

Written submission to address the concerns of Schedule 6
within Budget Bill 229

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2 Pages

To the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs:

Ontario's Conservation Authorities (CA) have been instrumental, since 1946, in controlling floods, creating and preserving flood-prone areas from development and ameliorating the extent of damage due to flooding. However, Climate Change is affecting Ontario. Each year Ontario endures more severe and frequent flooding causing widespread erosion, damage to properties and costly harm to businesses and livelihoods. Thank goodness Ontario has the CAs to protect our homes, businesses and livelihoods in addition to our watersheds, our water quality and our important environmentally sensitive areas. Here in London and in the Thames River watershed, The Upper Thames Conservation Authority does superb work in controlling flooding, providing education on environmental issues and helps protect water quality.

I question the Ontario Government as to why, in Schedule 6 of Budget Bill 229, the protective role of the CAs are being removed? Under Schedule 6 of Budget Bill 229:

Why are developers allowed to override the CAs' decisions regarding building permits in flood-prone areas?

Why are limits being placed on CAs to investigate illegal activity on the lands they protect?

Why is the ability of CAs to look after local needs and interests through non-mandatory programs being restricted?

Why is the Integrated Watershed approach being undermined by requiring board members to act in the interest of their community only, instead of for the good of the entire Ontario watershed?

Why is it that elected councillors only are allowed to be appointed to the CA boards resulting in the removal of citizen oversight?

Schedule 6 of Budget Bill 229 appears to be a very developer-friendly paper. As 95% of Ontario's population lives within a watershed managed by a Conservation Authority, it is important to retain the protections the CAs provide to all Ontarians. Decisions based on science and water management expertise protect us all and should override the desires of the few to profit from development on Ontario's important watershed land.

I request that you please remove Schedule 6 from Budget Bill 229.

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