



January 22, 2018

Honourable Yasir Naqvi  
Minister of the Attorney General  
11th Floor, 720 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S9

Dear Honourable Naqvi,

**Re: Bill 175, Safer Ontario Act, 2017**

Thank you for taking the time today to meet with myself, Councillor Ritesma-Teeninga and CAO Dwayne Evans regarding the impact Bill 175 will have on the Township of North Huron. We appreciate Bill 175 is being led by the Honourable Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services however, our concerns are with respect to the new Police Services Act.

North Huron is a lower tier municipality in the County of Huron. We have a population of 5000 and a catchment area of 16,000. North Huron is located one hour west of the Region of Waterloo and is comprised of the former Village of Blyth, the Township of East Wawanosh, and the Town of Wingham. North Huron is the proud home of the world renowned Blyth Festival Theatre and we would like to thank Premier Wynne and your government for supporting the arts through your 3.2 million dollar contribution towards cultural projects in Blyth.

The Wingham ward of North Huron has had its own police service for many years. The police service is governed by a 5 member Police Services Board. The Board is very aware of the cost of this service and Wingham residents are very proud of the police service they receive.

Bill 175 includes a New Police Services Act and a new Police Oversight Act. These Acts provide a clear vision of how policing can be modernized to improve efficiencies and effectiveness. North Huron supports efficiencies and effectiveness because policing is one of the fastest-growing areas of public expenditures in Canada. Bill 175 has impacts on municipalities which will affect service and which are not sustainable without ongoing provincial financial support. North Huron offers the following comments for your consideration.

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**Part I, Subsection 7**

This subsection requires municipalities to ensure that police services and police services boards are representative of the communities they serve. North Huron is steeped in history with many residents who have diverse backgrounds. How is the municipality to ensure its police services and police services board are representative of the community they serve?

**Part III, Section 10(6)**

This section expands the area of policing responsibility to include policing of all navigable bodies and water courses in the area for which the board has policing responsibility. North Huron, more specifically the Wingham ward, has a significantly sized water course flowing through its boundaries. The Wingham Police Service does not have the expertise or equipment to assume responsibility for the policing of navigable waterways. The resources and training required to assume this responsibility is cost prohibitive for a municipality of 5000 residents. North Huron is asking for this responsibility to be assumed by the OPP or for the province to provide funding to fully train and maintain the training of its officers for this expanded service. Further, municipalities require the necessary funding to acquire the equipment and resources to deliver on this new provincial mandate.

**Part IV, Section 28**

This section requires every municipality with a municipal board to prepare and approve a diversity plan to ensure that the members of the municipal board appointed by the council are representative of the diversity of the population in the municipality. The plan is to be published in accordance with the regulations and is to be reviewed and if appropriate, revised at least once every four years. The plan is to be approved before the later of,

- (a) 12 months after the day this section comes into force; and
- (b) 12 months after the municipal council constitutes its municipal board.

North Huron has the following questions and comments.

First, will the provincially appointed members to the police services boards be required to meet this same requirement? Second, can you provide us with any details or insight into what the regulations will require? Third, will full funding be provided to municipalities to prepare and maintain diversity plans? Fourth, as a small municipality with limited staff and financial resources, the completion of a diversity plan within 12 months after this section comes into force is not realistic. Other provincial mandates such as the regulations passed for Asset Management are going to consume a great deal of staff's time. Finally, it is suggested preparation of a diversity plan involves racial profiling. It is unclear how municipalities will prepare a diversity plan without invading the privacy of individuals.

**Part VII, Section 115**

This section of the amendment requires police service boards to accommodate the needs of a member of a police service who becomes incapable of performing or fulfilling the essential duties or requirements of his or her position as a result of a disability in accordance with the Human Rights Code. North Huron supports this provision however, the process to resolve these matters (as currently outlined in Bill 175) is a slow and cumbersome process which will be costly for municipalities. North Huron is seeking a less cumbersome and more cost effective process.

**Part IX, Sections 143 to 152, inclusive**

Sections 143 to 152, inclusive, speak to mandatory notice of professional misconduct. North Huron is comprised of 6 police officers, an administrative clerk, a part-time guard and a police chief. For a police service of this size, the requirements outlined in Sections 143 to 152 are prescriptive and excessive. In a vast majority of cases, it is suggested professional misconduct can be addressed by the police chief, in consultation with the police services board. In the event the professional misconduct involves the police chief, the matter is best resolved by the police services board. North Huron respectfully requests professional misconduct matters be addressed by required policies at the local level.

**Part XIII, Sections 187, 189 and 195**

Section 187 requires every municipality to prepare and adopt a community safety and well-being plan. This is reiterated in Section 143.

In North Huron we would have two years to prepare and adopt a plan. North Huron is a small municipality with limited staff and financial resources. Like many municipalities, North Huron has many challenges, including aging infrastructure. North Huron requests additional time and full cost reimbursement for the preparation and maintenance of a community safety and well-being plan.

Section 189 speaks to membership of the advisory committee to prepare the community safety and well-being plan. Subject to the regulations, the advisory committee must, at a minimum, consist of the following members:

1. A local health integration network representative for a geographic area in which the municipality is located, as determined under the Local Health System Integration Act, 2006, or an entity that provides services to improve the physical or mental health of individuals in the community or communities.
2. A person who represents an entity that provides educational services in the municipality.
3. A person who represents an entity that provides community or social services in the municipality, if there is such an entity.
4. A person who represents an entity that provides community or custodial services to children or youth in the municipality, if there is such an entity.
5. An employee of the municipality or a member of the municipal council.
6. A person who represents the police service board or, if there is no police service board, the commander of the detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police that provides policing in the area or his or her delegate.
7. Any other prescribed persons.

The Township of North Huron is serviced by the Southwest LHIN. North Huron does not have a local representative on this board. Social services are provided by the upper tier level of government (County of Huron) and the County of Huron receives North Huron's portion of the provincial dollars to fund children and youth services. What discussions, if any, have taken place with the LHINs and other levels of government regarding their ability to actively participate and assist with the preparation of Community Safety and Well-Being Plans in several communities and for all the plans to be completed within the two year prescribed timeframe?

Section 195 states that every municipality shall provide the Minister with any prescribed information respecting, (a) the municipality's community safety and well-being plan, including the preparation, adoption or implementation of the plan; (b) any outcomes from the municipality's community safety and well-being plan; and (c) any other prescribed matter related to the community safety and well-being

plan. As previously stated, North Huron is a small municipality. The Police Service Board for the Wingham ward provides service to less than 3,000 people. The required information is excessive for a municipality the size of North Huron in the absence of additional financial resources to offset the municipality's costs.

Thank you again for your time. As your government moves forward with consideration of Bill 175, we trust you will take these comments into consideration including, but not limited to, the financial impacts on smaller municipalities with local police service boards.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Neil Vincent".

Neil Vincent  
Reeve

c.c. Township of North Huron Council  
CAO Dwayne Evans, Township of North Huron