

Submitted on Wed, 03/10/2021 - 19:26

Application ID: 30711

Submitted values are:

Bill or item of business: **Bill 245, Accelerating Access to Justice Act, 2021**

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

Add your information

Are you submitting material as an individual or on behalf of an organization?

I am submitting material as an individual

Full name

Ms Cathy Pike

Contact phone number

[416 819-6305](tel:4168196305)

Email address

csurapike@gmail.com

Paste submission

March 10, 2021

To the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

I am writing, as a concerned resident of Ontario, to express my strenuous objection to Schedule 6 of Bill 245. The proposed Schedule, along with Bill 257 and extensive reliance upon Ministerial Zoning Orders, figures among steps this government has taken to erode environmental protections and democratic principles when it comes to land use and disposition.

These measures can only lead to the further aggravation of the climate crisis and degradation of the environment. With respect to process, this government has no mandate to ignore the desires of Ontarians, to refuse to consult, to refuse to submit its plans to environmental review, all in the

aid of surrendering green spaces to developers.

The effect of the proposed legislation will be to:

1. inhibit access to environmental justice in Ontario;
2. impair accountability for environmental decision-making;
3. adversely affect the quality and credibility of Tribunal proceedings and outcomes;
4. eliminate existing specialized and knowledgeable environmental expertise;
5. allow the Ontario Land Tribunal to favour procedures that promote fast-tracked outcomes at the expense of ensuring purposeful decision-making;
6. unduly restrict appeals including those to the Minister on both policy and facts (and just prior to the introduction of Bill 245, the cost of filing an appeal to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal for official plan and zoning by-law amendments was significantly increased from \$300 to \$1100 which could create a financial barrier to the public and deter them from even beginning an appeal);
7. arbitrarily allow written or electronic hearings for the sake of expediency rather than maintain the long-standing procedure of holding in-person hearings in the community where the dispute has arisen;
8. deprive non-parties, such as witnesses or citizen groups, of the right to make oral submissions, answer questions, and provide relevant evidence to the Ontario Land Tribunal; public participation rights are a vital part in the decision-making process;
9. give broad discretion to the Ontario Land Tribunal to dismiss a proceeding without holding a public hearing as required by law and before evidence has even been submitted.

Amalgamating the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, the Environmental Review Tribunal, Mining and Lands Tribunal, the Conservation Review Board and the board of negotiation into a single one is unnecessary, not supported by evidence, and unjustifiable from a public perspective.

Thank you for your consideration of these submissions.

Cathy Pike