

Douglas, Julia

From: Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Sent: December 2, 2020 3:44 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: Teng, Deborah
Subject: Webform submission: Submission of material 28691

Submitted on Wed, 12/02/2020 - 15:22

Application ID: 28691

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

Which deadline would you like to submit your written material for?

[Written Submission Deadline: 7:00 p.m. \(EST\) on Wednesday, December 2, 2020](#)

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I am submitting material as an individual

Full name

Hillary Quinn-Austin

Email address

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Paste submission

December 2, 2020

Re: Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020

I am writing this letter because I want to see Schedule 6 removed in its entirety from Bill 229. I strongly oppose

the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act that will undermine the critically important role of Conservation Authorities in overseeing the health of our watersheds and the local municipalities within. I am concerned that the changes were proposed in a budget bill, which do not require public consultation. I believe the changes being proposed will negatively impact Ontario citizens.

Ontario's Conservation Authorities have the very important role in land use planning to prevent development that puts communities at risk of flooding. I live in Ottawa, where several large rivers put properties at risk of flooding, and in recent years flooding has cost the citizens of Ottawa millions of dollars in damages and in risk prevention efforts. Without our Conservation Authorities keeping developers in check at the watershed level, development on important landscapes like wetlands and woodlots will increase erosion, run-off, and flooding. This will lower property value and increase taxes. The proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act in Bill 229 will take power away from Conservation Authorities in preventing permits and in giving stop work orders, and instead will put the power in the hands of the individual developers by allowing them to circumvent checks and balances. Limiting integrated watershed management is short-sighted and fiscally irresponsible.

Conservation Authorities in Ontario are unique and highly valuable as they operate at the watershed level, and so must consider how changes to the land will impact communities both upstream and downstream of development. The proposed changes will narrow the scope of Conservation Authorities to the interest of individual municipalities, thereby removing the linking role of Conservation Authorities among the land, waterbodies, and municipalities. Without this perspective, value will be placed on the interests of municipalities rather than the potential impacts of decisions on neighbouring communities, resulting in short-sighted decision making. The proposed changes will also introduce new rights for developers allowing them to fast-track development approvals and to appeal decisions they dislike but will not provide similar opportunities to citizens who may want to challenge the decisions of developers.

By reducing the influence and authority of Conservation Authorities in protecting our natural spaces and environment, who will developers be accountable to? Who will keep developers in check? I urge you to remove Schedule 6 in its entirety from Bill 229.

Sincerely,

Hillary Quinn-Austin

MSc. Biology (Water), University of Waterloo (2020),
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