

December 6, 2020

The Honourable Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5

Dear Minister Clark,

It has been my honour to serve as a member of the Greenbelt Council but at this juncture I must regretfully submit my resignation, effective immediately.

The government's proposals included in Schedule 6 of Bill 229 to curtail the powers and scope of Conservation Authorities activities are concerning. They would jeopardize the essential work CAs have done since the 1940s to protect our natural environment and water sources, and Ontarians from floods - all of which is only more important in an era of climate change. The exemption of the Greenbelt from select provisions that apply when a Ministerial Zoning Order is adopted does not mean that the Greenbelt will not be adversely affected by the proposed changes. We all know that natural systems are interconnected and impacts do not stop at boundaries drawn on a map.

In addition, it is troubling that the use of Ministerial Zoning Orders has been expanding, and the development projects so approved increasing in scope and scale. This has often occurred without due assessment or consideration for broader planning impacts, without the benefit of an explicit framework to reveal why some projects are chosen over others, and without the opportunity for meaningful public input.

There may well be legitimate reasons to review Conservation Authorities or to expedite development projects. However, the proposals in Bill 229 and intemperate use of MZO's do not constitute solutions to underlying issues, but rather only aim to weaken or circumvent existing policies and processes. Such approaches are short-sighted and will likely generate other economic and environmental costs and risks.

Changes to policy do not have to result in the destruction of the natural environment, collateral costs or the reduction of Ontarians' rights to have their voices heard. The government's actions do not constitute sound, evidence-based public policy nor serve the interests of Ontarians.

Respectfully,



Pamela Blais  
Member, Greenbelt Council

Copies to:

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Jeff Yurek, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks  
The Honourable John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry  
The Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance  
Kate Manson-Smith, Deputy Minister  
Greenbelt Council Members  
Ed McDonnell, CEO, Greenbelt Foundation  
Greater Golden Horseshoe stakeholders