

Amarjot Sandhu, MPP, Chair, Standing Committee, Bill 229
Julia Douglas, Clerk

Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Telephone: (416) 325-3515
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Re: Schedule 6 of Bill 229.

Dear Amarjot Sandhu,

I have very grave concerns about the effect on Schedule 6 on Conservation Authorities' ability to protect the safety of our drinking water and to control flooding. I am old enough to remember what it was like to experience the awful power of Hurricane Hazel that struck Southern Ontario on October 15-16, 1954. We know with our increasingly severe weather events, weakening the role of CA's is a dangerous action to take. There is good reason to expect more disasters like Hurricane Hazel, the worst natural disaster to hit Toronto. By including Schedule 6 in Bill 229 you are endangering the lives and safety of Ontarians.

When school let out at 3:30 PM on that Friday, the wind was already strong enough to make my short 5 minute walk home, the longest walk of my life. The wind whipped my umbrella inside out and my 7 year-old self struggled to walk through the rain and wind. My Dad had to place towels against the bottom of our front door to keep out the driving rain. We were lucky; while our basement stayed dry, one friend said that her parents stayed up the entire night bailing water from theirs. This was while caring for a new baby.

Please don't make Schedule 6 your Walkerton. The scope of danger to health and safety posed by this schedule will be greater than which occurred in Walkerton, all because of short-sightedness by your government. Please don't be the cause of misery and suffering for families because you propose to diminish the power of our Conservation Authorities to protect us

As a result of Hurricane Hazel, The Toronto Conservation Authority was created from smaller, local conservation authorities. Its scope increased to cover entire watersheds, sensible action for good planning. Thus it is now the Toronto and Area Conservation Authority. The following paragraph comes from the article linked below.

"In 1959, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority initiated plans for the development of large dams, reservoirs, and major flood-control channels, and for an erosion-control program. In addition, large areas of land were identified for acquisition and conservation. Regulations enacted since Hurricane Hazel restrict new development in flood plains, allowing rivers to flow naturally and reducing the risk to people and their property during flooding."

Sincerely,

Gloria Boxen
117 Old Surrey Lane
Richmond Hill, ON
L4C 6R8

A reminder of the devastation Hurricane Hazel caused can be found at
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hurricane-hazel>

Hurricane Hazel struck the Toronto area on 15-16 October 1954, with devastating results. It was Canada's worst hurricane and Toronto's worst natural disaster. During the storm, winds reached 124 km/h and over 200 millimetres of rain fell in just 24 hours.

...By 4:30 P.M. on 15 October, rain began to fall heavily on Toronto. Underpasses began to collect water, but by 7:00 P.M. the traffic had mostly cleared. Yet as Chief Meteorologist Fred Turnbull warned, "The worst is yet to come. This is the pause that always comes during a hurricane." (Betty Kennedy, Hurricane Hazel, 1979) The pause was not the anticipated "eye" of the hurricane; it was the pause before the deluge of rain inundated the city's rivers.

While the storm struck the Toronto area with heavy winds, the greatest destruction resulted from flooding. Much of the Humber River drainage basin was deforested, which allowed water to quickly flow into the river. The flood plains, already saturated by days of rain, simply could not contain the downpour.

The first deaths were reported at 11:00 p.m. as a car was swept into the Humber River killing the occupants. Of the final total of 81 dead, more than 30 were killed on a single street, Raymore Drive, when the cascading Humber River ripped entire homes from their foundations, sweeping them downstream. Volunteer fireman Bryan Mitchell recalled what he felt the night of Hazel on Raymore Drive, "I felt so helpless, but there was nothing I could do, nothing anybody could do. The water was so deep, up to our chins, and all the

firemen were weighed down by clothing and boats and equipment." (Toronto Star, 14 October 1984)

As the flooding escalated, 40 highways and main roads were submerged. Passenger trains were knocked off their tracks. Forty bridges were destroyed or structurally damaged and ten were out of commission because of damage to the approaches. In Woodbridge, the Humber swelled to 107 metres at its narrowest point; nine people died and several hundred more were left homeless. Two men, Murray and Clyde Deadder, were killed when their car was caught in floodwaters in Thistletown, where 12 families were left homeless.

Many brave rescue efforts were undertaken, even though the current was strong enough to endanger most boats. Several would-be rescuers launched missions to save stranded people, only to need rescuing themselves. Five firefighters from the Kingsway-Lambton Fire Station were killed when they attempted to rescue people stranded in a car by flood waters from the Humber River. Their fire truck became stuck on a flooded street and overturned, and the men—weighed down by heavy jackets, boots, and equipment—were tossed into the water.

Despite the difficulties, many lives were saved because of the quick action of police, fire personnel and citizens....

Lessons were learned from the tragic loss of life and environmental devastation of Hurricane Hazel. Conservation authorities, local municipalities, and the province together developed a comprehensive plan for flood control and water conservation to significantly reduce the risk to life and property posed by extreme weather events. After Hazel, the provincial government amended the Conservation Authorities Act to allow conservation authorities to acquire and regulate vulnerable lands (including the former Raymore Drive) for recreation and conservation.

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Please don't make Schedule 6 the equivalent of Walkerton in the scope of danger to health and safety Walkerton posed because of short-sightedness by our Government.