

To the MPPs, committee members and all those considering the proposed legislation:

The landscape and beauty of our diverse regions inform our identity as Ontarians.

We have remarkable natural heritage in all parts of our great province, and the scant remaining wetlands and ecologically significant conservation areas in Southern Ontario are particularly precious: by the most reliable figures less than 30% of our wetlands remain, though through Niagara and

GTHA, that number drops to only 10 percent. These remaining areas constitute an important part of the well being and sense of place that millions in these communities call home, that will undoubtedly be missed if lost. While public attention for the better part of this year has understandably been held by the global pandemic, these proposed development measures will become unmistakable to Ontarians in the months and years to come; once we irrevocably lose the few remaining parcels of greenspace in the urban and suburban areas that already have little to speak of, we'll pay a huge toll as it relates to our

economic future, property values and diminished quality of life. Should the unrestrained, unfortunate use of MZOs continue unfettered along with the proposed changes in this bill, then we are forfeiting the natural heritage and sense of place that makes our communities desirable, enjoyable places to live.

Publically available government data projects more frequent extreme rain events just around the corner, if not already here: so the plan going forward is to pave over the scant remaining wetlands and waterways that serve as the best, least costly

means to make the GTA / Golden Horseshoe less flood prone? It simply doesn't make sense economically or in terms of livability and healthy communities.

Just ask Houston Texas how paving over suburban wetlands and floodplains made homes and new businesses nearly uninsurable for flood damage:

FEMA had to create a public insurance plan at great cost (while continuing to operate at significant losses for the taxpayers) because private insurers all but deserted Greater Houston after the Harvey flooding, leaving no private policies available to one

of the largest population centres in America.

We also have even more recent and local signs of this becoming a true economic problem for all levels of government, as this October the federal government announced it will invest \$19 million along with \$28 million from the City of Toronto to upgrade sorely needed flood mitigation infrastructure.

Coming out of this Covid induced economic slump, it'll hardly be good for business or the provincial economy if we end up with increasingly costly flood

policy costs, or face a very plausible future
contending with no reliable private insurers
available whatsoever. We may not be quite as large
&/or flat as Houston, but southern Ontario is
approaching their established pattern of creeping
sprawl with ensuing headaches: let's act to protect
our naturally existing fail-safes so we don't incur
avoidable additional costs in the very near term.

As Ontario Nature notes: "It shouldn't be lost on
anyone that wetlands benefit communities by
helping to mitigate floods, purify drinking water,

control erosion, sequester carbon, provide wildlife habitat and much more. A 2009 study commissioned by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry conservatively valued wetland benefits at over \$161,000 per hectare per year in urban settings. With over 72 percent of wetlands already destroyed in southern Ontario, we simply cannot afford to lose any more."

There are many voters & taxpayers of all stripes concerned about conservation, natural heritage and the role of their local conservation authorities in common sense planning. There are so few wetlands

in our urban and suburban zones still intact, it seems irreversibly short sighted to greenlight paving them over while they continue to benefit our economy and communities in so many ways.

Thank you very much,

- Brandon Quinn