

TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

REQUEST TO REMOVE SCHEDULES 6 and 10 FROM BILL 245

Submitted by

The Green Sanctuary Group

First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto

175 St. Clair Ave. West

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To the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly

As regards Bill 245: Schedules 6 and 10:

Schedule 6: Replacing Five Tribunals with One:

Each of the five separate tribunals has appointees/adjudicators with specialized expertise in the areas under their jurisdiction. Combining them into one mega-tribunal means that the necessary knowledge and skills will be missing in passing judgment on different complex issues. Inaccurate and unfair decisions can result. The potential for irreversible environmental damage is a great concern.

Stripping down the expropriating process by eliminating requirements that currently apply to the Board of Expropriation and LPAT removes the mandatory inspection of the land involved, timelines for appraisal reports, written records of oral reports, written reasons for decisions and authority to publish reports of significant decisions. The loss of all these present stipulations will do the public an injustice.

The provision to summarily dismiss appeals without hearings further affects the quality and credibility of the process.

As well, public interest is not served by the elimination of Ministerial appeals under Ontario's environmental laws, as the only recourse for disputes will be to go to the courts.

We are further concerned about partisanship, and undue influence on these agencies, for example, the appointment last year of an ex-lobbyist to the land use tribunal, and the reduced number of ERT members from 12 to 4 in the last 2 years.

Schedule 10: Elimination of Ministerial Appeals

By precluding appeals on questions of fact and policy, Schedule 10 reduces public access to justice and should likewise be removed.

The changes proposed in Schedule 6 and 10 are unjustifiable, as no evidence has been provided to prove their necessity.

Therefore, we request that Schedules 6 and 10 be removed from Bill 245.

The Green Sanctuary Group**

First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto

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** We are a Unitarian-Universalist accredited Green Sanctuary Group. As such, our objective is to support action to bring our congregational culture into greater alignment with environmental justice as an expression of faith, through social action, worship, education, and sustainable living.

It is comprised of members from the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto