

Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora

Repealing Components of the Cutting Red Tape Act

Dear Honourable MPP Gallagher Murphy,

The Greenbelt and agricultural lands are more threatened by the Cutting Red Tape Act and Provincial Planning Statement than by the 2021-23 Greenbelt controversy. Current examples before the Ontario Land Tribunal include 65 St. John's Sideroad/MacKenzie Marsh and the 3000-home proposal at Dufferin and Bathurst on the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Key Concerns:

1. Petroleum and Fossil Fuels:

- Sections 2.9.1 and 3.8 lack specific plans for managing emissions and energy supply, leaving municipalities responsible without clear accountability or funding.
- Schedule 11 removes the Ontario Energy Board's role in approving hydrocarbon pipeline relocations, contradicting climate goals.
- Sections 4.4.1-5 focus on protecting mineral and petroleum resources but ignore Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) for Indigenous communities, essential for equitable resource extraction.

2. Urban Sprawl:

- The Act's provisions for increasing housing density and removing parking minimums are positive but undermined by eliminating Settlement Area Boundaries and Municipal Comprehensive Review processes, leading to unchecked urban sprawl.
- Developers could access prime agricultural land and natural areas with reduced municipal control.
- Lower-tier councils may lack the capacity to manage development pressures, contrary to Association of Municipalities of Ontario recommendations.

3. Loss of Green Space and Agricultural Lands:

- Annually, 116,478 acres of farmland are lost, affecting carbon sequestration, GDP, and food security.
- The Act removes protections from the Ontario 'Place to Grow' Growth Plan, which safeguarded agricultural land and green spaces.
- New appeal rights override municipal decisions and enable developers to exploit agricultural and green spaces.

Summary of Needed Repeals:

- Changes to the Land Tribunal Appeal process affecting municipal consent.
- Legislation allowing expropriation or development of agricultural lands and green spaces.
- Provisions enabling new developments beyond current municipal boundaries.
- Allowances for petroleum and fossil fuel infrastructure expansion.

Repealing these components will address affordable housing needs while upholding provincial promises on nature, food security, and climate efforts.

Sincerely,