***Sample Letter to the Province regarding Bill 23: The More Homes Built Faster Act***

Please personalize your email as you see fit.

Email your letter to:

Minister Steve Clark, Municipal Affairs and Housing - Steve.Clark@pc.ola.org
Minister Graydon Smith, Natural Resources and Forestry - Graydon.Smith@pc.ola.org
Your local MPP

**Re: Bill 23: The “More Homes Built Faster Act”
ERO 019-6141 and 019-2927**

Dear Ministers Clark and Smith,

As a resident and taxpayer of Ontario, I am extremely concerned about planned changes to the roles of responsibilities of Conservation Authorities (CAs). CAs have safeguarded people and property from natural hazards for more than seven decades. Many of the proposed changes will have significant impacts and costs while doing little to increase housing supply.

I am deeply concerned that changes proposed in the *More Homes Built Faster Act* will:

* Weaken the regulatory ability of CAs to protect people and property from natural hazards like flooding, erosion and slope failures - leading to greater risk of property damage and public safety.
* Eliminate the CA’s ability to address water quality issues through planning and permitting, leading to increased nutrients and sediment in lakes and rivers. We know from the 1990s this causes excessive weed growth and algae blooms that have economic impacts on property values, agriculture, tourism, recreation, fisheries and sources of drinking water for many residents.
* Reduce wetland evaluations and protections, leading to increased flooding, erosion and drought, as well as diminished groundwater, which is the source of drinking water in much of rural Ontario.
* Download more responsibilities to municipalities, which they’ve indicated will lead to inefficiencies, delays and increased risk and costs.
* Freeze development fees and pass development costs to taxpayers instead of growth paying for growth.

CAs are not a barrier to development; rather, they support safe and responsible growth.

* CAs save municipalities and developers time and money as a cost-efficient, watershed approach allows member municipalities to share the expertise of CA hydrogeologists, biologists and engineering staff to review planning applications instead of each hiring their own – a huge savings for taxpayers.
* CAs also save the Province and taxpayers money by reducing the financial impacts of severe flooding like Eastern Ontario experienced in 2017 and 2019. The province’s own Special Advisor on Flooding, Doug McNeil, in his 2019 report found that Ontario’s unique CA system remains the fundamental reason why Ontario has not seen the same catastrophic flooding impacts in the billions of dollars as Alberta and BC, which do not have CAs to direct development away from high-risk areas.
* CAs were not named within the Province’s “Housing Affordability Task Force Report” which introduced 55 recommendations to increase the housing supply in Ontario.

At a time when climate change is causing more frequent and intense storm events, the role and watershed mandate of Conservation Authorities has never been more critical.

 **I urge you to withdraw amendments that weaken the protection of natural heritage features so valued by Ontario residents and uphold the role of Conservation Authorities and municipalities in environmental protection, planning and decision-making.**

**It is time to rethink your approach and time to reconvene the multi-stakeholder *Conservation Authorities Working Group* that your government created and work with CAs to identify alternative solutions that will increase Ontario’s housing supply without jeopardizing natural infrastructure and public safety or downloading additional responsibilities to municipalities.**

Sincerely,