the value of CAs, as they have been and as they are, in providing integrated watershed management to the Province. Bill 229 is not the mechanism to improve the CA partnership with municipalities, citizens and the Province, so please remove Schedule 6 from Bill 229.

Furthermore, the proposed changes in Schedule 6 are contrary to the momentum on accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of CAs. As proposed, Schedule 6 is an unilateral initiative, and not well thought through! It is vitally important that respectful dialogue on these matters continue in a more appropriate manner (other than Bill 229).

Please remove Schedule 6 from Bill 229. Thank you!

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