

Douglas, Julia

From: Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Sent: December 2, 2020 4:35 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: Teng, Deborah
Subject: Webform submission: Submission of material 28771
Attachments: Remove Schedule 6.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Submitted on Wed, 12/02/2020 - 16:33

Application ID: 28771

Submitted values are:

Bill or item of business: **Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020**

Choose a topic

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I am submitting material as an individual

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Dear Rod Philips and Ontario MPPs,

I'd like to take a moment to formally ask for the removal of Schedule 6 and stop the attack on our children's futures, the attack on wetlands, the attack on forests and the attack on Conservation Authorities.

We are all in living through a difficult time, and I cannot believe that while the world is collectively suffering, I must take a moment to remind my elected officials about the importance of protecting not only today but tomorrow.

I am a constituent who lives on the border of Ajax and Pickering Ontario. My family's life and finances will dramatically be affected if this bill goes through, and the town of Ajax and the City of Pickering will suffer for years to come. This bill would allow for decisions about MZO's to be made without the consultation of Conservation Authorities, such as the MZO that was made in Pickering concerning the Wetlands, wetlands that were not only protected but in 2005 were officially considered financially beneficial to the region.

Let me explain how this would affect my area, and I hope this will display why conservation authorities are so important.

In the case of the Pickering wetlands, these are one of the last wetlands left in Ontario, a place that used to be filled with them. Wetlands are a place to funnel rainwater, as to not overflow our soils and rivers. You may know that parts of Toronto, Oshawa, and others are prone to flooded basements, this is not an issue in Ajax/Pickering, and we have the wetlands to thank for this. The destruction of these wetlands, to put a warehouse (which can be put anywhere else, by the way), would threaten not only my family's basement but many. This would logically cause our home insurances to go up and would make it difficult for anyone who has tenets in their homes.

A so-called solution has been suggested: to displace the wetlands, or to add artificial resources elsewhere preferably near the lakefront. The issue is that this seems to be pricier than just moving the location of a warehouse that hasn't been started. This supposed "solution" may also not be a big enough space to make a substantial difference. In essence, this suggestion is for the government to use taxpayers' dollars to throw money on a problem that was created simply because the government didn't consult environmental groups – which outside of this pandemic would have been mandatory. It's like paying a credit card debt with another credit card, when you had the option not to. It makes no financial sense, the jobs created in the warehouse can exist if the warehouse was built anywhere else in the city of Pickering (there are spots available that aren't on protected land for those unfamiliar with the area). I have no doubt that this warehouse would benefit the economy, but to build this warehouse on the site of significant wetlands removes its value – especially when there is no strong reason for it to be built overtop or next to the wetlands. To reiterate, there are many spots in the city of Pickering that are available to build this warehouse in. In fact, across the street from the wetlands a golf course has closed, the warehouse can be moved across the street to avoid the destruction of the natural resource.

Will the government pay for the repairs to my future damaged basement? Will the government pay for the damage to my car when the roads are flooded? Had the government been consulted on this MZO and listened,

these questions wouldn't have to be asked, this whole fiasco would be avoided. I wouldn't have to be writing this letter, and the constituents of at least two ridings wouldn't be upset.

This is a very localized example, but like this example are many across Ontario. Many municipalities and regions have voiced their concerns with this section of the bill, including but not limited to, the municipality of Thunder Bay, King City, Halton, Hamilton, and many many more.

The environment is not there to bother us, it's there to protect us.

There are simple solutions to many issues, and environmental groups are there to let us know when something we think will benefit us short term will actually harm us in the long term. They are there to advise us to move a warehouse elsewhere, instead of somewhere where it will cause many people living in the area more harm than good. They are the experts in this field, and we should to the experts.

We are trying to move past the hardship and the emergency of Covid19 but we cannot get through it if we are creating another disaster as we do it. If we are to move forward in a way to get through this difficult time, we must also look ahead to make sure we're not creating the next difficult time. We must be proactive in a time that has forced us to be reactive, and we can do so easily by consulting the groups who are there to help us make the wisest decisions.

Once again, I'd like to ask not only my MPP but all of our elected officials to remove schedule 6, from the Bill 229.