



November 24, 2020

Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario

Honourable Rod Phillips
Minister of Finance

Honourable Jeff Yurek
Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks

Honourable John Yakabuski
Minister of Natural Resources & Forestry

Honourable Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**Re: Bill 229: Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020
Schedule 6 – *Conservation Authorities Act***

At the November 19, 2020 regular meeting of the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority the Board received a presentation on the proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* as found in Schedule 6 of Bill 229. The Board had a fulsome discussion about the proposed amendments and have directed that a letter be sent to the province outlining the Authority's concerns.

While some of the proposed amendments are positive, other amendments have significant implications, fundamentally changing the role of a conservation authority and its ability to fulfill the purposes of the legislation.

Our most significant concerns are summarized as follows:

- The proposed amendments that reduce a conservation authority's role in plan review will have the detrimental affect of limiting an authority's ability to support municipalities to enhance and maintain a healthy natural environment, a critical attribute of any prosperous Ontario community.
- Several of the proposed section 28 permitting amendments will significantly reduce or impair a conservation authority's ability to protect people and property from flooding and other natural hazards.
- Many of the proposed amendments will have the affect of undermining accountability and by extension good governance.

We strongly urge the government to remove Schedule 6 from Bill 229.

We ask the government to engage conservation authorities and municipalities in a conversation on how best to achieve the policy outcomes it seeks. Any subsequent proposed legislative changes should be posted on the EBR for a sixty-day period to allow for a broad range of public input.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We are available and willing to work with the province on this important matter.



Andy Mitchell
Chairman of the Board

c.c. Minister Laurie Scott
MPP David Smith
MPP David Piccini
Member municipalities