

I am writing to request that you remove Schedule 6 of Bill 229, gutting the power of conservation authorities in planning decisions.

This is an uncalled-for attempt to slant development decisions in favour of construction. We need conservation authorities to have a voice in such decisions. They are the ones who best know what needs protecting. In particular, they need a say in the Lower Duffins Creek wetland, which the government is attempting to destroy without due process. Conservation associations take into account the whole watershed, whereas the municipal representatives with which this schedule proposes to stack their boards have only a limited vision.

The conservation authorities have not been obstructionist, but have allowed the large majority of development applications. In a time of global warming, we need more than ever their nature-based perspective. To attempt to strip them of power, and to do so underhandedly in a mainly budget bill, risks frittering away the public goodwill built up by the Ford government by its response to the Covid crisis. It seems to me shameful and shortsighted.

Yours sincerely,

Jean O'Grady