

Remove Schedule 6 and Schedule 8 from Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover From
Covid-19 Act

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Procedural Services Branch
99 Wellesley Street West
Room 1405, Whitney Block
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Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

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

Thank you for accepting this letter regarding the removal of Schedule 6, proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and the removal of Schedule 8, proposed changes to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act from Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from Covid-19 Act.

The approval of Schedule 6 is concerning to me since it limits Conservation Authorities' membership, leaving them unable to appoint indigenous representatives. The proposed amendments will replace the Conservation Authority's ability to represent their municipalities in lieu of elected councillors, leaving them unable to fulfill their mandate. Their duties to investigate future proposals, access land, research and expropriate will be further narrowed so they are unable to use the watershed approach which is fundamental to their mandate to build climate resilient communities.

I am especially concerned with how open ended this Act is in favour of requestors, as well as the increased flexibility for the Minister to appoint their own investigators to fill what would have been the Conservation Authority's position. Bill 229 omits key details surrounding programs, services and requirements of Conservation Authorities and leaves decisions open to future regulators who may not be acting in the public's best interest.

Additionally, I am opposed to amendments to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, Schedule 8, since it applies to the majority of land base in Ontario and places species at risk in harm's way. These amendments eradicate the Endangered Species Act by making forestry and development proposals exempt to the law, stating that "no person shall kill, harm or harass a listed species nor damage or destroy its habitat necessary for their survival and recovery." If these changes are approved and there is "imminent danger to an at-risk species", the Minister will no longer have authority to issue orders to those whose actions have a "significant adverse effect" on species at risk. Ultimately, amendments that attempt to "avoid or minimize harm" cannot replace the Endangered Species Act's original objective to "protect and promote recovery" of our species at risk.

For these reasons, I am strongly opposed to the amendments in Schedule 6, the Conservation Authorities Act, and Schedule 8, the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and I ask that you please remove them in their entirety from Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from Covid-19 Act.

Thank you for your time and understanding,

Kaylee Draper